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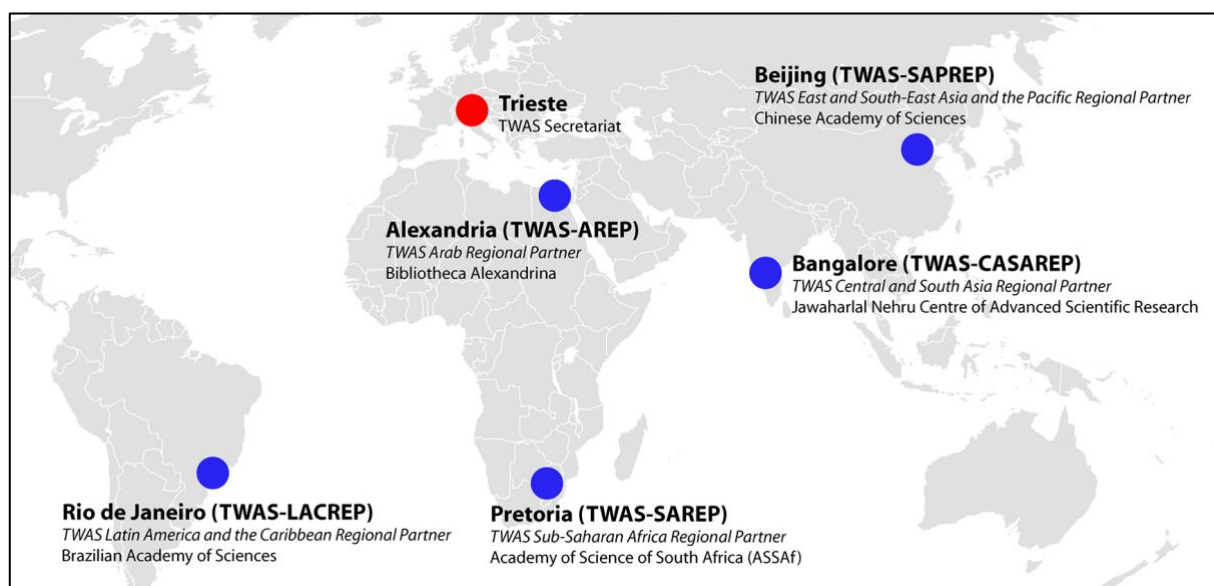
The World Academy
of Sciences

Young Affiliates

2024-2029

TWAS Young Affiliates 2024-2029

Since 2007, each year each of the five TWAS Regional Partners (formerly Regional Offices) has elected up to five excellent young scientists from their region as TWAS Young Affiliates for a period of six years (five years until 2019). The Young Affiliates must be living and working in a developing country and have an excellent track record of at least 10 international publications. Here we present the bio data for the 18th selection of TWAS Young Affiliates.



Arab Region

TWAS Regional Partner for the Arab Region (TWAS-AREP) at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria, Egypt

Hilda E. Ghadieh

Department of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Medical Sciences, University of Balamand, Balamand, Lebanon

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Hilda Ghadieh is a distinguished researcher and academic leader with a PhD in molecular medicine from the College of Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Toledo, United States of America (USA), committed to advancing knowledge in diabetes and its cardiometabolic manifestations. She completed her post-doctoral training at Ohio University, USA, and served as a research associate at the American University of Beirut. She is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Medical Sciences, University of Balamand, Lebanon. Recognized for excellence in research and innovation, she has received prestigious awards, including the European Association for the Study of Diabetes-European Group for the Study of Insulin Resistance (EGIR-EASD) Award (2021), and the distinguished 'Innovators Under 35 MENA' recognition by *MIT Technology Review Arabia* (2022). A passionate educator and mentor, Ghadieh empowers trainees at all academic levels, fostering research capacity in the Arab region and cultivating excellence in the dynamic scientific landscape. Her extensive publication record reflects her dedication to advancing medical research, earning her roles as a guest editor and reviewer for international journals.

