

Global Young Academy

Lead academy: Global Young Academy (GYA)

The Global Young Academy (GYA) was officially founded in February 2010 with the support of IAP. As a “voice of young scientists around the world”, the GYA aims to empower and mobilize young scientists to address issues of particular importance to early career scientists. Current working groups focus on improving early scientific careers, science-society dialogue, science education, and interdisciplinary research.

With support from IAP, GYA was able to build its global presence in 2014 through a number of national and international meetings.

International conference

The GYA 4th International Conference was held on 21-25 May 2014 in Santiago de Chile, Chile. The meeting marked the first time the GYA convened in South America and helped to increase interest in the GYA on the continent. Entitled ‘Natural Resources in a Finite World’, the conference focused on the management of natural resources and improving the use of intellectual and cultural resources for sustainable development. In total, 105 scholars attended, bringing 78 GYA members from around the world together with Chilean young scientists and scientific leaders. The conference featured distinguished speakers including Jorge Sequeira (UNESCO representative in Chile), Angélica Bucio (communications officer, ICSU Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean), Juan Asenjo (president, Chilean Academy of Sciences), Howard Alper (chair, Government of Canada’s Science, Technology and Innovation Council), and Jorge Allende (Chilean Academy of Sciences), who proposed a threefold strategy to communicate science to society more effectively.

A panel of distinguished guests and GYA members stressed the importance of indigenous knowledge in the stewardship of natural resources. A plenary panel on the GYA as a science advisor argued that, for the GYA to have a significant impact, its strategic approach should be based on informing choices and supplying options to the global community. A meeting of representatives of national young academies preceding the GYA conference paved the way for a second worldwide meeting of young academies in 2015.

The GYA also took the opportunity to hold its general assembly in Chile, inaugurating 45 new young scientists to its membership.

National young academies

In 2014, six national young academies were established with the support of the GYA: in Canada, Egypt, Ghana, India, Kenya and Vietnam. As an example, after several years of effort by Egyptian GYA members, including a GYA mission to Egypt in 2012, the Egyptian Young Academy of Science was launched on 18 September in Cairo. At the launch, Heidi Wedel, GYA managing director, presented the GYA, the international young academy movement, and the support that the GYA can offer for the development and networking of national young academies.

In addition, in January, two GYA representatives and IAP co-chair Volker ter Meulen met with representatives from the Royal Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences of Spain and the Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology to encourage the formation of a Spanish young

academy. Prior to the meeting, the idea had been conveyed to a general Spanish audience via a letter published in the leading Spanish newspaper, *El País*.

Meeting in Trieste

In February, GYA co-chair Sameh Soror and Heidi Wedel presented the GYA’s activities at a meeting of the world’s major scientific organizations and networks in Trieste, Italy. The interactions reinforced the already strong cooperation with the IAP and contributed to developing relationships with UNESCO, the International Council for Science (ICSU), TWAS and the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD). As a result, for example, a researcher associated with the GYA ‘Global State of Young Scientists’ report (GloSYS) was invited to the ICSU/International Social Science Council (ISSC) young scientists’ conference to present the GYA and the preliminary results of the GloSYS study.

EuroScience Open Forum

At the EuroScience Open Forum in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 21 June 2014, GYA members Catherine Beaudry, Canada, and Martin Dominik, UK, organized a well attended session on ‘What environment is required to fulfil the role of a scientist’. Young scientists face a multitude of challenges in their research environments with increasing pressure to perform and conform, so in some cases diversifying beyond traditional niches is the only way forward. The session drew on two GYA studies: GloSYS, on the challenges and opportunities of young scholars and ‘Perceptions of Research Excellence in Thailand and Japan’, that assessed the research environment, the promotion of opportunities, and the structures that ensue from assessment criteria in those countries.

Disaster risk reduction

Jauad El-Kharraz, France/Morocco, represented the GYA in the delegation to the UN Preparatory Committee Meeting for the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on 14-15 July 2014. As a member of the Science & Technology Major Group he contributed actively to a joint plenary statement as well as other facets of the meeting.

New Champions

Five GYA members were invited to the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of New Champions, which took place in Tianjin, China, on 10-12 September 2014. Selected from among the five, Ivana Gadjanski, Serbia, participated



Participants at the GYA 4th international conference, held on 21-25 May 2014 in Santiago, Chile.

as a panelist in the 'Gender in STEM' discussion and represented young scientists in the 'New Champions Plenary', sharing what grand challenges and global issues are driving her work to shape a better future. The GYA are continuing discussions with WEF with regards to future cooperation.

STS Forum

Each year, the Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum convenes in Kyoto, Japan, bringing together scholars and researchers with policy-makers, business leaders and media leaders from all over the world to meet and discuss science and technology issues in the 21st century. This year's meeting, held on 5-7 October, had a special session for young leaders. This provided a valuable forum for discussions with leading academics and decision-makers on topics of importance for the GYA, such as research integrity, multidisciplinary, open access to scientific information, and the importance of education.

GYA in Africa and the Middle East

In order to reinforce cooperation with the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) and its member national academies, as well as on the GYA GloSYS Africa project, GYA member Fridah Kanana, Kenya, attended the 10th Annual Meeting of African Academies (AMASA-10) on 10-12 November in Uganda. She highlighted the concerns of young researchers, including the lack of mentorship from senior researchers and the need to support the establishment of more young academies, a call that was supported by IAP co-chair Mohamed Hassan.

In 2013, GYA members made significant contributions to the elaboration of the Global Research Council's (GRC) 'Shaping the Future' policy statement, which was formally adopted in 2014. Subsequently, GYA representatives were invited to GRC regional meetings in 2014. Sameh Soror attended the GRC regional meeting for the Middle East and North Africa region, presenting the GloSYS study and highlighting recommendations from the GYA grant mechanisms statement, such as optimizing the use of expensive facilities in the region. At the GRC Africa regional meeting, Fridah Kanana discussed the follow-up to the GloSYS study with a particular focus on Africa.



Interactive session at the GYA 4th international conference held in Santiago, Chile.



GYA member James Tickner, Australia, speaking at the GYA 4th international conference held in Santiago, Chile.



GYA co-chairs Eva Alisic (front left), Sameh Soror (front centre) with GYA managing director Heidi Wedel (front right) with other GYA executive committee members at the GYA 4th international conference held in Santiago, Chile.

