

3rd Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies Statement

The role of Young Academies in achieving the UN SDGs

September 2017

Preamble

In July 2017, more than 60 representatives from over 35 Young Academies and similar young scientist initiatives from all over the world met in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting focused on the question of how young academies in general, and young scientists in particular, can contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants discussed the role of Young Academies in the national implementation of the SDGs, and how science and technology can best be harnessed towards achieving the SDGs.

We concluded that Young Academies can and should play a central role in conceptualising, developing and implementing strategies to achieve the SDGs. We urge policy-makers working on the SDGs and Senior Academies to act on their proclamation that ‘young people are key drivers of sustainable development’¹ and to increasingly seek and include advice from Young Academies. As members of Young Academies, we are willing and ready to contribute to achieving the SDGs and, to this end, have identified the following areas for engagement:

Policy Advice

Achieving the goals of sustainability and poverty reduction will require a concerted effort by all sectors of society. Science has a crucial role in this effort and its central role must be recognised and utilised in achieving the SDGs and in monitoring their implementation.

We believe that the members of Young Academies, whether national, regional or global, are well placed to contribute interdisciplinary science advice to SDG implementation: they are typically not working in disciplinary silos, but looking together at societal challenges, they embrace diversity (cultural, disciplinary, gender, etc.) and connect scientists across borders due to their regional and global networks. Thus, we recommend that Young Academies should take on a science advisory role at a national, regional and global level. By becoming recognised as an independent part of their national, regional and global policy advice systems, Young Academies and their members can play an important role as trusted intermediaries between the research community and policy-makers and provide research-based evidence for SDG implementation and indicators for monitoring and evaluation. This would ensure inclusion of perspectives of young scientists at the national and global science-policy interface and strengthen the scientific base of the SDG process.

Science Communication and Outreach

We see Young Academies as strategically well positioned to raise awareness and understanding of the SDGs and related science issues within their nations by communicating them to civil society, policy-makers, the private sector and wider public through workshops, lectures, and outreach programmes. By engaging with schools and universities on the SDGs, they can reach out to the next generation of future scientists.

Moreover, Young Academies can assist the media in building science literacy on the SDGs as well as confidence in science by contributing to science articles in the popular media and online.

¹ UN General Assembly, 69th Session, High-Level Event for World Programme of Action on Youth, 29 May 2015. Online: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ga11648.doc.htm>

Through all these activities, Young Academies can play a crucial role in demystifying science to the public by communicating research clearly and accessibly, thereby increasing public trust in science, unmasking fake news, and exposing infringements on academic freedom.

Capacity Enhancement for Young Scientists and Young Academies

An important part of the work of Young Academies is making the SDGs more familiar to our members. By helping each other to gain a better understanding of policymaking processes and evidence-based policymaking, as well as how to apply the UN policy framework to joint collaboration in the field of SDG implementation and monitoring, our work will be more effective and efficient.

Young Academies can achieve this by aligning ongoing academy activities and working groups with the SDGs, focusing on these goals in meetings and workshops (e.g. 2018 Africa Young Academies Regional Conference, 2019 Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies), looking at ways to incentivise young researchers to get involved, and by collaborating with Senior Academies, international science networks and other stakeholders.

One potential avenue, we suggest, is that Young Academies strengthen their engagement with the InterAcademy Partnership and their SDG-related project on “Improving Scientific Input into Global Policymaking: Strategies for Attaining the Sustainable Development Goals”, and their African SDG project on “Harnessing Science, Engineering and Medicine to Address Africa’s Challenges”, to learn about pathways into the UN science-policy interface.

In summary, we believe that Young Academies around the world can contribute successfully to national, regional and global SDGs processes using science, research and innovation. Engaging with our partners, in particular Senior Academies, we can leverage science to attain evidence-based policymaking and to deliver tangible outcomes on the livelihood of societies. To achieve this, we will continue encouraging, training and supporting our members and each other around the globe to be involved in national, regional as well as international, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational SDG-related dialogues and undertakings, and to work towards embedding the voice of young scientists in any proposed solution for achieving inclusive sustainability. We now urge SDG policy-makers and Senior Academies to work with us. We can achieve more by coming together and working jointly towards a “global science” driving sustainability.

Signed by

.... (Name of YA, Country, Logo)

Background

The Global Young Academy and the network of National Young Academies

Young Academies are academies formed by early and mid-career young scientists and scholars who typically have been selected for the excellence and impact of their research and their commitment to service. These Young Academies work as the voice of young scientists for the advancement of issues of importance to society and to young scientists.

One of the major aims of the Global Young Academy (GYA) is to support the establishment and development of National Young Academies (NYAs) and similar bodies, to cooperate with them and provide opportunities for networking and capacity enhancement. Overall, 33 NYAs and more than 10 similar bodies now exist worldwide, many having been established with support from the GYA and its members. The global network of Young Academies continues to grow dynamically, with ever more NYAs being established all over the world and up to six new academies expected to be established in 2017. (see <https://globalyoungacademy.net/national-young-academies/>).

Aware of the role young scientists can play to enhance Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) and to drive the implementation and monitoring processes for the UN SDGs, the GYA is an active facilitator and supporter of its members and NYA partners worldwide.

The GYA and NYAs will continue to work closely and organically with international partners to facilitate capacity building for young scientists and to strengthen the role of science in working towards the SDGs.

For more information on the 3rd Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies and its outcomes, see: <https://globalyoungacademy.net/events/3rd-worldwide-meeting-of-young-academies-2017/>

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●日本学術会議若手アカデミーが外部団体等の意見の表出等に
署名等を行う場合の手続について

〔平成28年3月18日〕
若手アカデミー決定

若手アカデミー運営要綱第8条第1項に基づき、標記について以下の通り定める。

1. 若手アカデミーが外部団体（国内・国外の学術団体等）と、日本学術会議に対して、予算の支出、義務、負担等を課することのない意見の表出（声明等）等に署名等を行う場合の手続は、以下によるものとする。
 - （1）若手アカデミーは、意見の表出の文面等について、会長に事前に提示し、同意を得るものとする。
 - （2）若手アカデミーは、（1）の提示に際し、各副会長に報告を行うものとする。
 - （3）若手アカデミーは、（1）の同意を得た後は、署名日の事前・事後を問わず、速やかに幹事会への報告を行うものとする。
2. 1. に該当する案件であっても、1.（1）において、日本学術会議に大きな影響を与える可能性があり、高度・専門的な判断を必要とする等の判断を会長が行った場合等は、幹事会の同意を得るものとする。
3. 本決定に該当しない案件の手続については、別途、若手アカデミー運営要綱等によるものとする。