



FACT SHEET

SWISS YOUNG ACADEMY

Supporting young academics is a top priority of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences (a+). It is in the Academies' interests to take young academics' concerns and contributions seriously and to integrate this younger generation into the Academies' activities.

Objectives

The Swiss Young Academy pursues its objectives of enhancing young scholars' skills¹ and expanding their academic networks with the following measures:

- Providing a **networking platform** focused on current issues, science policy, and dialogue;
- Encouraging **inter- und transdisciplinary collaboration** between young researchers, particularly on topics related to the Academies' main areas of focus;²
- Providing **mentoring and development programmes for young academics**³ that, among other benefits, strengthen participants' national and international networks and complement existing development initiatives;
- Promoting **equal opportunities** and creating an **awareness** for issues related to society, academia, and dialogue.⁴

Organisation

The Swiss Young Academy:

- Is a platform of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences;
- Has its administrative office in the House of Academies in Bern;
- Has the freedom to develop its own programmes within the thematic areas of focus set in the Academies' multi-annual programme (MJP) and performance agreement;
- Is free to shape its own organisational structures, while remaining subject to the overriding authority of the board of directors of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences;
- Is subject to the oversight of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences.

Governing Bodies and Elections

Members

- As a general rule, the number of members is limited to 25; each member is elected for five years.
- Members have the status of a member of the Swiss Young Academy of a+.

Members are elected annually. The election commission appointed by the Swiss Young Academy and the a+ board of directors alternate years in which they are responsible for electing members. Members of the Swiss Young Academy are entitled to nominate potential members. In addition, applications are accepted.

¹ These skills include those related to carrying out academic work and developing an awareness of inter- and transdisciplinarity and a deeper understanding of issues related to society, science, and dialogue.

² MJP 2017-2020: personalised medicine; the ageing population; energy, the environment, and resources; digitalisation; dialogue with youth; and participatory technology assessment. MJP 2021-2024: digital literacy and technology; transformations in health; and sustainable development. More information can be found at <http://www.akademien-schweiz.ch/index/Portrait/Auftrag.html> (version from 16 July 2019, in German).

³ Development programmes for young academics may include workshops, language courses, small-group training sessions, etc. Over 100,000 experts from the advisory board and the Academies could potentially participate in the mentoring programme.

⁴ See the Federal Council's 2014 report entitled *Massnahmen zur Förderung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses in der Schweiz*.



Advisory Council

- The advisory council is a supportive body with eight to fourteen individuals from various disciplines and institutions.
- The Academies and centres of excellence are each entitled to one representative in the advisory council.
- Members of the advisory council and the president are each elected for four years.
- The president is elected by the members of the advisory council.
- The president and other advisory council members may be re-elected once.
- The council meets one to three times each year and exchanges information with the Academies.

Executive Board of the Swiss Young Academy

- The executive board has a speaker and four members, each with a one-year term of office.
- The executive board is elected by the Swiss Young Academy's general meeting.
- The executive board has guest status in the Academies' board of directors and delegates assembly.
- The speaker heads the board and serves as its internal and external representative.

Administrative Office

- The administrative office is part of the head office of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences.
- An academic staff member is responsible for managing the administrative office and is supported by an assistant.
- The administrative office receives support from the centralised services of the head office of a+.

Members' Duties

The Swiss Young Academy carries out the following duties:

- Initiates and carries out **inter- and transdisciplinary projects**⁵ with the support of the Academies;
- Initiates **projects at the intersection of academic research and society** that are relevant for the younger generation;
- Initiates **forward-thinking projects** that foster creativity and innovation;
- **Promotes academic discourse** as well as inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration;
- **Takes positions on developments** in science policy, with a particular focus on young researchers' professional and social situations, and on the development of an enduring academic culture.

Project Types and Guidelines

Joint Projects (generally up to CHF 30,000 per project)

- Project topics may be chosen freely within the thematic areas of focus set by the Academies.
- Projects are carried out by groups of two to six people.
- Project results are communicated in the form of workshops, conferences, events, or publications.

Personal Projects (max. CHF 1,000 per person per year)

- Personal projects support an individual member's development, either in furthering his or her personal academic pursuits or in addressing one of the Academies' main areas of focus.
- Project results are recorded in a short report.

⁵The following is a selection of possible projects: academic reports advising on policy; fact sheets; workshops and networking events related to transdisciplinarity; internal or public events; or collaboration opportunities such as those provided in the Netherlands and Sweden that foster a dialogue between academia and politics. The results of such projects could thus also take the form of exchanges of experience and knowledge.