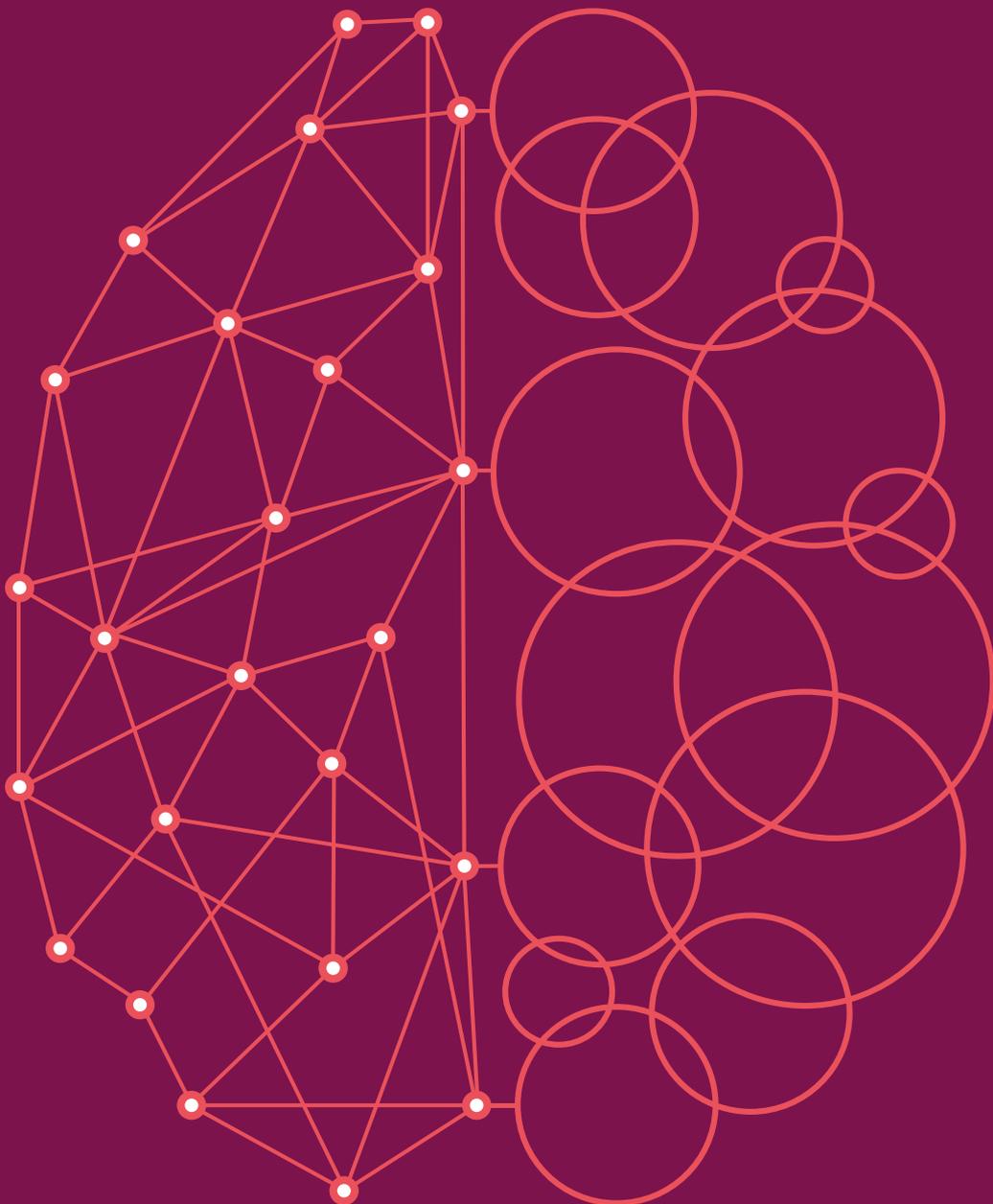


# Annual Report 2024

Swiss Young Academy



# Objectives and priorities in 2024

The first key goal of the Swiss Young Academy for 2024 was to complete the organisational evaluation, that was conducted by INTERFACE and which has been ongoing since 2022, and to incorporate the resulting changes into the legal basis, means of communication and practice. In addition to revising the organisational regulations and means of communication, a plan was therefore communicated to the Board of Directors of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences to implement the new changes over the period from summer 2025 to summer 2026.

The second main goal of the year was the planning of the European National Young Academies Meeting (ENYA) 2025, which will take place in Bern on 5 & 6 June 2025 and will be organised and hosted by the Swiss Young Academy. The ENYA Meeting is an annual meeting of all Young Academies in Europe, organised every year by a different Young Academy. For this purpose, an organising committee consisting of SYA members was set up, which worked in close consultation with the SYA Executive Board and the Administrative Office (project manager: Administrative Office collaborator Kai Pitre Salgado).

