

Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Young Academies

November 2019

A: INTRODUCTION TO YOUNG ACADEMIES

Young scholars (defined as early- and mid-career professionals of sciences, arts and humanities) across the world increasingly recognise the need to build a true and integrated global community, regardless of geographical, disciplinary or financial barriers. This community will enhance the contribution that young scholars around the world can make to science and society. We believe the next frontiers of discovery, thought, and ideas, which will be essential to solving today's and future global challenges, will be shaped by those who understand the need for partnerships that transcend boundaries. We also believe the skills to effectively navigate geographical, cultural, and disciplinary boundaries, to influence policy, and to engage with key stakeholders can be nurtured and are not just innate. An important strategy for achieving this is through the network of young academies (YAs), consisting of national (NYAs) and regional YAs and the Global Young Academy (GYA). The role of these YAs is to identify, connect and nurture excellent young scholars.

The knowledge landscape once dominated by learned societies now has many other actors. The recognition that young scholars bring unique perspectives to many of the challenges science and society are facing today prompts YAs to engage with these actors using novel approaches rather than simply recreating younger versions of "senior" academies (defined as the traditional academies of sciences, arts and humanities that comprise established scholars as life-long members). Furthermore, YAs give voice to and advocate for young scholars, addressing their specific needs and challenges, thus combining a dual role of outreach as well as research and science leadership capacity building. In contrast to "senior" academies, membership term in YAs is limited, with selection based on both academic excellence and a demonstrated commitment to reach out to other disciplines and society, urging members to use this opportunity wisely and encouraging them to participate in the activities of their academies during their membership period.

B: RATIONALE FOR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In recent years, there has been a surge in the number of NYAs globally, from just a handful in 2014 to more than 40 NYAs across all global regions by early 2019. This upward trend is being driven by a

- Desire for impact to foster a more positive and constructive science environment that supports impact, policy engagement and societal outreach.
- Need for greater connectedness with other parts of their countries, regions and globally - a necessary requirement for raising awareness of the roles that science, arts and the humanities can play in society, and how scholars at similar career stages can make a meaningful contribution.
- Search for community and a desire to connect with other like-minded scientists to share experiences, to access peer-mentoring and peer-inspiration, motivation and encouragement.

With the increasing number of YAs, it has become necessary to clearly delineate the guiding principles in order to continue to build this active community and to preserve the values that underpin the YA movement. To this end, led by the Global Young Academy, a core writing group was assembled representing all world regions to draft the initial version of this declaration. This draft was then



circulated to all YAs who provided inputs and perspectives, which were incorporated into this final version.

This document outlines the shared guiding tenets of YAs worldwide and represents principles for new YAs as they develop, and the goals that existing YAs aspire to and embrace as we continue to strengthen and grow as an impactful community.

C: GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF YOUNG ACADEMIES

1. Excellence

YAs strive for both academic excellence *and* the commitment to reach out to other disciplines and society when selecting their members and in their activity. YA members are scholars across all sciences, arts and humanities who have completed a doctoral degree and are at an early-mid career stage¹. Their academic excellence is evidenced using a variety of criteria that are contextually relevant to the member's field, including, but not limited to, significant research grants, awards, outstanding track record of publications, patents or similar output and other forms of national and international peer recognition. Commitment to outreach and demonstrated leadership is similarly a core indicator of excellence, adjudicated using objective criteria such as mentoring, outreach, policy and community engagement and leadership.

2. Impact

- ON POLICY: by striving to engage with relevant institutions and stakeholders through member-led initiatives and in collaboration with partners such as other academies. Impact may reflect at national (or other relevant) policy levels and may also involve contributing to guidelines and advice for global policies.
- ON SCIENCE, ARTS AND HUMANITIES: by promoting initiatives that identify challenges faced by science, arts and humanities themselves, as well as by society and young scholars and by exploring solutions to address these. YA activities can focus on, but are not restricted to, current and possible future challenges locally and globally.
- ON SOCIETY: by providing outreach to engage with the whole of society to enable more interaction between scholars, policy makers and members of the public.

3. Diversity and inclusivity

Finding solutions to the challenges encountered in the modern world requires an inclusive approach. Such an approach not only expands our thoughts and action by eliminating some of the limitations we otherwise would encounter, but also enables us to find solutions that reach deep into every corner of society. Thus, YAs within their organisational structure and function should demonstrate proactive efforts to promote and maintain inclusiveness for members from all disciplines and regarding all other dimensions of diversity, while ensuring professionalism and excellence. Furthermore, YAs demonstrate active engagement in organising and carrying out activities that promote inclusiveness.

¹ Some young academies adopt a broader set of membership criteria and welcome applications from professionals working in business, the charity sector, public service, and the creative industries. In such instances, a doctoral degree is not required to apply for YA membership, and excellence is demonstrated through other relevant accomplishments.

4. Responsibility

YAs have a responsibility to advocate for, and promote best practices within the science, arts and humanities community. YAs also have a responsibility to society, including but not limited to engaging with grand societal challenges, and maintaining a linkage between scholars and the society. YAs accept that members shoulder the responsibility of playing an active role in highlighting, and contributing solutions to challenges faced by other young scholars and the wider society. Relatedly, this responsibility extends to contributing to the broader YA community, for example by sharing best practice with other YAs, be that in person through participation in regional and worldwide meetings of YAs or being prepared to support new YA initiatives where advice is requested. It also involves active science communication, providing science advice for policy, contributing to sustainable development and supporting social initiatives with scientific evidence.

