

YOUNG ACADEMIES AND THEIR ROLES IN THE SCIENCE DIPLOMACY ECOSYSTEM

Assoc. Prof. Mürsel DOĞRUL
Turkish Young Academy

Abstract

This chapter explores the evolving role of young academies in global science diplomacy, focusing on the development and prominence of the Turkish Young Academy. Affiliated with the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) and rooted in TÜBA's GEBIP programme, the Turkish Young Academy exemplifies how institutional support and structured mentorship can empower early-career researchers. By comparing it with other institutions, such as the Global Young Academy (GYA), Die Junge Akademie (Germany), De Jonge Akademie (the Netherlands), Junge Kurie (Austria) and the Young Academy of Japan, the chapter reveals common features in terms of governance, membership, funding and international engagement. It is known that young academies are assuming an increasingly pivotal role in science diplomacy thanks to their international partnerships and memberships. They serve as bridges between generations, providing platforms for innovation, collaboration, and global dialogue. Their contributions extend beyond science into public trust, policy influence and international cooperation. The Turkish Young Academy is well placed to strengthen regional and global connections, demonstrating how the next generation of scholars can influence and maintain science diplomacy in an era that requires an inclusive, adaptable and forward-thinking approach to science.

Keywords

Turkish Young Academy, Science Diplomacy, Young Academies, International Collaboration, Academic Mentorship

Introduction

In the contemporary era, characterised by heightened interconnectedness and complexity, the relationship between science and diplomacy is undergoing a significant transformation, manifesting in novel and substantial ways (Turekian, 2018; Adler-Nissen & Eggeling, 2022; Porsdam & Porsdam Mann, 2023). The prevailing understanding of science diplomacy has traditionally been conceptualised through three distinct lenses: science in diplomacy, diplomacy for science, and science for diplomacy. These categories were delineated in a 2010 report by the Royal Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (The Royal Society, 2025). The role of science in informing foreign policy is described in the first instance, with the utilisation of diplomatic efforts to advance scientific research and the fostering of international relationships through scientific collaboration being described in the second and third instances, respectively.

Nevertheless, the global environment has undergone significant changes (Van Langenhove & Piaget, 2024). The contemporary geopolitical landscape is characterised by unprecedented levels of fragmentation, multipolarity, and dynamism (Turekian & Gluckman, 2024; Turekian, 2024). This has prompted scholars and practitioners to rethink the traditional approaches used to interpret and analyse international relations. A more streamlined, two-dimensional model has emerged. This model describes the reciprocal influence between science and diplomacy, with science influencing diplomacy and diplomacy influencing science. These approaches present science diplomacy as a tool for advancing diplomatic goals across sectors. For example, when scientists collaborate across borders to address global challenges such as climate change, or advise on treaty negotiations, they demonstrate the potential of science to influence diplomacy. Conversely, diplomatic decisions, including visa policies, international funding and sanctions, can substantially impact scientists' ability to engage in collaborative research.

This shift has prompted scholars to propose a new model, Science Diplomacy 2.0, which is more inclusive, networked and participatory. Unlike earlier paradigms, which were dominated by elite institutions, this model recognises the contributions of a variety of stakeholders, including young scientists, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and regional bodies. The aim is to integrate science more fully into foreign policy and global governance (Tyler et al., 2024).

A recent development in the discourse concerns the integration of diplomacy into scientific research (Flink, 2022; Saric et al., 2025). This involves the use of diplomatic skills within the scientific community itself, including managing tensions, establishing consensus and navigating cultural differences. Science diplomacy is no longer the exclusive domain of a select few elite actors. The contemporary landscape comprises a multifaceted ecosystem of governments, international bodies, academic institutions and industry players operating at the intersection of science and global affairs. This framework emphasizes the mutual influence between science and diplomacy.

In the context of the expanding field of science diplomacy, national science academies have traditionally held a pivotal role (Maphosa, 2019). These institutions, comprising leading scholars, function as authoritative voices in scientific discourse and as vital

connectors across international boundaries (Colglazier, 2018). It is frequently the case that they operate through "Track Two" diplomacy (Kaye, 2007), that is to say, informal exchanges between academics and non-state experts. In this manner, they facilitate the establishment of trust between nations, especially in sensitive or complex areas of policy.

In recent years, however, a powerful new wave has emerged: the rise of young academies Inter Academy Partnership (IAP), 2022; International Science Council (ISC), 2023; 2024; All European Academies (ALLEA), 2023). These organisations comprise exceptional early- and mid-career researchers, typically under the age of 40 or 45. While there is considerable overlap in terms of objectives between young academies and traditional academies, the former are distinguished by a novel perspective, a heightened sense of urgency and innovative approaches to international collaboration (Bálint et al., 2021).

The inaugural establishment of a young academy was in Germany in 2000, and since that time, the movement has grown exponentially (ALLEA, 2021). By the mid-2020s, more than 50 national young academies had been established across the globe, frequently operating in conjunction with their senior counterparts. These groups are also linked through central bodies that foster international cooperation and amplify their collective voice: the GYA, the International Science Council (ISC), All European Academies (ALLEA) and the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP).

The underlying objective of young academies is to empower emerging scientific leaders, encourage interdisciplinary work, and strengthen the connection between science and society (ALLEA, 2019; GYA, 2019). These priorities render them natural and influential actors in the realm of science diplomacy. The efforts of these actors are increasingly recognised by international institutions. The GYA, for instance, has been lauded as a formidable proponent for enhancing research capacity and advocating for equity in global scientific collaborations, notably by ensuring that underrepresented regions, such as the Global South, are included in the formulation of international science policy.