Reham Said Ibrahim Abdelkader

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Reham Said Ibrahim Abdelkader is an associate professor in the Pharmacognosy Department at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Alexandria University (AU), where she earned a bachelor's degree with distinction and honours (2006), a master's degree (2010) and a PhD (2014), all in pharmaceutical sciences. At AU, she specialized in pharmacognosy, where she currently holds more than 10 courses in chemistry and biology of medicinal natural products for under- and post-graduate students. She is the recipient of the prestigious Alexandria University Scientific Encouragement Award (2022) for researchers under 40. An esteemed reviewer and editorial board member with leading international scientific journals, she works to unveil the complexity of plant matrices through metabolomics, grant the quality control of active principles, disclose the pharmacological mechanisms of action of herbal drugs, and find novel drugs for therapeutic use in natural

products. With over 50 publications, the supervision of more than 20 master's and PhD theses, and the participation in over 10 international conferences, she is a leading figure in advancing both research and education in pharmaceutical and health sciences.

Abdelhamid Hussein Farag Maetouq

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Abdelhamid Maetouq is an associate professor in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Benghazi (UoB), Libya, since 2015. In 2007, he earned his bachelor's degree with honours from UoB; in 2009, his master's degree with distinction, and 2013, his PhD, both from The University of Edinburgh (UoE), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. At UoE, he worked as research associate at the Institute of Digital Communications (2013–2014). His research focuses on wireless and optical communications, particularly spatial modulation, MIMO systems, and digital signal processing. He has held leadership roles as the dean of the Engineering Department (2018–2023) and head of the Electrical and Electronic Engineering Department (2016–2018) at UoB. He is a member of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities. His achievements include the Overseas Research Student Award (2010), Best Student Paper Award at the 78th IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Vehicular Technology Conference (2013), and the National Instruments Graphical System Design Achievement Award (2013). He also received the Almadar Aljadid R&D grant for his work on millimetre-wave large-scale MIMO systems.

Abdulkareem Mohammed Matar

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Abdulkareem M. Matar is an assistant professor and researcher in the Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Food Science and Agricultural, King Saud University (KSU), Saudi Arabia. At the same university he teaches lactation physiology and genetics. He holds a bachelor's degree in animal production, a master's degree in agricultural science, and a PhD in animal production and poultry science, all earned at KSU. His research interests include milk production systems, genes responsible for milk quality, the relationship between camel and sheep milk and human health. In recognition of his contributions to science and development, in 2021 Matar was jointly awarded the second prize at the 11th scientific meeting at KSU. His study aimed to identify a gene coding for a complex multifunctional enzyme system and its association with unsaturated fatty acids that are beneficial to human health. In 2023, he was also awarded during the first scientific meeting at the College of Agriculture, KSU.

Central and South Asia

TWAS Regional Partner for Central and South Asia (TWAS-CASAREP) at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research in Bangalore, India

Alifa Binta Haque

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Alifa Bintha Haque is a faculty member in the Department of Zoology, University of Dhaka (UD). She is also the founder and team leader of the Bengal Elasmobranch Lab Collaboration, conducting innovative research on sustainable fisheries, with emphasis on marine megafauna in the Bay of Bengal. She holds a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in zoology from UD, where she received the Dean's Award for Excellence, and completed a master's degree in biodiversity conservation and management at Oxford University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK). She earned a PhD in biology from the Oxford University and the British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK, focusing on socially just and sustainable fisheries management. Her research addresses the intersection of marine biodiversity conservation and fishers' livelihoods, focusing on community-based management, sustainable fisheries, and conservation action planning. Accolades for her contributions include the WINGS WorldQuest Woman of Discovery Award (2023), United States of America, and the best student presentation at Sharks International (2022). She is also an Edinburgh Ocean Leaders Fellow (2023), University of Edinburgh, UK, and a National Geographic Photo Ark Zoological Society London EDGE Fellow.