Joint meeting with the Young Academy of Sweden, April 2024



SYNESPOD workshop, April 2024



Visit Federal Palace, January 2024



Visit Federal Palace, June 2024

# Composition

## Selection Procedure for new members

In 2024, the new members of the SYA were selected by an Election Commission set up by the SYA Members' Assembly and consisting of SYA members. A shortlist of the five most favored candidates was submitted to the Members' Assembly for an electronic resolution.

## New members

Newly elected as members of the SYA for the period 2024-2029 were:

- **Raffaella Kunz**, Postdoctoral Researcher, Faculty of Law, University of Zurich
- **Clément Meier**, Postdoctoral Researcher, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Lausanne
- **Julio Paulos**, Associate Programme Director, Future Cities Lab, ETH Zurich
- **Mohammad Peydayesh**, Senior Assistant and Lecturer, Laboratory of Food and Soft Materials, ETH Zurich
- **Eda Elif Tibet**, Advanced Post-doctoral Researcher, Wyss Academy for Nature, University of Bern

## Advisory Council

The SYA Advisory Council was abolished in the course of the evaluation of the SYA and its members were dismissed in late summer 2024.

## Administrative Office

During the first half of the year, the SYA Administrative Office consisted of Karin Spycher, Delia Marcon and Josua Kuonen. Due to Karin Spycher's maternity leave, Kai Pitre Salgado joined the team in the second half of the year.



Head of the Swiss Young Academy  
**Karin Spycher**



Scientific collaborator  
**Delia Marcon**



Scientific Collaborator  
**Josua Kuonen**



Project Manager  
**Kai Pitre Salgado**

## Members' Assembly

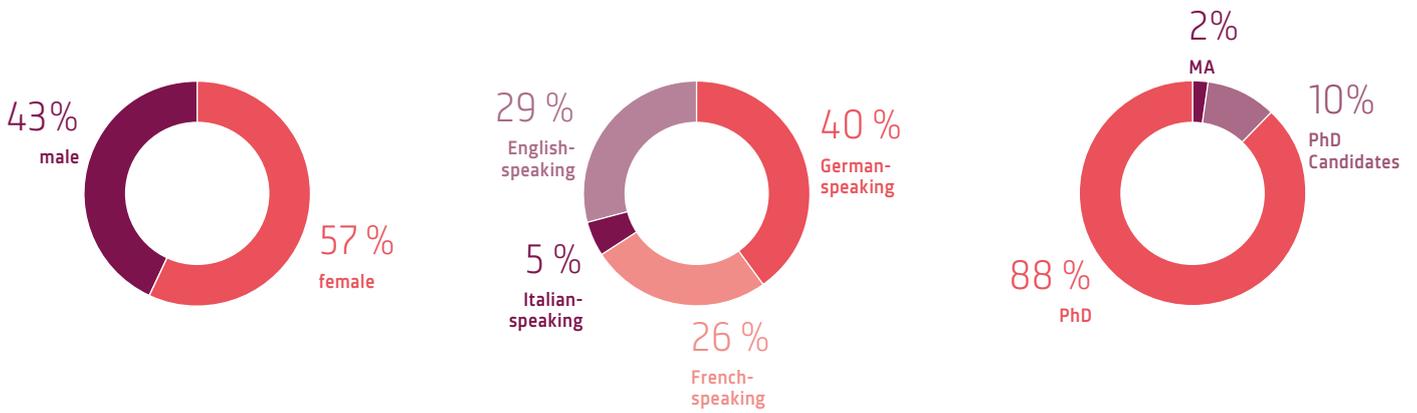
The composition of the members of the SYA was as follows (on 31 December 2024):

**42**  
Active members

**2**  
Alumni

**23**  
different universities /  
research institutions

**35**  
different scientific  
disciplines



# Joint Projects

## Overview

2

Newly approved  
joint projects

1

Non-approved  
joint projects

1

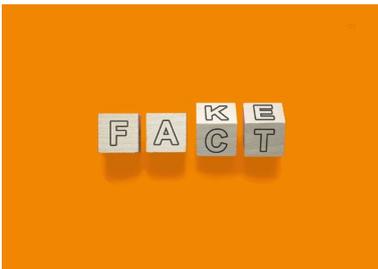
Finalised  
joint projects

6

Prolonged  
joint projects

## Project results and activities

→ [View all projects](#)



→ [Covid-19 Fake News](#)

Publication of the final Project Handout → “[Countering online misinformation and conspiracy theories - Recommendations from scholars and practitioners in the DACH region \(Germany, Austria, Switzerland\)](#)” published in three languages (in print / web).