In Europe, this shift is also acquiring strategic significance. The European Commission's (2024) recent science diplomacy agenda emphasises the centrality of scientific cooperation and competition in global affairs. The report emphasises the significance of engaging talented young researchers as a component of a comprehensive strategy to augment soft power, fortify alliances, and influence the future of global partnerships.

This chapter explores the growing role of young academies in science diplomacy, focusing on the case of the Turkish Young Academy (n.d.). The study traces the academy's evolution from the 2001 TÜBA Outstanding Young Scientists Awards (GEBIP, 2025a) award programme to its formal establishment in 2019, and compares its structure and mission with similar institutions such as the GYA, Germany's Die Junge Akademie, the Netherlands' De Jonge Akademie, Austria's Junge Kurie and the Young Academy of Japan. The analysis under scrutiny highlights common trends in governance, funding, and integration with senior academies. The core of the argument is that mentorship and affiliation can engender collaboration as opposed to competition, thereby reinforcing institutionalism and science diplomacy.

The chapter also examines how young academies contribute to international science diplomacy through networks, partnerships, and global initiatives. This argument is supported by recent policy reports, as well as national and international initiatives of the Turkish Young Academy, and draws on current literature. This chapter contends that young academies function as dynamic platforms that facilitate connections between emerging scientists and global diplomacy initiatives, thereby contributing to the shaping of more inclusive and responsive science-policy landscapes.

Turkish Young Academy

Türkiye's endeavour to launch a national academy for young scientists began with a pioneering programme designed to support the country's most promising young researchers. In 2001, TÜBA established the GEBIP. The programme primarily operates by acknowledging and providing financial support to researchers under the age of 40 who demonstrate exceptional ability in their field (GEBIP, 2025a). However, its objectives were not limited to financial support and research assistance. The GEBIP initiative was conceived with the express aim of cultivating the next generation of academic and scientific leaders. It provides a structured environment in which early-career researchers can develop both intellectually and professionally.

A distinguishing feature of the programme is its emphasis on mentorship. Each year, a select number of awardees (GEBIP, 2025b) were granted research funding and paired with senior TÜBA members. These mentor-mentee relationships were facilitated through organised meetings that encouraged meaningful dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the development of a shared academic culture. The programme aimed to foster intergenerational collaboration.

In practice, GEBIP functioned as an entity that transcended the scope of an awards scheme. This program operated as an informal young academy, providing a platform for early-career scholars to interact with the broader scientific community and cultivate leadership skills within an esteemed and collegial framework. Notably, the GEBIP model exhibited a striking similarity to the young academies that began to emerge across Europe during the early 2000s. Subsequent evaluations revealed that GEBIP demonstrated no significant deficiencies compared to its European counterparts. Conversely, the Turkish model was found to have certain advantages in terms of its structural design and support systems. These findings emphasised the pivotal role of GEBIP in establishing the institutional foundations for Türkiye's young academy of sciences.

By the close of the 2010s, TÜBA had taken definitive measures to formalise its longstanding support for early-career researchers. On 30 November 2019, the TÜBA Academy Council officially established the Turkish Young Academy of Sciences, known domestically as the Turkish Young Academy. This milestone formalised TÜBA's commitment to early-career scientists. TÜBA's Academy Council accepted the official Charter of the Turkish Young Academy in October 2022. The Charter delineated the mission, governance principles, and operational rules of the recently established

academy, thereby ensuring clarity and consistency in its future activities. Shortly thereafter, the Turkish Young Academy formally initiated its operations, with the commencement being publicly declared during the annual GEBIP Evaluation Meeting in late 2022 (TÜBA, 2022a). Speaking at this meeting, TÜBA President Prof. Dr. Muzaffer Şeker emphasized that the academic advancement of young researchers is often hindered by their delayed integration into the scientific community. This limits their productivity and impact. Within traditional academic structures, early-career scientists often lack the opportunity to influence policy decisions or lead innovative projects. While senior scholars are often revered for their experience and wisdom, this should not prevent the embrace of the fresh perspectives and dynamic energy that younger academics offer. The TÜBA-GEBİP Program has been addressing this issue for over two decades. Since 2019, this commitment has been reinforced by the establishment of a more modern institutional body: the Turkish Young Academy (Official Gazette, 2025).

Any forward-thinking academic institution has a responsibility to support the creation of a platform specifically for junior researchers. The Turkish Young Academy was presented as a response to this gap, intended to 'compensate for at least one deficiency' in the academic system. The academy represents a step towards a more inclusive and dynamic research environment, one that gives young scientists a meaningful voice and enables them to contribute more actively to the future of science and scholarship in Türkiye (TÜBA, 2024b).

The fundamental philosophy of the Young Academy is to establish a more age-friendly research environment in Türkiye, to empower young scientists and provide them with a significant role in shaping the country's scientific future (TÜBA, 2022b). According to the preamble of the founding charter of the Turkish Young Academy, the institution is an integral part of Türkiye's research system, aiming to connect different generations and support outstanding researchers in achieving success. It provides a secure and esteemed environment and taxonomy (Gluckman et al., 2017) in which early-career scholars can engage in intergenerational discourse, exchange ideas, and contribute to the development of science and scholarship.

