

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- International Conference of Young Scientists “Trust in Science” concludes after outstanding participation
- GYA members elect new leadership
- Grant programme renamed to “Sasha Kagansky Interdisciplinary Grant”
- GYA now permanently hosted at the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- [Meet the new GYA Executive Committee](#)
- [Meet the new GYA members](#)
- [Read more about the Sasha Kagansky Interdisciplinary Grant](#)
- [Download GYA Connections Issue 9](#)
- [Download the GYA 2020 Yearly Report](#)

This bulletin provides an overview and highlights of the activities of the Global Young Academy (GYA) in the second quarter of 2021, and complements our monthly newsletters (archive available [here](#)), which provide more comprehensive details.

GYA MEMBERS ELECT NEW LEADERSHIP AT 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The GYA’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) and International Conference of Young Scientists “Trust in Young Scientists” successfully concluded on 4 June, and included the induction of new members, as well as the election of new leadership.

As Co-Chairs for the upcoming year, members chose [Roula Inglesi-Lotz](#) (University of Pretoria, South Africa) and [Michael Saliba](#) (University of Stuttgart, Germany). Michael served as a Co-Chair last year.

Further Executive Committee (EC) members are as follows: [Michael Backes](#) (University of Namibia); [Derya Baran](#) (KAUST, Saudi Arabia); [Cristina Blanco Sío-López](#) (University of Pittsburgh, USA/Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, Italy); [Lahcen El Youssfi](#) (Sultan Moulay Slimane University, Morocco); [Mohamed Elhadid](#) (Zewail City of Science and Technology, Egypt); [Enceih Erfani](#) (IASBS, Iran); [Anna Harris](#) (Maastricht University, Netherlands); [Abhijit Majumder](#) (Indian Institute of Technology, India); and [Prosper Ngabonziza](#) (Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research, Germany). Mohamed and Lahcen were both re-elected.

Looking at the year ahead, Co-Chair Roula Inglesi-Lotz states that, “In a world where the voices for diversity, social justice and equal opportunities are becoming louder, the GYA is here to serve as a platform for young scientists around the world to express their own voice. If nothing else, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that connectivity, collaboration and sharing are key for sustainable growth and development.”

Co-Chair Michael Saliba adds that, “The GYA brings people from all disciplines and walks of life together. It is now an established voice within the scientific and science advice community. We will strive to make this voice heard even more in the coming year and look forward to working together with our partners.”

[Learn more about the Co-Chairs’ and EC members here.](#)

SASHA KAGANSKY INTERDISCIPLINARY GRANT

During the 2021 AGM, GYA members came together with Sasha Kagansky’s friends and family to rename the North-South Interdisciplinary Grant the “Sasha Kagansky Interdisciplinary Grant” in honour of this GYA member who sadly passed away in 2020.

A GYA member from 2015-2020 and EC member in 2017/18, Sasha made countless meaningful connections and initiated and collaborated on many inspiring projects during this time.

The grant programme, originally introduced at the GYA’s 2014 AGM, seeks to support the development of small-scale, innovative, curiosity-driven, blue-sky, exploratory research pilots or prototypes that unite researchers in low- or middle-income and high-income countries and cross-disciplinary boundaries.

A past recipient of the interdisciplinary grant himself in 2015/2016, Sasha embodied the principles that the program seeks to encourage, and in this way the GYA seeks to honour his legacy.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE OF YOUNG SCIENTISTS SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES

The GYA held its second online Annual General Meeting (AGM) from 1-4 June, together with an online International Conference of Young Scientists on the topic “Trust in Science”, which was open to public participation. Over 170 GYA members and alumni and over 490 external guests from 114 countries registered to take part in sessions throughout the week.

The week-long AGM included the induction of [31 new GYA members](#), the election of a [new GYA Executive Committee](#), and meetings of the general assembly to discuss internal functions and development of the GYA as an organisation. The GYA’s many Working Groups held meetings in the weeks before and after the AGM, to integrate new members and make plans for the coming year.

Four international and interdisciplinary panels on 2 June addressed different aspects of the conference topic, with expert talks followed by interactive discussions.

The day began with the panel “[Transforming Food Systems: Public Trust and Engagement to reach the UN SDGs](#)”, in light of this year’s UN Food Systems Summit. The discussions highlighted the need for a better connection of people with their (local) food systems, in part through more communication in local languages and widespread knowledge-sharing.

The panel “[Science Policy Advice – Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)” looked at different levels of trust in science, particularly related to science policy advice mechanisms and trust in evidence-informed policy. Among other issues, panelists addressed the challenges of maintaining or improving confidence in vaccinations and in measures designed to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of global learning from different national and regional experiences was emphasised.

A lively theoretical debate on trustworthiness ensued in the panel “[Improving Trust in Science through Communication](#)”, and touched on the origins of trust and distrust in society towards science and evidence-informed policy. This panel was organised by the GYA’s “Trust in Young Scientists” Working Group, which unveiled three new videos produced in a collaborative project “SciSo”. More on the project, and links to the [short science communication videos here](#).

Finally, the topic of “[Building Trust with Open Science](#)” discussed flaws in science systems themselves and concrete efforts to make science more openly accessible to other scientists as well as to an informed public. The session highlighted international examples before focusing on current efforts by Open Research Europe.

GYA Working Group public presentations were also well-received, generating questions and debates among participants from around the world. All [public sessions are viewable online here](#).

GYA PERMANENTLY HOSTED AT THE GERMAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES LEOPOLDINA

In January 2021, the GYA was granted open-ended funding (subject to annual approval) by the German Federal Government, as well as the State Government of Saxony-Anhalt, where the GYA Office is hosted by the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina.

In connection with this, GYA Office staff positions could be made permanent. Taken together, this means that the GYA has the necessary infrastructure to successfully continue its mission of providing a voice to young scientists for many years to come.

Support that the GYA received from its partners in the science policy sphere was instrumental and much appreciated in this development. The GYA received its seed funding from the Volkswagen Foundation, and from 2014 received core funding from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Support has also come from the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) and other international donors.

Receiving open-ended funding is a tribute to the dedicated work of hundreds of GYA members and alumni over the 10-plus years of the GYA’s existence, and is cause for celebration throughout the organisation, including our esteemed [Advisory Board](#) members.

ABOUT THE GYA

The vision of the GYA is *science for all; science for the future*, and its mission is to give a voice to young scientists and researchers around the world. The GYA, founded in 2010, is an independent science academy of 200 outstanding early- to mid-career researchers from six continents who are selected from across disciplines based on their academic excellence and commitment to engage with society. GYA members serve five-year terms, and the GYA presently counts members and alumni from 94 countries. The GYA administrative Office is publicly funded and hosted at the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The wide array of GYA activities are supported by a range of international public and private funders.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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