Najmeh Hoseini Monjezi

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Najmeh Hoseini Monjezi is an assistant professor with the Department of Applied Mathematics and Computer Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran. She earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degrees in applied mathematics at the University of Isfahan, and received her PhD in applied mathematics with a specialization in optimization from the University of Isfahan, Iran, in 2019. Her research interests include non-smooth optimization, nonconvex optimization, numerical algorithms for solving optimization problems, optimization on Riemannian manifolds and machine learning. She graduated as a top student in all of her university courses and was admitted in the graduate programmes (PhD and master's) without the entrance exam, as an exceptionally talented

student. Currently, she is a passionate young researcher who has already made interesting contributions to non-smooth numerical optimization.

Samamalee Upekshi Kankanamge

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Samamalee Upekshi Kankanamge is a senior lecturer in the Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka. With the same university, she held the head of the pharmacy department position (2018–2021). She holds a bachelor's degree in pharmacy (first-class honours) and a master's degree in industrial analytical chemistry, earned at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ), Sri Lanka, where she is currently pursuing her PhD in pharmaceutical science. Her research explores the potential therapeutic benefits of natural compounds and traditional remedies, looking for new compounds, formulations, or delivery systems for medications. She has a record of 42 research publications including 10 original articles, 7 review articles, and 25 conference papers. She won twice the title of best oral presentation awards for her PhD research findings, at the International Research Conference in Health Sciences (USJ) and Lincoln International Multidisciplinary Conference, Lincoln University College, Malaysia, in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

H. S. S. Ramakrishna Matte

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H. S. S. Ramakrishna Matte is a scientist at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences in Bangalore, India. In 2006, he earned his Bachelor of Science from Government College, Rajahmundry, India, and in 2009 and 2013 his Master of Science and PhD in chemical sciences. He worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Northwestern University, United States of America, and Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany. He now leads a group of eight PhD students, two postdoctoral researchers, and one master's student. His research interests include printed electronics, low-dimensional materials, electrochemical energy storage devices, and organic photovoltaics. With more than 70 research papers published in international journals, and more than 9,050 citations (with an h-index of 30), Matte also holds nine patents (granted, or applied for). He is a member of two Indian academies, INYAS-INSa and NASI, and an associate Fellow of the Andhra Pradesh Academy of Sciences. He was awarded the Silver Medal from Chirantan Rasayan Sanstha, the Short Research Trip to France grant from the French Embassy in India, and a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Visiting Fellowship from Germany. He received the Young

Innovator Award from India at the BRICS Summit (2024) and was selected for the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship by the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Dilshod Nematov

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Dilshod Nematov is the head of the quantum electronics laboratory, S.U. Umarov Physical-Technical Institute, National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, where he carries out research activities with his group. Nematov earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degrees in computer materials science from the Tajik National University, and a PhD in materials science from the Tajik Technical University, in 2021. His research interests include theoretical (DFT analysis and modelling) and experimental studies of new highly efficient functional nanomaterials for solar cells, LED devices, and other photovoltaic applications. In recognition of his contributions to science and technology, in 2023, he was awarded the Dushanbe Mayor's Prize in Natural and Technical Sciences (Tajikistan). In 2024, Nematov received the Order of the Best Young Scientist of the Commonwealth of Independent States countries.

East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific

TWAS Regional Partner for East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific (TWAS-SAPREP) at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, China

Nurfashareena Binti Muhamad

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Nurfashareena Muhamad is a senior research fellow with the Southeast Asia Disaster Prevention Research Initiative, Institute for Environment and Development, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Her skills include optimization of the use of geospatial technology in decision-support systems to facilitate knowledge-based decision making for land use planning and development control, for disaster-risk reduction. She has coordinated a pilot project supported by the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund, which developed a prototype multi-hazard platform to manage and communicate risks and enhance disaster resilience in Kuala Lumpur City. She is involved in a project funded by the International Development Research Centre, Canada, to develop a multi-hazard open access system for selected areas in Malaysia and Cambodia, to blend information from global databases with crowd-sourced information. She led a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)-funded project for the Ministry of Education Malaysia, which developed a disaster risk reduction education module for school children. She is a co-leader of U-INSPIRE Malaysia@UKM, a platform for youth and young professionals in science, engineering, technology, and innovation to accelerate the implementation of disaster-risk reduction.