The Turkish Young Academy has thus emerged through a combination of accumulated experience and an urgent necessity. On the one hand, the GEBIP programme had already established the foundations by supporting and connecting talented young researchers for over two decades. However, a growing awareness emerged that young academics needed formal integration into the nation's scientific governance structures. The Young Academy denotes the subsequent phase in this progression, metamorphosing a recognition programme into an institutional platform. As highlighted in a Nature Careers article, there are six compelling reasons to establish a Young Academy. These are outreach, open science, science policy, networking, mentoring and advocacy, and equality, diversity and inclusion (Balint et al., 2021). All of these are reflected in the vision and purpose of the Turkish Young Academy. As of the close of 2022, the Young Academy had become operational, with the potential to contribute to the advancement of science in Türkiye and

to engage in international academic platforms and umbrella organisations. The ensuing sections will explore the organisational structure of the Turkish Young Academy and its global comparisons.

Structure, Membership, and Operations of Turkish Young Academy

The Turkish Young Academy was established as a national young academy within the framework of the TÜBA following a formal amendment to Presidential Decree No. 4 in 2021 (Official Gazette, 2021). Operating under the institutional umbrella of TÜBA, the Young Academy enjoys a degree of self-governance, guided by its charter and overseen by TÜBA's Council.

The internal structure of the organisation is built around two core bodies: the General Assembly and the Governing Board. The General Assembly, comprising all active members, functions as the primary decision-making authority. The body convenes a minimum of once per annum, customarily during the TÜBA-GEBIP Evaluation Meeting (TÜBA, 2024a). In addition, it may meet more frequently when the necessity arises. Decisions are made by majority vote, with a minimum participation threshold to ensure quorum.

The Turkish Young Academy's Governing Board comprises elected members representing the core fields of the natural, health and social sciences. The Board is responsible for guiding the Academy's scientific activities and reports to the General Assembly. The Assembly comprises the President of the Turkish Young Academy and the President of TÜBA, who may lead the meetings or appoint someone to do so on their behalf. Each board member serves a single non-renewable three-year term. This thoughtful governance model combines the expertise of senior leaders with the enthusiasm and viewpoint of early-career researchers, ensuring continuity and a powerful voice for the next generation of scientists (Susi et al., 2019).

Candidacy for membership of the Turkish Young Academy is extended to those scientists who have demonstrated exceptional promise in their early careers, with a maximum age of 45 years and possession of a doctoral degree. Priority is given to recipients of the TÜBA-GEBIP Award, as well as the TÜBİTAK Incentive Award and TÜSEB Aziz Sancar Award. Candidates must be nominated by a full member of TÜBA and supported by a minimum of two others, with final approval granted by TÜBA's Academy Council. Following selection, members are affiliated with one of three disciplinary clusters and serve for a term of five years. Their membership is terminated either upon reaching the age of 45 or if they are elected to TÜBA as associate or full members. This approach is intended to guarantee a consistent replenishment of the academy's membership and to preserve its emphasis on scholars during the initial stages of their careers. To ensure continued relevance and impact, the Young Academy's member selection criteria may be revised in response to national or global needs.

A distinguishing characteristic of the Turkish Young Academy is its dedication to mentorship, a tradition that originates from the GEBIP programme. Each young member is paired with a senior TÜBA academic, thus facilitating the exchange of knowledge and

experience between generations. This mentorship prepares scholars for leadership roles and integration into TÜBA's academic life. The Young Academy is conceptualised as a preparatory space in which members can familiarise themselves with the responsibilities, values and traditions of academic life, thus providing an essential foundation for future full membership of TÜBA.

The activities of the Turkish Young Academy are financially supported through TÜBA's main publicly funded budget. While GEBIP awardees continue to receive individual research funding through the programme, the Young Academy's budget is allocated towards collective initiatives such as meetings, collaborative projects, publications, and outreach activities. Following a thorough legal review, it was determined that individual members of the Young Academy are not eligible for separate research funding as part of the Academy's budget. Following Presidential Decree No. 4, signed by the President of Türkiye, research support is exclusively designated for full TÜBA members. However, academy members may receive reimbursement for participation in official meetings, provided such costs comply with relevant state finance regulations. This funding approach reflects the Turkish Young Academy's role as a collaborative entity rather than a funding mechanism for individual projects.

The Turkish Young Academy has been established with the objective of facilitating interdisciplinary discourse and promoting scientific contributions that are of benefit to society. The members convene periodically to engage in the exchange of ideas, the planning of collaborative initiatives, and the establishment of thematic working groups with a focus on subjects such as science education, sustainability, and innovation. These activities are designed and led by members themselves, offering flexibility to address current scientific and societal challenges.

Since its establishment, the Turkish Young Academy has placed significant emphasis on the promotion of international representation. It is worth noting that the Turkish Young Academy maintains active participation in meetings of institutions worldwide. Such participation has included the contribution of joint statements, conferences, and research dialogues with the ISC, ALLEA, IAP and others. The Young Academy's contributions to global science diplomacy efforts are facilitated through its broader affiliations with networks such as the World Science Forum (WSF, 2024). In this manner, the Turkish Young Academy serves to enhance Türkiye's scientific presence on the global stage, whilst simultaneously providing a platform for the articulation of ideas by the next generation of scholars.

