



# Global Conference for Diaspora Networks In Science 2022



## Global Conference for Diaspora Networks in Science 21, 22, 23 Sep 2022

*Inspire -> Catalyse -> Do*

### Concept note

#### Introduction and rationale

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines diasporas as “migrants or descendants of migrants, whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background.” (IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019). Diasporas are thus distinguished from other communities in that they maintain some link - cultural, linguistic, historical, religious or affective - to their home country; as such, they represent a bridge between host and home countries and favour both “brain circulation” and “brain bank” (Kapur, 2001).

Science diasporas in particular can play a key role in the development of their country of origin, by transferring knowledge, skills and technology. Diaspora networks are thus a hidden treasure of untapped potential. In many cases, official and unofficial networks have emerged. Yet, they often struggle to deliver on their potential locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

In addition, we have witnessed how COVID-19 has brought to the limit health, social, economic, and labour systems and provoked huge turbulence in multilateral relations. In parallel, science and its ability to inform policies for better response has become a crucial component of the solution to the crisis. COVID-19 has taught us that we are only as strong as every human being and every network. Everyone counts and we are truly a global community.

This Global Conference for Diaspora Networks in Science is a continuation of the recent Global Diaspora Summit which outlined the future agenda of action for global diaspora engagement through the [Dublin Declaration](#). As the world emerges at various paces from the COVID-19 pandemic, the GDS serves as a statement of global commitment and collaboration to the advancement of Objective 19 of the GCM - “Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries” - and of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment comes at a





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time of opportunity to engage diaspora and transnational communities, including diaspora youth, as partners for both humanitarian response and development, to mobilize the diverse range of diaspora capitals – cultural, economic, social and human - for the benefits of societies in countries of origin and destination and for the protection of migrants and saving lives.

Diaspora is a very complicated word, and part of the conference will be to unpack what this word means in its broadest terms, to be inclusive to everyone.

### Themes

The three themes of the Conference:

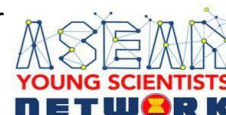
- Inspire: sessions that showcase diaspora work and amplify their voices and frontline experience to inspire others.
- Catalyse: sessions that create a space to connect different science diaspora with other stakeholders to exchange ideas, share knowledge and bring change.
- Do: sessions that advance progress through committed action globally.

### Aims of the Conference

The aim of the Conference is to enable science diaspora from all scientific disciplines, including: basic, social, applied, and humanities to come together – and with other multi stakeholders such as academia, governments, industry and media – to learn from each other, share experiences, challenges and successes, and come up with practical ways forward and best practices that can make such networks more efficient in their work, and effective wherever the scientists are located, and especially in their home countries.

Specifically, the conference's goals are to:

1. review existing diaspora networks and identify good practices in building effective and sustainable scientific diaspora networks.
2. bring together international science communities and diaspora networks of scientists.
3. facilitate the coming together of main actors in the field, to share experiences and forge new consensus in improving links and support to diaspora networks.
4. highlight the role of diasporas in development of scientific infrastructure in home countries.
5. highlight the challenges faced by diasporas, with additional focus on those who were forced migrants.
6. highlight the role of women in diaspora networks for





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7. identify common areas of research to create joint projects and partnerships.
8. form and inspire a critical mass of diverse actors interested in bringing back the knowledge and perspectives to their institutions, countries, groups.

### Format and contents of the Summit

The Conference will be held online (Zoom Events virtual platform) on 21-23 September 2022.

The Conference will include keynote speeches, panel discussions and roundtable/workshops, and will focus on the following themes:

- Diaspora in Science success stories, challenges, and best practices
- Science and Politics
- National chapters / learning from well-established diasporas
- Engagement and communication
- Gender, science, and migration

The Conference will target the following stakeholders:

- Diaspora networks and groups
- Governments
- International organizations
- Media
- Scientific institutes and organisations
- Organizations providing opportunities for and support to displaced scientists.

### Language

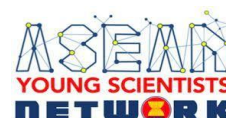
The main language is English, but there will be an option to conduct the sessions in any other language the host finds convenient.

### Expected results and impact

Upon leaving the conference, diaspora and non-diaspora scientists, government officials, policy makers, community leaders, education experts, and S&T entrepreneurs will be well-versed in key issues in this field and will have gained high level exposure to regional and global tools, partnerships, and best practices in this field.

Government officials and policy makers in particular, will have further learnt and exchanged experience with peers in building systems that adequately support diaspora networks of scientists, and both these and also diaspora organisations will leave the workshop with a toolkit that they will utilize in their home constituencies.

### Outputs:





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- Conference report
- Policy recommendations
- Summary of best practices
- Engagement plan with stakeholders, including a potential platform for continued engagement

### Organising partners

#### Main organizer:

#### The Society for the Advancement of Science and Technology in the Arab World ([SASTA](#))

SASTA's mission is to mobilize and catalyze the engagement of scientists, professionals, NGO's, academic institutions and professional societies to advance higher education, science and research in Arab countries. SASTA's aim is to contribute to the advancement of science, technology, higher education and research in the Arab region through supporting scientific human capacity building, development of academic and research programs and providing scientific, technical and material support to local academics, scientists and universities.

