

“Science for Policy and Diplomacy for Early-Career Scientists in Europe”

The workshop on science advice was designed to provide a platform for early-career scientists to exchange on their role at the interface of science, policy, and diplomacy.

This workshop was organized through a collaborative effort between the Swiss Young Network for Science Policy and Diplomacy ([SYNESPOD](#)), Global Young Academy ([GYA Science Advice Working Group](#)), Young Academy Finland ([YAF](#)), UK Young Academy ([UKYA](#)), and Young Academies Science Advice Structure ([YASAS](#)) to discuss the engagement of EMCRs in science for policy and diplomacy, addressing challenges and emerging opportunities.

The program involved a general introduction to the topic by Laura Zimmermann (GYA), followed by perspectives by Gabriela Ivan (ISC), Ralf Mitschke (EUSDA and BYLAT), and Stella Tsani (GYA, YASAS), as well as a round-table discussion moderated by Estrella Diaz (GYA and Young Academy Spain, YAS), Veera Ehrlen (YAF), and Alistair McConnell (UKYA).

The workshop and discussions provided insights into the engagement of EMCRs.

- **They highlighted the necessity for scientists to make their research more accessible and policy-relevant.** Participants recognized the importance of translating complex scientific findings into formats that policymakers can easily understand, such as policy briefs, executive summaries, and infographics. There was a consensus that scientists need training to develop these communication and engagement skills early in their careers.
- **Another key takeaway was the need to confront the barriers that hinder the translation of scientific evidence into public policy.** Structural issues, such as institutional inertia, funding limitations, and inadequate support mechanisms, were identified. Cultural gaps between the scientific and policy communities also emerged as a challenge, often leading to misunderstandings or reduced trust. Additionally, the politicization of science complicates the integration into policymaking, making it crucial for scientists to be equipped with strategies to navigate politically sensitive environments.
- **Finally, participants explored how early-career researchers can engage more effectively with policymaking frameworks.** Formal programs, such as fellowships with governmental bodies or advisory councils, were cited as key mechanisms. Institutions, such as the European Commission and parliaments, provide avenues for such engagement; however, awareness and access remain limited for young researchers. It was emphasized that universities, scientific associations, and academies must play a more active role in facilitating mentorship and policy-oriented training. Publishing in interdisciplinary or policy-focused journals can also enhance a scientist's visibility and influence in decision-making.

During the discussion, participants identified challenges faced by young academies.

They noted the growing involvement of these academies in international initiatives, including partnerships with organizations such as the International Science Council (ISC), UNESCO, and The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS). Regional collaborations, particularly between Europe, were highlighted as promising areas for joint action. However, significant barriers remain, including limited institutional recognition, funding shortages, and credibility challenges. Many early-career scientists encounter resistance when attempting to enter the diplomatic sphere, particularly when dealing with politically sensitive issues without adequate guidance.

To address the challenges, participants proposed several strategic recommendations.

(i) They called for the creation of structured capacity-building programs that would equip young scientists with essential skills in policy engagement, diplomacy, and communication. (ii) Young academies should take a proactive role in shaping national and regional science diplomacy agendas. Initiatives like policy dialogues, position papers, and multilateral collaboration platforms were seen as effective ways to increase their visibility and impact. (iii) Finally, there was a strong emphasis on the need for young academies to clearly communicate their value and expertise to policymakers and diplomats, fostering more meaningful partnerships.

In conclusion, the workshop underscored the pivotal role that early-career scientists can play in shaping evidence-informed policy and promoting international collaboration. Realizing this potential will require not only individual effort but also sustained institutional support, capacity-building, and a shift in how scientific contributions are perceived and applied in policymaking.