Leading Young Academies Worldwide

Türkiye's strategy for establishing a national young academy is consistent with many of the fundamental principles observed in other countries, while also incorporating elements that are specific to its national context. In this section, a comparative analysis is conducted between the Turkish Young Academy and four well-established counterparts: the GYA, the Die Junge Akademie in Germany, the De Jonge Akademie in the Netherlands, Austria's Junge Kurie, and the Young Academy of Japan. These academies represent some

of the earliest and most influential examples of the young academy model, and as such, provide valuable points of reference for understanding variations in governance, membership criteria, funding models, and international engagement. Through the analysis of these comparisons, we can more accurately contextualize the Turkish experience within the broader global landscape of young academies and evaluate the impact of local adaptations on their effectiveness and reach.

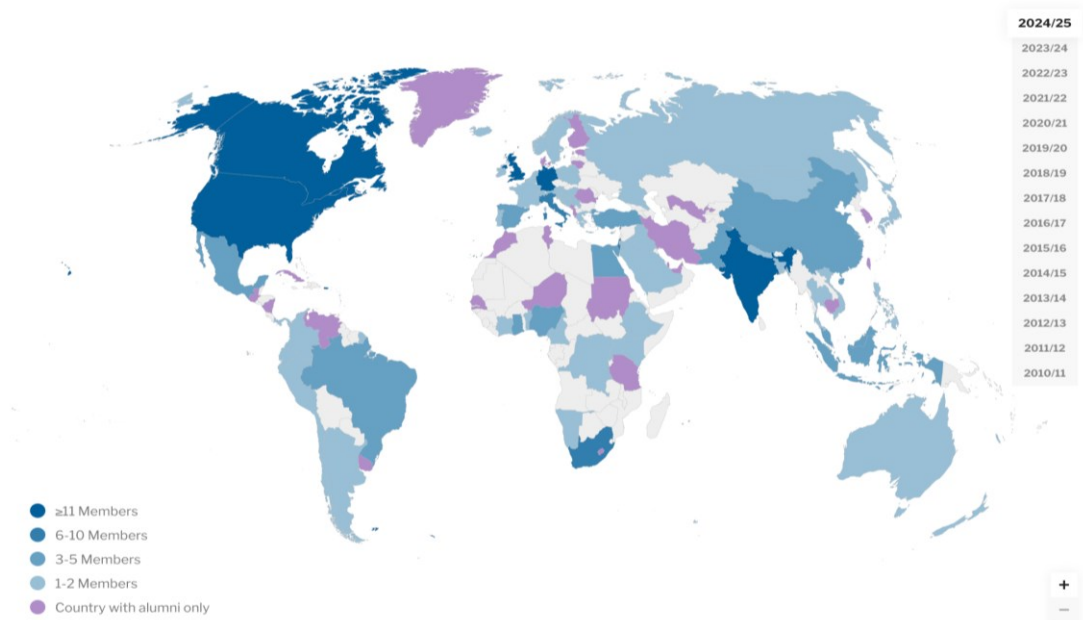
Global Young Academy (GYA-Germany)

The GYA was established in 2010 and represents the only international young academy, which brings together approximately 200 early- to mid-career researchers from over 80 countries (see the map). The objective of its establishment was to provide a platform through which the voices of young scientists could be heard within the global science policy landscape. Members, typically 5-10 years post-PhD and aged 30-40, are selected based on their academic excellence and engagement with society (GYA, 2024a). These individuals serve five-year terms, during which they actively contribute to the GYA's mission, and subsequently become alumni.

The GYA is governed by an elected Executive Committee and supported by a small secretariat based in Germany. Despite not being affiliated with any specific national academy, it engages in close collaboration with international partners, including the InterAcademy Partnership, and receives financial support from science ministries, international organisations, and contributions from academic institutions.

Figure 1

GYA Membership Map (GYA, 2025a)



The GYA (2023), in its capacity as a science diplomacy actor, operates at the nexus of science and policy. The organisation is responsible for the facilitation of annual meetings, the provision of support for interdisciplinary working groups, and the allocation of seed

funding for initiatives pertaining to issues such as open science, sustainable development, and science education. GYA members engage with institutions such as the UN, UNESCO, and the OECD, contributing to policy dialogues and global consultations.

In addition to its advocacy work, the GYA plays a pivotal role in the development of young academy networks on a global scale. It provides support for new national young academies and hosts global summits to foster collaboration. The GYA functions in two principal capacities: firstly, as a forum for the exchange of scientific knowledge on an international level; and secondly, as a training ground for the next generation of science diplomats.

Die Junge Akademie (Germany)

The Die Junge Akademie was established in 2000, marking the inception of the world's first young academy. This initiative was a collaborative effort between the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and the Leopoldina. Initially a pilot project, it became a permanent, independent institution in 2011 and has since served as a model for other national young academies.

The Junge Akademie (2025) boasts a modest and exclusive membership of 50 scholars, representing a diverse range of disciplines, including the humanities and arts. Annually, 10 new members are elected for a non-renewable five-year term, thereby ensuring regular turnover and the introduction of fresh perspectives. Typically, members are 3-7 years post-PhD, with strong academic records and a broad intellectual outlook. The academy places significant emphasis on the promotion of disciplinary diversity, intending to achieve a balanced representation of both the sciences and the humanities, as well as between genders.

Die Junge Akademie is a self-governing institution that functions independently while maintaining robust connections with its founding academies. The institution is governed by a General Assembly and a five-member elected board, with the board's spokesperson holding observer status on the senior academies' boards. The academy is the recipient of secure public funding via the Leopoldina and is administratively supported by the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW).

