

# International Student Young Pugwash (ISYP) Report to Pugwash Council

## 2023



**Prepared by**

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# Current State of Play & Past Activities Since 2017

Since the Pugwash Conference in Astana (2017), ISYP's internal structure has evolved and its activities have expanded. In 2021, the membership of ISYP's Leadership Team almost fully turned over, and in 2022, we recruited several additional members to increase the team's capacity. In recent years, funding from the Pugwash Conferences—including for a software upgrade and for a conference in Berlin—has enabled ISYP to grow our programming.

## ISYP Mission

Inspired and supported by the Pugwash Conferences, ISYP provides young professionals with opportunities to engage in cross-national dialogue and cooperation on issues at the nexus of science, ethics, and security. We take an interdisciplinary approach to topics including nuclear weapons, climate change, and emerging technologies. ISYP creates a space for its members to build personal connections and to understand “the other”—nurturing common understanding. Later on, as these individuals gain influence, their cross-national relationships become crucial for policymaking that promotes peace.



# ISYP in 2023

## Leadership Team Structure

The nationalities and countries-of-residence of our 17 team members span several regions:

- Europe: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, UK, Switzerland
- Asia: India, Japan, Pakistan, South Korea
- Africa: Egypt, Nigeria
- Middle East: Bahrain, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Turkey
- North America: Canada, US
- South America: Ecuador

Our team structure includes:

- A Director (Talia Weiss), Deputy Director (Kseniia Pirnavskaia), and Secretary (Elisabeth Suh) who are responsible for the strategy and management of ISYP. Our prior Director was Ezra Friedman.
- A Network Engagement Team (led by Elif Erginyavuz), which maintains regular communications with our network and programming for our diverse audiences.
- A Partnerships Team (led by Nicolas Ayala Arboleda), which coordinates communications with ISYP Advisory Board members, external partners, and Student/Young Pugwash local and national groups.
- A Communications Team (led by Dylan Land), which runs our website, social media, and newsletters. Haruka Noishiki runs the ISYP website and Laura Rose O'Connor is responsible for the ISYP Newsletter.

## ISYP Network

- Several countries host national or local Student/Young Pugwash (SYP) groups, including Israel, Italy, India, Russia, the UK, the USA, and Germany. These groups offer programming on technology and international affairs. The ISYP Leadership Team supports SYP groups: We connect groups with one another, we have developed guidelines on how to establish a new SYP chapter, and we hosted a meeting in early 2023 with members of all SYP groups (organised by Shira Cohen).
- ISYP's social media pages have 1,500 followers, including established and emerging experts in relevant fields. Our newsletter has 400 subscribers. Through these channels, we share updates and opportunities from ISYP and other organisations—enabling regular engagement of our network.
- The Advisory Board (AB) advises ISYP on its future direction and strategy. Our AB members are leaders in areas including nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, regional cooperation, chemistry, and physics. The AB includes Dr Kennette Benedict, Ms Sandra Ionno Butcher, Dr Poul-Erik Christiansen, Mr Hubert Foy, Dr Francesca Giovannini, Dr. Karen Hallberg, Mr Karim Kadry, Dr Moritz Kütt, Dr Zafra Lerman, Dr Anna Péczeli, Dr Mahsa Rouhi, Ms Elena K. Sokova, Mr Sherman Teichman and Dr Tong Zhao. ISYP Leadership meets annually with the AB (as organised by Jasmine Auda).

# ISYP Activities (2021-2023)

## Recent and Ongoing Programming

### **Third Nuclear Age Project**

ISYP's Third Nuclear Age project (3NA) is one of our flagship activities. Starting in 2022, the first 3NA edition centered on in-person programming in Berlin: A two-day conference of paper presentations and panel discussions, plus a one-day hybrid writing workshop held by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. The conference covered nuclear arms control and disarmament, advancements in nuclear technologies and measures for non-proliferation, state-of-the-art delivery systems and launch methodologies, as well as a discourse on emerging technological innovations. After the conference, ISYP supported participants in publishing their papers and promoting their ideas in three virtual discussions via Twitter Spaces (e.g., one on AI and nuclear weapons). This conference was made possible through the collaborative efforts of esteemed partners including the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Third Nuclear Age Project, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Universität Duisburg-Essen and the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists.