SASTA is uniquely placed to lead on implementation of this Global Conference.

#### Partners:

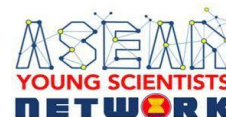
#### The World Academy of Sciences for the advancement of science in developing countries ([UNESCO-TWAS](#))

UNESCO-TWAS supports sustainable prosperity through research, education, policy and diplomacy. It was founded in 1983 by a distinguished group of scientists from the developing world, under the leadership of Abdus Salam, the Pakistani physicist and Nobel laureate.

UNESCO-TWAS, with its extensive network of Fellows, Young Affiliates, and five Regional Partners in the Global South, is in a unique position to partner with SASTA in the organisation of a Global Conference for diaspora networks in science.

UNESCO-TWAS collaborates with the International Science Council (ISC) and the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) in the [Science in Exile initiative](#). Science in Exile aims to create a network of like-minded organizations that will work together to develop a platform and roll out a coordinated advocacy campaign, so as to foster a cohesive response for the support and integration of at-risk, displaced, and refugee scientists.

#### The International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#))





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Established in 1951, IOM is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration. IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people. IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management: migration and development; facilitating migration; regulating migration; and forced migration. Drawing on its long-standing experience, IOM has formulated a comprehensive strategic approach centred on the 3Es for action: to enable, engage and empower transnational communities as agents for development. IOM has developed methodological and innovative tools to engage in a dynamic way with diasporas, including iDiaspora, a unique digital hub creating an active and impactful global community of diaspora leaders and organizations.

### Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World ([OWSD](#))

The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) is an international organization founded in 1987 and based at the offices of The World Academy of Sciences in Trieste, Italy. It is a programme unit of UNESCO. OWSD is the first international forum to unite eminent women scientists from the developing and developed worlds with the objective of strengthening their role in the development process and promoting their representation in scientific and technological leadership. OWSD provides research training, career development and networking opportunities for women scientists throughout the developing world at different stages in their careers.

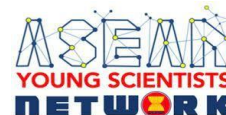
### SciComm X

SciComm X is an all-in-one science media and communication agency that offers 360-degree solutions and services. We are on a mission to empower and support science media and communication ecosystems worldwide through building innovative products and bringing creative solutions. We focus on Science, Technology, Health, Environment, Public Engagement, and Education.

[SciComm X](#) and its subsidiaries ([Science Journalism Forum](#), [Arab Forum of Science Media and Communication](#), [Scientific Arab](#), and [Arab Science Week](#)) will partner and support the Global Conference for Diaspora Networks in Science.

### The Venezuelan Academy of Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences ([ACFIMAN](#))

Its main function is to promote, integrate and disseminate the advancement of scientific and technological knowledge in the country, within the framework of the universality of knowledge. To do this: it will contribute to the creation of scientific and technological knowledge and will ensure its use based on social welfare and sustainable development. It





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will stimulate the training of human resources for science and technology, promoting the best science teaching practices. It will carry out studies and report on world scientific and technological progress and within this context it will analyze the country's situation. It will advise public and private entities on matters within its competence. To achieve these objectives, the Academy selects its members based on their experience and recognized academic achievements.

### Gender

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the best attempt to tackle global challenges; gender inequality however is compromising action on most SDGs. In fact, sustainable development cannot happen without gender equality (SDG 5): the proposed conference aims to support emergence, leadership, and capacity-building of female scientists in diasporas. A specific workshop where women will be both the principal applicants and the workshop leaders will enable them to deepen their leadership and scientific skills, while acquiring soft skills such as communications and diplomacy.

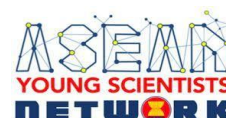
From aiming for gender parity among both for speakers and participants, to including gender perspectives in all panels, presentations, discussions and outputs, the conference will streamline gender throughout. Additionally, if funds allow it, and in order to encourage the participation of women, small, fixed allowances for childcare costs could be provided to parents (of all genders) in need of this service. The conference committee will encourage panel proposals and speakers that address gender and diversity concerns as part of general discussions on science in diaspora. Finally, in terms of themes, the conference will also be specifically presenting a number of panels entirely focused on gender themes, thus creating extensive spaces for discussion on key issues often seen as impediments towards gender mainstreaming in scientific capacity building.

### Participation from Least Developed Countries

To encourage participation from Least Developed Countries (LDCs), participants from those countries will be able to apply for a small financial contribution to cover internet costs for the duration of the conference.

### Key stakeholders and other potential partners, to be identified:

- Networks of diaspora from around the world, with special focus on developing countries and least developed countries.
- International organisations, UN, initiatives, groups, and other institutes working with diasporas and/or supporting refugee and displaced scientists.





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- Science Academies in countries with either strong diasporic groups abroad or that are hosting significant diasporas.
- Known diaspora groups from around the world, including but not limited to diasporas from: Syria, Rwanda, Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Myanmar, Palestine, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Venezuela, etc.