The core principle of the Junge Akademie is the facilitation of interdisciplinary collaboration and public engagement. Members initiate innovative projects that span the disciplines of science, society and the arts, including citizen science, exhibitions and science policy debates. These efforts position the academy as both a creative think tank and a reform-oriented voice in German academic discourse.

Despite its status as a national institution, Die Junge Akademie has cultivated international collaborations with the GYA and other national academies, thereby establishing a global reach (GYA, 2024b). As the inaugural institution of its kind, its unique structure and values have exerted a significant influence on the design of young academies worldwide, resulting in a quiet but enduring diplomatic impact.

De Jonge Akademie (Netherlands)

The De Jonge Akademie was established in 2005 by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) to provide a forum for 50 early-career researchers to convene for five-year terms. Annually, a cohort of ten new members is selected based on their academic excellence and demonstrated interest in science policy, communication, and societal engagement. De Jonge Akademie is committed to promoting disciplinary and demographic diversity, extending a warm welcome to scholars from a wide range of scientific, humanities and artistic disciplines (De Jonge Akademie, 2025).

The De Jonge Akademie functions as an autonomous forum within the KNAW, maintaining a balance between independence and integration. Its members participate in a variety of activities, including serving on Academy committees, contributing to evaluations, and engaging in strategic discussions. This structure ensures that the voices of younger academics have a role to play in the formulation of science policy, while benefiting from the mentorship and visibility within the senior academy that they are entitled to.

The academy has gained renown for its active engagement in both national and international arenas. Members lead interdisciplinary projects, organise public events, and advocate on topics such as open science, research funding, and academic culture. In addition to these domestic initiatives, De Jonge Akademie has demonstrated a commitment to international collaboration through its involvement with the GYA and the Young Academy of Europe (YAE, 2024). Notably, De Jonge Akademie has provided advisory services to the Dutch government on the subject of science diplomacy, underscoring its role in promoting international cooperation in the field of science. The present paper sets out to demonstrate how the De Jonge Akademie, in its embedded role within KNAW and strong policy impact, serves as a leading example of how young academies can bridge the gaps between science, society and global engagement.

Junge Kuri (Austria)

The Junge Kurie, founded in 2007, is the young academy of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW). In contrast to numerous other institutions, it does not constitute a distinct entity; rather, it is a formal third division within the Academy, alongside the humanities and natural sciences. This structure ensures that young scholars become active participants in the Academy's governance and activities from the outset (Junge Kuri, 2025).

The Junge Kurie, which is comprised of up to 70 members at any given time, is a distinguished group that selects individuals based on their exceptional accomplishments in the early stages of their careers. These accomplishments may include the attainment of significant grants or fellowships. Members serve eight-year terms, which extend beyond the duration typically observed in other young academies, thereby facilitating profound involvement and ensuring continuity. New members are selected by their peers and subsequently endorsed by the ÖAW's General Assembly, thus combining autonomy with senior oversight.

The governance of the ÖAW is overseen by an elected board, with members enjoying extensive participation rights within the ÖAW, including the right to vote and the ability to serve on committees. The Junge Kurie is responsible for the provision of administrative and financial support, which is allocated from the Academy's primary budget, thus ensuring institutional backing.

The mission of the organisation is threefold: firstly, to strengthen research careers in Austria; secondly, to promote interdisciplinary work; and thirdly, to support equity in science. The programme of activities includes thematic workshops, collaborative meetings, and outreach programmes such as a national "Roadshow" to connect with early-career researchers across the country. A significant number of members are leaders in research groups and engage in international collaborations, thereby contributing to Austria's visibility in the global scientific community.

Although less visible than some of its counterparts, the Austrian model performs a discreet yet calculated function in the realm of science diplomacy. Members of the Junge Kurie are invited to join international networks and represent the ÖAW in global forums. In this capacity, they play a key role in shaping Austria's scientific ties on the global stage. As a fully integrated structure, Junge Kurie offers a robust example of how young academies can exert a transformative influence on science from within established institutions.

The Young Academy of Japan (YAJ)

The YAJ was established in 2011 as a permanent committee within the Science Council of Japan (SCJ). The programme convenes exceptional early-career researchers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, typically within the age range of 30 to 45 years, intending to promote the advancement of science and its societal impact. The academy was established to amplify the voices of junior scientists in national dialogues concerning research, education, and policy. YAJ's provision of a collaborative and discursive space has been demonstrated to have a significant impact on its members, enabling them to address emergent issues and encourage innovation across a variety of disciplines (YAJ, 2025).

YAJ is structured around a General Assembly and several working subcommittees, which are coordinated by an Executive Subcommittee. These groups concentrate on pivotal domains such as human resource development, academic career reform, research ethics, and science-society relations. Members are selected through a competitive process and serve for a period of up to six years, or until they reach the age of 45. During their term, a wide range of activities are engaged in, including the organisation of forums and policy discussions, as well as the development of proposals to improve Japan's academic and research landscape. This organisational structure guarantees that the academy maintains a dynamic and responsive character concerning current needs.

The academy also plays an active role internationally. It engages in collaborative endeavours with other young academies and global science networks to facilitate international exchange and the dissemination of best practices. The participation of YAJ

members in global dialogues of science policy, sustainability, and equity in research is facilitated by the aforementioned partnerships. Within the domestic environment, their professional undertakings serve to inform national decision-making processes, thereby fortifying the nexus between scientific research and public life. The Young Academy of Japan serves as a conduit between generations, facilitating the exchange of novel perspectives and the utilisation of institutional support. This institution is a catalyst for the advancement of science and the future of the field.