→ [Navigating the Media as Early Career Academics](#)

Preparation of a two-day media training retreat for early career academics on 24-25 January 2025 in Bern, which provides tailored media training and an overall focus on systemic issues linked to media appearances.



→ [The “Spark” Podcast](#)

Development and production of three pilot episodes of the podcast ‘Spark. Stories from Advocates for Global Change’ together with the production company Podcastschmiede, on which the Management Board of the Academies provided feedback.



→ [Swiss Young Network for Science Policy and Diplomacy \(SYNESPOD\)](#)

- Implementation of a science for policy and diplomacy workshop on 3 May 2024, complemented with the perspective on the Swiss political system and communication for scientists (in English) with → [Reatch](#) and → [Geneva Science Policy Interface GSPI](#) (see workshop report → [here](#)).
- Implementation of a workshop at → [the Geneva Science Diplomacy Week \(GESDA\) Week](#) on 14 June, an international forum for science diplomacy, in partnership with → [foraus](#).

- Development of report on educational offers in science for policy and diplomacy in Switzerland and beyond, which gives a brief overview of educational offers in science for policy and diplomacy in Switzerland and beyond in collaboration with Reatch and GSPI.
- Complementary Activities: contribution of the projects speakers to the → [World Biodiversity Forum](#) in Davos and webinars with → [MSCA Network](#) and → [SAPEA](#) and implementation of international meetings with partners → [Global Young Academy GYA](#), → [Young Academy Finland](#), Young Academies Science Advice Structure (→ [YASAS](#)) etc.



#### → Science vs Activism? Exploring the Boundary

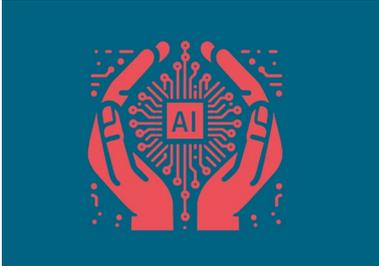
- Implementation of two one-day workshops for interested early career academics (March & September) at the House of Academies, which featured two talks from guests on „The public engagement of academics: From academic freedom to professional ethics“ and „Scholars or Activists – Roles and Responsibilities of Philosophers“. The project group invited representatives of the SCNAT REDIRO project to one of the workshops.
- Publication of → [interview results](#) “Science vs. Activism? Exploring the Boundary: Perspectives of Young Researchers in Switzerland”. The aim was to understand how early-career scholars understand activism in the context of science and how the relationship between science and activism is negotiated in different disciplines.
- Presentation of interview results “Examining the nexus of science, science communication, and activism: Young scientists’ perspectives in Switzerland” at the Annual Meeting of the → [Swiss Association of Communication and Media Research \(SACM\)](#) (April 17–19, 2024) and at the → [European Communication Conference \(ECREA\)](#) (September 24–27, 2024).

- Panel Participation from project member at the Science Cafés (September 2 & 9, 2024) in Bern and Thun, organised by Science et Cité: “What does activism bring – and when does it become counterproductive?” and at panel “How political can science be?” (December 3, 2024) at the University of Bern with panelists Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter, Rector, University of Bern and Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer, Vice-Rector for Quality and Sustainable Development, University of Bern.



#### → Innovative Policies for Fostering Academic Careers in Switzerland

- Implementation of a workshop on 21 February, in order to network relevant stakeholders at universities and to promote the exchange of existing innovative approaches to improving the career and working conditions of early career academics. Compiling a collection of innovative policies for academic employment and career development, which is available on the SYA website (see → [here](#)).
- Participation of project member at the cross-institutional co-creation workshop of the SNSF to discuss and develop future scenarios for the promotion of early-career researchers (ECRs) in Switzerland on 23 September.
- Participation of project member at the Séance de Réflexion of the SNSF Research Council on 5 & 6 November 2024 on the topic ‘Responsible Research Assessment for Research Careers’.



### → AI in Science and Society

- Organisation of regular meetings within the project group to discuss and reflect on the topic “Impact of AI on Young Scientists: Challenges, Opportunity, and Responsibility.”
- Workshop “Role and Responsibility of AI Scientists and Communicators in Engaging with the Public” (10 September 2024) at the → [annual Science Communication Conference ScienceComm24](#) in Neuchâtel, organised by Science et Cité.
- Workshop on the topic “AI or real? Reflecting on (generative) AI expertise and applying it professionally” (10 September 2024) at the annual Swiss Science Communication conference ScienceComm24 in Neuchâtel.
- Input presentation and panel discussion participation by project member on the topic ‘Disinformation in times of generative AI: identification, dissemination and combating’ as part of Escher Talk at Zurich Central Library (23 October 2024) and participation of member in the panel discussion on ‘Teaching, Research and AI: The Future of Knowledge and Societal Impact’ at the → [Association of Senior Researchers and Teachers at the University of Zurich](#) (29 October 2024) and participation of project member as a panelist at the panel ‘AI & Elections: What chatbots, social media and deep fakes mean for our democracy’ at the Berlin Science Week (2 November 2024).