Zainun Binti Mustafa

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Zainun Mustafa is an early-career faculty member at the Fakulti Sains dan Matematik, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia. She holds a Bachelor of Science with education (with honours) in biology and earned her PhD in science education from Universiti Sains Malaysia. With almost a decade of experience teaching in government schools, Zainun also has held research-related interim roles at the Centre for Science and Environmental Studies, and at the Institute of Islamic Understanding, as a research officer at Universiti Sains Malaysia's Regional Centre of Expertise for Education for Sustainable Development, and at the National Child Development and Research Centre. Zainun served as a specialist in intergovernmental institutions, where she trained educators across Southeast Asia and the Global South. Besides serving as the education unit fellow at the Centre of Biodiversity and Conservation, Zainun is an early-career scholar for the programme 'Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in

ASEAN/Southeast Asia'. Her contributions to training and research in science education have been supported by grants from Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Thao Thi Phuong Nguyen

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Thao Thi Phuong Nguyen is an accomplished early-career researcher with expertise in mental health, psychology, artificial intelligence in medicine, and stem cell research. She is a researcher at the Vinmec Research Institute of Stem Cell and Gene Technology, College of Health Sciences, VinUniversity, Viet Nam. Nguyen earned her medical degree in preventive medicine from Hue University of Medicine and Pharmacy in 2014, followed by a master's degree in medicine and a PhD in public health from Hanoi Medical University. Selected to be a member of the InterAcademy Partnership's Young Physician Leaders programme in 2024, she is recognised for her leadership and dedication to advancing science and health equity. Her pioneering work bridges public health and technology, driving progress in mental health research while fostering innovation and international collaboration.

Wu Chenglai

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Wu Chenglai is a professor with the International Centre for Climate and Environment Sciences at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). He also serves as a graduate student supervisor at the University of CAS. He earned a Bachelor of Science in atmospheric science from Nanjing University, China, and a PhD in meteorology from the Institute of Atmospheric Physics (CAS) and the University of CAS. His research focuses on the development and application of earth system models by improving the dust emission, aerosol processes and aerosol-climate interactions, as well as adopting models for climate prediction and future projection to mitigate the impact of climate change and meteorological disasters. Wu is one of the key developers of the Chinese Academy of Sciences earth system model. In 2022, he was awarded as a young talent in computational geosciences by the Tsinghua University-Inspur Group. He has published more than 60 papers in peer-reviewed journals.

Wenchao Xue

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Wenchao Xue is an associate professor and academic chair of the environmental engineering and management programme, School of Engineering and Technology, and founding director of the Belt and Road Research Center (BRRRC) at the Asian Institute of Technology, in Thailand. She teaches postgraduate courses in environmental quality management, wastewater treatment, and environmental statistics. She holds a bachelor's degree in engineering and a master's degree in environmental science and engineering from Tsinghua University, in China, and a PhD in urban engineering from the University of Tokyo, in Japan. Her research interests include advanced technologies for water pollution control, energy and resource recovery from wastewater, the monitoring and elimination of emerging environmental contaminants, and sustainable watershed environmental management. She has received research grants from the governments of China, Thailand, Japan, and international organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research. In 2019, she established the BRRRC to promote and facilitate international collaboration in science and technology.