Global Trends in the Young Academies

The cases discussed above demonstrate common global approaches to governance, mentorship, funding and international engagement. These examples provide a useful benchmark against which to evaluate the structure and influence of the Turkish Young Academy. The following section explores how these trends are mirrored, adapted or implemented in a unique way in the Turkish context, highlighting both alignment and distinct national characteristics.

The establishment of young academies in various countries, including Türkiye, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and Japan, as well as the GYA, has led to a discernible convergence in terms of core models and values. Over the past two decades, the emergence of over 50 national young academies has been observed, indicative of shared trends in structure, purpose, and practice (GYA, 2025a).

Governance Models: Most young academies adopt a General Assembly alongside a smaller executive board or steering committee. While each operates autonomously, many are closely integrated with their parent/senior academies. In some cases, such as in Austria and the Netherlands, they are embedded as internal divisions; in others, such as in Türkiye and Germany, they retain institutional ties while functioning semi-independently. This connection ensures alignment with national science priorities and access to mentorship, while also enabling the younger generation to participate in decision-making processes. Leadership rotation is common, providing many members with opportunities to gain governance experience during their short, non-renewable terms.

Funding Sources: Young academies are usually funded by the public sector or by the academy itself. In the Netherlands and Austria, for instance, their budgets are incorporated into those of senior academies. Germany initially relied on sponsorship and mixed funding, later securing federal support. Although most operate on modest budgets, these funds enable core activities such as meetings, workshops, and outreach programmes. Some academies also secure external sponsorship for specific events. International academies, such as the GYA, receive support from national governments and global partners. An increasing number of governments and scientific institutions recognise young academies as vital platforms for innovation and engagement with early-career researchers.

Membership and Diversity: The majority of young academies impose a maximum entry age of approximately 40 years and restrict service to a period of 4-6 years. The selection process is subject to variation, with some methods being open calls and others reliant upon nominations. A salient positive trend is the involvement of existing members in new selections, ensuring the group evolves intentionally. While academic excellence remains the fundamental prerequisite, qualities such as interdisciplinary interest, societal engagement, and a commitment to diversity are increasingly emphasised. Numerous academies aspire to achieve gender parity and comprise a diverse range of disciplines, institutions and regions.

Alumni Networks: Upon completion of their designated terms, members are transitioned into the alumni category. A significant number of young academies are currently engaged in the development of alumni networks with a view to maintaining connections and leveraging the expertise of their former students. Alumni frequently maintain involvement in academic and policy-making domains, with some attaining membership of senior academies. These networks function as valuable extensions of the academy's influence, thereby ensuring continuity across generations.

Innovative and Interdisciplinary Activities: Young academies often serve as laboratories for new formats and collaborations. They are renowned for their creative public engagement events, science-art collaborations, and interdisciplinary discussions. Free from the formalities of senior academies, they explore unconventional topics and attract a broader audience. These projects foster new research and enhance public understanding of science, often serving as informal tools of science diplomacy.

Relations with Senior Academies: One of the most important dynamics is the relationship between young academies and their senior counterparts. Strong partnerships based on mentorship rather than competition have proven to be the most effective. Many senior academies include young academy leaders on their councils or committees, thereby reinforcing mutual trust. The young academy benefits from guidance and infrastructure, while offering fresh insights and greater diversity. Germany's experience shows that a measured, collaborative path to autonomy is the most sustainable model, rather than abrupt independence. The guidance of the parent academy is important in preserving the tradition of scientific seriousness and originality in science academies.

Young academies around the world are increasingly aligning around a common set of principles that reflect both best practices and shared values. These include selecting members based on merit, limiting terms to ensure renewal, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration, engaging with the public, and maintaining strong ties with senior academies. Together, these elements create vibrant platforms where early-career researchers can thrive. By amplifying their voices, sparking innovation, and promoting dialogue between generations, young academies play a growing role in shaping science diplomacy. At the same time, their work is firmly rooted in the ethical standards and institutional legacy of long-established scientific communities.

Building Bridges, Not Boundaries Between Senior and Young Academies

The relationship between young academies and their senior academies plays a crucial role in shaping the scientific ecosystem (Nature Editorial, 2021). In the vast majority of cases, the establishment of young academies is supported by senior academies. When this relationship is founded upon mentorship, trust, and a shared purpose, there is a mutual benefit to both parties. Senior academies contribute institutional memory, credibility, and access to policy networks, while young academies offer energy, fresh perspectives, and expertise in emerging fields. Collectively, these initiatives serve to enhance the scientific voice, particularly within the domain of science diplomacy, where intergenerational collaboration has been demonstrated to augment both the relevance and the reach of the endeavours undertaken.

The mentorship component of this partnership is of paramount importance. Senior academies are responsible for more than simply the provision of logistical support; they facilitate the development of young scholars in some key areas, including the capacity to contribute to policy, maintain research integrity, and engage in public discourse. Programmes such as TÜBA-GEBIP's mentorship pairing and the Netherlands' joint committee work illustrate how this guidance can be formalised and made effective. Concurrently, the process of learning occurs in both directions. Senior members frequently report that collaboration with junior scholars can offer novel perspectives on subjects such as open science, public engagement, and digital-era communication, domains in which early-career researchers frequently spearhead advancements. Such exchanges align senior academies with current research trends and sustain institutional continuity.

