

Report of the INYAS Mid-Year Meeting and Technical Symposium - 2024

The INYAS Mid-Year Meeting and Technical Symposium on “Empowering Young: Leveraging Science and Technology for Sustainable Development” was organised from 26 - 28 September 2024 at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata, celebrating INYAS’ 10th anniversary. The first day of the three-day symposium successfully covered two technical sessions and one panel discussion focusing on ‘Agriculture and the Agri-food Sector’s Role in Feeding the Globe Sustainably’, ‘Advanced Strategies for Climate Action and Sustainable Development’ and ‘Young Scientists in Science Governance’ respectively. The first day also witnessed a vibrant inaugural session wherein three INYAS Publications - Annual Report 2023-24, Mid-Year Newsletter 2024 and MYM-2024 Brochure were released. The second day featured four sessions on affordable healthcare, industry-academia collaboration and green energy, highlighting innovation and sustainability, which concluded with a focus on ethics in research. The third day continued with discussions on novel materials for a greener future and the final milestone satellite session on the Asian Young Academies (AYA).

The final satellite session S4, titled “Role of Neighboring National Young Academies (NYAs) to Build Scientific Temperament among Asian Countries”, proved to be a high-yielding gathering. The final session of the Mid-Year Meeting brought together representatives from the Global Young Academy (GYA), the International Science Council (ISC) and representatives from National Young Academies of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and the Early Career Forum of New Zealand, on the same platform. The session was initiated with introductory remarks by Prof. Chandra Shekhar Sharma (GYA Co-Chair and Former Chair, INYAS), reflecting on INYAS’s early initiatives to unite NYAs across Asia and emphasizing the significance of enhancing collaboration among NYAs in Asia to maximize global impact, focusing in developing the young scientific community worldwide. Following the trajectory, each NYA representative showcased a brief presentation highlighting their organization’s achievements and future aspirations for cross-border and cross-cultural scientific cooperation. First in line, Sri Lanka’s SLAYS spotlighted its robust international connections and contributions to various organizations like NASSL and NSF. Moving ahead, the Royal Society Te Apārangi Early Career Forum elucidated its structure of three-year terms and broad membership across disciplines. The National Young Academy of Bangladesh (NYAB) unfolded their ongoing joint activities with INYAS and SLAYS, including work on an IAP-sponsored project focused on predatory publishing. Thereafter, Nepal’s NAYAN emphasised its role in proliferating interdisciplinary dialogue exchange while Pakistan’s NAYS outlined its extensive outreach programs, including Science 4 Youth (S4Y) and a variety of focus groups dedicated to advancing women in science, biosafety and health. INYAS activities were presented by Prof. Nishant Chakravorty (Chair, INYAS).

The much-awaited presentation from the Global Young Academy (GYA) provided intrinsic insights into its international role as an independent academy connecting 200 members and over 450 alumni worldwide, actively promoting the establishment and broadening of new NYAs. Following the course, the International Science Council (ISC) noted that NYAs are part of its affiliated members, with 17 new young academies added in 2023. ISC emphasised its

endeavours toward global sustainability and policy simulation including an upcoming General Assembly in Oman in June 2025. In the entire course of discussion, the participants explored strategies to strengthen the network among Asian NYAs and identified shared aspirations to foster collaboration among young research community. Drawing successful comparisons



to other networks, such as the European Young Academies (EYNA) the panelists discussed and deliberated upon the lessons learned and underscored the prominence of the ISC and GYA's roles in facilitating these connections. Some participants suggested the notion that collaborations at an individual and programme-based level may be more feasible initially, given the diverse organisational structures among NYAs across countries. The session also highlighted the importance of consistency and patience in establishing such networks, drawing from the experiences with EYNA and YASAS.

Anna-Maria Grammate, representing GYA elaborated that GYA in capacity of an independent young academy, is well-positioned to facilitate relationships between NYAs in the region and share top-notch scientific practices. ISC's representative Ms. Gabriela Ivan elaborated on ISC's convening role, its strategic objectives and initiatives like the Global Knowledge Dialogue aimed at connecting young and senior academies across globe. Thereafter the panelists discussed the challenge of limited funding for international collaborative meetings and programmes. The solution put forth to 'maximize impact while minimizing resources' was presented by organizing online events and virtual networking opportunities. Magnanimous



successful past events such as Sci-Art and SARANSH Three-Minute Thesis competition were cited as instances of impactful resource-efficient collaborative efforts.

Towards the conclusion, Prof. Nishant Chakravorty, Chair of INYAS, summarized the session's future plan of action, focusing on both short-term and long-term agendas shared by the panellists for global scientific upliftment. He proposed that Asian NYAs initiate consistent and systematic joint activities and increase the frequency of online meetings, and move toward in-person annual meetings with tangible outcomes. To start the engine, joint efforts could include research collaborations, capacity-building workshops, technical symposiums, international programmes and dialogue exchange forums for young scientists. Overall, the session flagged the pressing need for an Asian National Young Academy network to create a unified platform for interaction. Such a diverse network will ensure that Asian NYAs to collectively address regional challenges and pursue shared objectives. Together with INYAS, the proposed platform aims to amplify the voices of young scientists and foster a scientific temperament across Asia, marking a significant milestone towards escalated scientific diplomacy, policy formulation and collaboration across the globe.