5. Knowledge-based evidence

YAs recognise the integral role of generating evidence in society. Learning about the key challenges facing society on a national and global level is a pillar for building a solid YA strategy since it allows a better understanding of the various dimensions of diversity within and between societal landscapes, be that political, economic, religious, linguistic, or cultural. In this way, YAs strive to connect with decision-making policy structures at different levels to promote science-informed policies.

6. Independence and transparency

YAs are responsible for creating and adhering to their Constitution and Standard Operating Procedures. These may be developed and implemented to varying degrees in collaboration with partners such as a “senior” academy or other bodies, adhering to the legal requirements of the country or region and these guiding principles. We recognise the vital role that partnership with “senior” academies or similar bodies plays in the success of YAs. We further recognise that several models of YAs exist with varying degrees of connection or linkages with, and support by “senior” academies. Whilst encouraging collaboration, we nonetheless commit to embracing these principles of independence and transparency:

- YAs select their members in a transparent process that may be in partnership with “senior” academies or other bodies. The selection process should ideally be guided by a dedicated Membership Selection Committee with unbiased, voluntary participation of existing members.
- YAs have a clear leadership structure, including the transparent procedure of leadership election and continuity in leadership that drives the development and implementation of the strategic plan of the YA.
- Activities are member-led which promotes sustained member engagement on emerging and relevant issues.
- Where possible, management and administration are supported by dedicated professional staff, as this greatly eases the administrative burden of YA members and leaders.
- When accepting financial or in-kind support from any organisation or collaborator, YAs regard their independence as a priority and any conflicts of interest are readily declared.

7. Integrity

Maintaining a strong positive reputation is crucial for impact. For YAs to lend a credible voice to global issues and grand societal challenges, a platform that is above reproach and free of scandal is required. Accordingly, YAs intentionally and proactively commit to high standards of academic and social integrity and ethics.



D: CALL TO ACTION

Call to action to young scholars: We call upon young scholars worldwide to establish a YA where one does not exist, working with local champions for young scholars to motivate to establish one, centred around these guiding principles. Existing YAs and the toolkit developed by the Global Young Academy can assist the process of YA formation, learning from promising practices to ensure these guiding tenets are embraced.

Call to action to existing YAs: We call upon all YAs to strive to align their organisational structure, strategic initiatives such as policies, member-led activities, and priorities with these guiding principles. We call on YAs to initiate, commit to and embrace best practices aligned with these values at all times and share lessons learned with new and existing YAs. We further call upon YAs to adopt methods within the YA that encourage reflective practices along the guiding principles and use it as a tool for continuous growth in developing activities that reflect these principles. We see the principles set out in this statement as a *living document* and call upon YAs to contribute insights from their reflections to further evolve these principles going forwards as the YA movement continues to grow.

Call to action to “senior” academies and similar bodies: We call upon members of national and regional academies of sciences, arts and humanities or similar bodies to work in partnership with YAs in their countries and regions as they strive to embrace all guiding principles. Cognisant of these guiding values, where YAs do not exist, we urge “senior” academies and similar organisations to work with leading young scholars to support the development of new YAs whose organisational and leadership structures and strategic priorities fulfil their commitment to these guiding principles.

Ratified by the following Young Academies: Albanian Young Academy, Austrian Young Academy, National Young Academy of Bangladesh, Jonge Academie (Belgium), Benin Young Academy of Science, Burundi Council of Young Scientists, Cameroon Academy of Young Scientists, Estonian Young Academy of Sciences, Ethiopian Young Academy of Sciences, Young Academy Finland, Die Junge Akademie (Germany), Ghana Young Academy, Hungarian Young Academy, Indian National Young Academy of Science, Israel Young Academy, Young Academy of Japan, Kenya National Young Academy of Science, Association of Latvian Young Scientists, Young Korean Academy of Science and Technology, Young Scientists Network – Academy of Sciences Malaysia, Nigerian Young Academy, National Academy of Young Scientists (Pakistan), Philippine Academy of Young Scientists, Polish Young Academy, RSE Young Academy of Scotland, Senegalese National Young Academy, South African Young Academy of Science, Young Academy of Spain, Sri Lanka Academy of Young Scientists, Sudanese Academy of Young Scientists, Thai Young Scientists Academy, Uganda National Young Academy, New Voices in Sciences, Engineering & Medicine (US), Vietnam Young Academy, Young Academy of Europe, Global Young Academy

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For more information on the young academies: <http://globalyoungacademy.net/national-young-academies/>



YOUNG ACADEMY

ÖAW ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

YOUNG ACADEMY FINLAND



GLOBAL YOUNG ACADEMY

ESTONIAN YOUNG ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

האקדמיה הצעירה הישראלית
الأكاديمية الشابة الإسرائيلية
THE ISRAEL YOUNG ACADEMY



KNYAS KENYA NATIONAL YOUNG ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

YOUNG SCIENTISTS NETWORK MALAYSIA

KAST Young Korean Academy Science and Technology



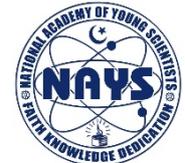
AMU Akademia Młodych Uczonych POLSKA AKADEMIA NAUK



ACADEMIA JOVEN DE ESPAÑA



Académie Nationale des Jeunes Scientifiques du Sénégal



SAYAS South African Young Academy of Science