The second 3NA edition is led by Kseniia Pirnavskaia and Shane Ward. 3NA 2.0 is a 24-month youth-initiated and youth-driven project to develop cutting-edge intersectional policy solutions to address the understudied systemic forces which will shape the trajectory of the Third Nuclear Age. The project cycle includes public-private policy consultations, virtual policy hackathons, and an in-person gathering for hackathon winners. The project has three core objectives: (1) empower and integrate young voices into active policy discussions, (2) facilitate meaningful engagement with real-world issues, and (3) build intersectional bridges between next-gen scholars within and beyond nuclear. The first phase (policy consultations) is ongoing and is to be finalised by early 2024.

### **South Asia Programming**

In 2022, ISYP launched a series of virtual roundtables on nuclear weapons issues in South Asia, organised by Laura O'Connor alongside ISYP's South Asia Advisor, Dr Tanvi Kulkarni (Policy Fellow at APLN). We have hosted two roundtables, with more in-development. The first roundtable took stock of participants' perspectives on contemporary nuclear issues in South Asia, and the second centered on the "cyber-nuclear nexus." Each roundtable included three presentations, moderated conversations in breakout rooms, and a plenary discussion; the second meeting also featured a scenario-building exercise.

Participants in the roundtable series include students and young professionals in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Participants frequently expressed that the roundtables were crucial for understanding "what the other side is thinking," influencing narratives and ultimately reducing nuclear risks. Our program partners are the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies; the Centre for Security, Strategy and Policy Research; and the Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement.



## Additional Virtual Programming

Beyond these major work streams, ISYP also engages its network through online events on a range of topics and with diverse partners. Highlights since 2021 include ISYP-hosted events, such as the commemoration of “[The Pugwash Nobel Peace Prize 27 Years On](#),” a [talk with Professor Charles Weiss](#), and a discussion of the book “[The Global Hibakusha](#).” We have also co-hosted events, including a [networking program with seven nuclear groups](#) in partnership with IAI and VCDNP, events on “[The Cuban Missile Crisis After Sixty Years](#)” and “[Reflecting on the 2022 Doomsday Clock](#)” together with the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, an APLN-ISYP roundtable on “[Keeping Nuclear Memories Alive](#),” and a panel discussion on “[Humanitarian Impacts and the NPT](#)” together with IPPNW Students, BASIC, and the EVN.

## New and Future Initiatives

ISYP will soon release a call for its new **Peer Mentorship Programme**, led by Elif Erginyavuz and Haneen Khalid. This program will match young professionals in pairs across disciplinary and national divides (e.g., natural vs. social science), based on common interest-areas. For about three months, pairs will discuss a series of trust-building questions, then brainstorm ideas for projects at the intersection of science, ethics and security. Pairs will then optionally pursue and write-up their projects, supported by ISYP.

ISYP’s **Africa Project**, run by Daniel Ajudeonu, is a new initiative with the dual goals of capacity-building and diversity-building. ISYP seeks to expand its network on the continent of Africa and to engage students and young professionals in the field of nuclear science, energy, nonproliferation and disarmament. The proposed approach to do so is through networking events, writing workshops and an essay competition.

ISYP has also begun forming a **Hard Scientist Task Force**—an international group of young scientists and engineers charged with devising a detailed strategy for how ISYP can sustainably engage hard scientists.

## ISYP Board and Activities (2017-2020)

We are grateful to our predecessors who laid the groundwork for what we do today and the community we have. The previous ISYP Board set a high bar regarding in-person programming. Activities from 2017-2020 included hosting a Regional Youth Conference in Cyprus to promote dialogue among young participants from the Middle East and North Africa, as well as preparing for the ISYP meeting alongside the Pugwash Conference originally scheduled for 2020. In 2020, the previous ISYP Board invested its capacities in initiating online engagement of our network and recruiting an almost entirely new team.

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