The careful balancing of affiliation and autonomy is imperative. Some young academies are embedded directly within their parent institutions, as exemplified by Austria's model. In contrast, others, including Die Junge Akademie and the GYA, operate with a relative degree of independence whilst maintaining close links. In either scenario, it is imperative to ensure the maintenance of open communication. Young academies should be granted the autonomy to pursue their initiatives and articulate their distinct priorities, even when these may not align with the immediate agenda of the senior academy. However, mechanisms such as shared board membership or observer roles can help to prevent misunderstandings and ensure alignment when required. In Germany, for instance, the spokesperson of Die Junge Akademie participates in meetings of the senior academy boards. This arrangement is conducive to the provision of guidance, feedback, and trust-building. This configuration fosters an environment conducive to innovation, while concurrently ensuring a robust connection to the overarching institutional framework.

Avoiding fragmentation in the science ecosystem is another key concern. The young academy should exercise caution when considering the assertion of total independence, particularly in areas such as science policy or funding. Expediency in this regard may result in the generation of confusion among stakeholders or even precipitate competitive dynamics with the senior academy. However, the majority of countries have circumvented this scenario by adopting a gradual, collaborative model of development. Germany offers a pertinent illustration of this phenomenon. The Junge Akademie

commenced its operations as a collaborative endeavour, subsequently attaining greater autonomy while maintaining connections through governance and budgetary assistance. In the case of Türkiye, a comparable level of caution has been exercised. The President of TÜBA holds the distinction of being an honorary member of the Turkish Young Academy. Furthermore, members of the Turkish Young Academy are known to participate in events organised by TÜBA with considerable regularity. The concept that the two academies constitute a unified, developing ecosystem is reinforced by the presence of shared spaces.

This relationship is also about preparing the next generation. Young academies frequently function as conduits for talent, thereby facilitating the progression of early-career scientists towards senior positions within the scientific community. These institutions serve as crucial platforms that enable scientists at the beginning of their careers to accrue valuable experience, establish networks, and make significant contributions to national science initiatives. This process often occurs before they transition into more senior roles within the scientific ecosystem. Alumni of young academies frequently continue to engage with the community, often in a capacity as mentors, advisors, or future members of the senior academy itself. Their prior experience, particularly in international networks such as the GYA, is of significant value when they transition into national leadership roles. This continuity has been demonstrated to support institutional renewal and facilitate the transfer of innovative ideas generated in younger circles.

Collaboration between young and senior academies strengthens science diplomacy efforts. Multi-generational delegations, where experienced senior figures and dynamic early-career researchers represent a country together, send a clear signal of openness, continuity and inclusivity. Such delegations are more effective at building trust with international partners and communicating the evolving priorities of national science systems. Rather than presenting fragmented or competing perspectives, such collaborations demonstrate a coordinated, forward-thinking approach to global challenges.

The relationship between young and senior academies is most effective when it is based on mutual respect, structured dialogue and a shared commitment to scientific excellence and service. Young academies should not be viewed as rivals or replacements, but rather as complementary institutions that extend the same mission with the added strengths of innovation and renewal. Cultivating this relationship carefully enriches the entire scientific ecosystem, ensuring that expertise, institutional wisdom and creative thinking all contribute to a more inclusive and adaptive scientific community that is well-positioned to meet the demands of a changing world.

Young Academies in International Science Diplomacy

Young academies are emerging as active participants in international science diplomacy, offering new insights, promoting collaboration, and taking part in global policy discussions (Leppert, 2023, p. 387; Yacadeuro, 2025). Their work encompasses formal networks, capacity building, policy engagement and informal diplomacy, thereby reinforcing their status as trusted voices in national and international settings (GYA, 2025; Die Junge Akademie, 2025).

A central hub for this activity is the GYA. Through the GYA, national young academies collaborate on working groups, attend annual meetings, and contribute to global statements. The Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies, convened periodically by the GYA, facilitates joint initiatives in response to global challenges. During the pandemic, young academies shared advice and strategies under GYA's coordination and issued a joint call for evidence-based policy. Regional networks such as SAPEA (2023) in Europe and the African Academy of Sciences (AAS, n.d.) have similarly supported the integration of young academies into science-policy efforts, ranging from EU consultations to regional issues such as water security.

Furthermore, young academies are also directly involved in international science-policy forums. Members have participated in national delegations to events such as the World Science Forum, the Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (UN STI Forum, n.d.) and International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA, n.d.) conferences. In cooperation with their young academies, GYA and several G20 senior national science academies contributed to the Science20 (S20) dialogues, offering perspectives on inclusive science from the perspective of early-career researchers. These contributions frequently function as "science for diplomacy," especially in strained political contexts where scientific collaboration persists across borders. For instance, despite the presence of diplomatic tensions, academies have organised joint webinars, thus facilitating the maintenance of dialogue through the utilisation of track-two diplomacy.

Moreover, their influence extends to the global governance of shared spaces. In the lead-up to COP26 (Glasgow) (United Nations, 2023), young academies have issued climate statements, and the GYA's climate working group has participated in UN side events. It is evident that through the implementation of such activities, there is a contribution made to the facilitation of informal yet impactful policy conversations. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives, including training sessions facilitated by the EU Science Diplomacy Cluster (European Commission, 2025) and seminars organised by the young academies, have been implemented to equip early-career researchers with the necessary skills to assume roles in science diplomacy and science advice (Polish Academy of Sciences, 2020). A proportion of these individuals subsequently assume roles as scientific attachés or policy advisors, thereby ensuring the direct dissemination of scientific expertise into the domain of foreign policy.