### → Unveiling the leaky Pipeline in STEM

- Preparation of the extensive survey (with an Advisory Board), aiming to better understand the reasons behind the leaky pipeline in Switzerland’ STEM fields by surveying the researchers who left academia.



### → Innovative teaching formats at the science-society interface

- Implementation of a workshop on innovative teaching formats at the House of Academies (12 June 2024) with lecturers of higher education institutions in Switzerland who already use or are interested in using innovative teaching formats for science-society dialogue.
- Implementation of the workshop “Innovating teaching at the science-society interface – opportunities, barriers, and ways forward” (23 October 2024) for young lecturers in Swiss higher education institutions at the event “Transforming our university teaching towards sustainability”, which was organized together by WWF Switzerland, Wissenschaft schafft Zukünfte, Sustainable Development Solutions Network SDSN.
- Preparation of report mapping of existing innovative courses at the science-society interface in Swiss higher education institutions, which led to the development of a typology of such formats.

# Activities

## Activities within the Academies

- **a+:**
  - Contribution to statement of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences on the situation of young academics: The SYA project group ‘Innovative Policies’ was invited by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences in December to contribute to a statement on the career development and working situation of young academics in Switzerland.
  - Participation of speaker Sabrina H. Kessler at the a+ Séance de Réflexion in Solothurn.
  - Speaker Sabrina H. Kessler acted as Jury member of the Prix Média.
- **SAMW:** Participation of SYA member Lauren Clack in the National Coordination Platform Clinical Research (CPCR).
- **SCNAT:** REDIRO Project representatives were invited to a workshop organised by Science vs. Activism project.
- **Science et Cité:** ScienceComm24 in Neuchâtel – Workshop “Role and Responsibility of AI Scientists and Communicators in Engaging with the Public” and workshop “AI or real? Reflecting on (generative) AI expertise and applying it professionally” by the Swiss Young Academy project group “AI in Science and Society”. Panel Participation from project member “Science vs Activism” at the Science Cafés (September 2 & 9, 2024) in Bern and Thun, organised by Science et Cité.

## Other activities

- **Mentoring programme:** The mentoring programme of the Swiss Young Academy enables the advancement of its members in their academic, professional and personal development by providing advice and support on career-relevant topics, as part of one-to-one mentoring and through networking opportunities. Every spring and autumn, members can sign up for the one-to-one mentoring programme.
- **Personal projects:** Personal projects support the scientific development of the SYA members. Members can submit personal projects - with a budget of 1000 CHF per year - at any time during the year.
- **Annual SYA Retreat:** Every year, the Administrative Office and the Executive Board organise a retreat for SYA members to develop new projects and further develop existing ones. In addition, central topics of interest in academia are discussed. At the Retreat on 22 June, Prof. Adrian Ritz from the University of Bern, gave a presentation on the topic of academic leadership.
- **Guided tour of the Federal Palace «Bundeshaus»:** On 26 January and 13 June, the Administrative Office invited SYA members to visit the Federal Palace in Bern and attend the parliamentary session as spectators.
- **Meeting with Swedish Young Academy:** Together with the SYA project group SYNESPOD, the Administrative Office organised an exchange meeting with the members of the Swedish Young Academy in Geneva, as they had visited Switzerland in April (see report [→ here](#)).
- **Participation in the ENYA Meeting 2024 / YASAS General Assembly in Berlin (21-23 May):** A delegation consisting of two members and one collaborator of the SYA Administrative Office participated in the European National Young Academies Meeting (ENYA) 2024 in Berlin. In addition, the SYA delegate participated in the Young Academies Science Advice Structure (YASAS) General Assembly, which took place at the same time also in Berlin.

## Swiss Young Academy

The Swiss Young Academy is a network for early career academics and provides an inspiring environment for inter- and transdisciplinary exchange and innovative ideas. The Swiss Young Academy belongs to the network of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences.

## Contact

Swiss Young Academy  
House of Academies • Laupenstrasse 7 • P.O. Box • 3001 Bern  
+41 (0)31 306 92 45 • [info@swissyoungacademy.ch](mailto:info@swissyoungacademy.ch)

 [swissyoungacademy.ch](http://swissyoungacademy.ch)

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