Young academies strongly advocate for the inclusion of global science. Organisations such as the GYA and TWAS advocate equitable international collaboration, promoting open science and facilitating researcher mobility, particularly in underrepresented regions (GYA Call, 2024). ASEAN young academies, for example, have issued joint recommendations to enhance regional exchange. Their independence enables them to express views on sensitive issues such as academic freedom and the ethics of artificial intelligence, areas that senior bodies sometimes avoid. This enhances the diversity of voices involved in global normative discourse.

Furthermore, young academies have played a key role in spearheading or contributing to collaborative initiatives that address global challenges. During the pandemic, for example, over 40 young academies released a joint statement promoting international solidarity. In the context of climate-related discourse, they have participated in youth-oriented forums, thereby supplementing senior academy reports with initiatives such as campaigns and outreach activities. These efforts not only increase visibility, but also influence public engagement and the direction of policy attention.

Unlike an inward-looking approach, young academies take a forward-facing stance, carefully preparing members to participate in global collaboration over several decades. Their active participation aligns with the recent call for “science diplomacy 2.0” (Tyler, 2024), which is a more inclusive, responsive and networked model (Leppert, 2023). Due to their unique status as hybrid actors functioning as a conduit between science, policy and public engagement, it is evident that they possess a distinct vantage point from which to influence the future trajectory of international cooperation.

For the Turkish Young Academy, global engagement has long been a core priority. In the medium term, it is well placed to host regional forums and address issues in which Türkiye holds strategic relevance. These include climate adaptation, refugee scholar integration, and regional health diplomacy (Science Diplomacy Alliance, 2024). These endeavours will augment Türkiye's scientific legacy and exemplify the importance of next-generation diplomacy, a concept driven by collaboration, creativity, and a shared sense of purpose.

Conclusion

The emergence of young academies represents a significant structural development within the scientific ecosystem, providing institutional platforms through which early-career researchers can play an active role in shaping the future of science at national and international levels. The Turkish Young Academy, with its roots in the TÜBA-GEBIP program how national models can be adapted to meet global standards while addressing local needs. The programme has been meticulously designed to encapsulate the fundamental tenets of the young academy philosophy, namely selective, merit-based membership, interdisciplinary engagement, time-limited participation and robust mentorship, while concomitantly addressing national scientific goals. Its integration within Türkiye's scientific infrastructure signifies a commitment to investing in younger generations, ensuring academic renewal, and enhancing scientific leadership capacity.

As comparative insights with peer institutions in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Japan, and the GYA reveal, young academies are converging around a flexible yet consistent model. This model is characterised by a balance between independence and affiliation, innovation and tradition. These academies amplify early-career voices and act as hubs for interdisciplinary ideas and informal diplomacy. They contribute to science diplomacy in active ways, for example, through the issuing of joint statements, the establishment of training programmes, the initiation of collaborative projects, and participation in forums such as the UN-Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology,

and Innovation (UN-STI Forum) and the Science20 dialogues (Doğrul & Akpınar, 2022). Young Academies' growing presence indicates a shift towards a more inclusive, responsive and distributed science diplomacy ecosystem, one that values both emerging and established expertise.

In the medium term, the Turkish Young Academy is well-positioned to strengthen its international presence by fostering connections between Türkiye's scientific community and global networks. Its ability to facilitate regional discourse and foster connections between Eastern and Western regions while addressing issues such as climate resilience, the integration of refugee scientists and science-driven diplomacy and scientific advice positions it at the forefront of contemporary engagement strategies. In the contemporary global context, characterised by increasingly intricate and interwoven challenges, the role of young academies as conduits between generations, disciplines and nations is set to become increasingly significant. The ongoing success of these initiatives depends on sustained mentorship, institutional support and demonstrable commitment to the values of openness, collaboration and scientific excellence intrinsic to the science diplomacy ecosystem.

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About the Author

**Assoc. Prof. Mürsel DOĞRUL | Turkish Young Academy, Representative |
mursel.dogrul[at].tuba.gov.tr | ORCID: 0000-0002-0637-843X**

Dr. Mürsel Doğrul is an Assoc. Prof. at the National Defence University, specializing in International Relations. He earned his degree in International Relations from Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in 2014, conducting research in Romania and Spain during his undergraduate and postgraduate studies. In 2013, Dr. Doğrul completed internships at the Ministry of EU Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye. He obtained an M.Sc. degree in International Relations from Necmettin Erbakan University, focusing on the "Counterterrorism Policy of Japan," and completed his Ph.D. at the National Defence University in 2021, researching "The Middle East in Japanese Foreign Policy: Political Economy of Energy." As a Japan Foundation Fellow, he was a visiting scholar at Meiji University in 2023 and an Erasmus Fellow at Tokyo University in 2024. His research interests encompass Japanese foreign policy, energy policy, and security. Dr. Doğrul has made significant contributions to the field through academic works, examining the evolving dynamics of international security and international relations literature. He has served as an advisor to the President of the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) since 2019 and as a representative of the Turkish Young Academy, demonstrating proficiency in advanced English and intermediate Japanese.