Latin America and the Caribbean

TWAS Regional Partner for Latin America and the Caribbean (TWAS-LACREP) at the Brazilian Academy of Sciences in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Alejandro Javier Cagnoni

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Alejandro Cagnoni is an associate researcher with the Laboratory of Glycomedicine, Institute of Biology and Experimental Medicine, in Argentina. He is also an assistant professor in the Department of Organic Chemistry, School of Exact and Natural Sciences, University of Buenos Aires (UBA), where he teaches organic chemistry, organic synthesis and glycobiology. He holds a master's degree and a PhD, both in chemical sciences from UBA, and a PhD in chemical sciences from the University of Picardie Jules Verne, in France. His research covers organic chemistry, organic synthesis, carbohydrate chemistry and glycobiology. He authored 32 papers in international journals and two book chapters. For his contributions to science, he has received individual awards from the Honorio Bigand Foundation (2022), the Argentine Society for Organic Chemistry Research (2015), and the University of Buenos Aires (2009). His group awards include the Merck-CONICET (National Scientific and Technical Research Council) Award for Innovation in Health Sciences (2022); Gador Foundation Award (2022); Lustig Award (2022); Faryna-Raveglia Award (2019); Fiorini Foundation Award (2018); and Cherny Award (2017).

Melissa Maria Cruz Torres

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Melissa Cruz is a professor with the School of Physics, and coordinator of the master's degree in physics at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), in Honduras, where she also teaches electromagnetic theory, quantum mechanics and particle physics. She holds a bachelor's degree in physics and electrical engineering from UNAH, and a master's degree and a PhD in physical sciences from the Pontifical Catholic University of Río de Janeiro, in Brazil. Her research interests are in experimental high energy physics, flavour physics, hadron spectroscopy and the CP violation phenomena. She is a member of the Large Hadron Collider collaboration at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. She is one of the founding members of the Central America Network in High Energy Physics and Computing Science, and the representative of Honduras in the Latin American Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructure. In 2023, 2022 and 2021, she was awarded for her research by the Directorate of Scientific,

Humanistic and Technological Research of UNAH. In 2021, she also received a research grant from TWAS.

Carla Eloisa Fernández Espinoza

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Carla Eloisa Fernández Espinoza is a Bolivian biologist specializing in freshwater ecology, with a focus on plankton dynamics and high-altitude Andean lakes. Since 2018, she has been a researcher at the Unit of Limnology and Aquatic Resources at the Higher University of San Simón (Universidad Mayor de San Simón, UMSS), Plurinational State of Bolivia. She earned her PhD in aquatic resources engineering from Lund University, Sweden, in 2018, supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Her doctoral research explored the adaptive strategies of daphnids to ultraviolet radiation. Additionally, she holds a master's degree in environmental sciences, a diploma in ecology and environment, and a bachelor's degree in biology, all from UMSS. Her research explores the relationship between plankton dynamics and water quality in extreme environments. For her scientific contributions, she has been awarded with the 2022 Marie Curie Award from the National Academy of Sciences of Bolivia, the 2022 TOYP (Ten Outstanding Young Persons) Cochabamba-Bolivia Award for Leadership and Academic Achievements, and has been selected to represent the Plurinational State of Bolivia at the 2022 UNESCO-Al Fozan International Prize for the Promotion of Young Scientists.

Yuri Gomes Lima

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Yuri Gomes Lima is an assistant professor at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC), Brazil. He earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in mathematics from UFC, in 2006 and 2008 respectively, and a PhD in mathematics from the National Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics (IMPA), Brazil, in 2011. He has completed postdoctoral fellowships at IMPA; Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel; University of Maryland, United States of America; and Université Paris-Sud 11, France. He has experience in the field of mathematics, with an emphasis on dynamical systems, ergodic theory, combinatorics, and probability. Between 2018 and 2020, he was a grantee of the Royal Society-Newton Advanced Fellowship. In 2021, he received an honourable mention in the Brazilian Mathematical Society (SBM) Prize for the best article. Currently, he is a regular associate of the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Italy, and a grantee of the Serrapilheira Institute, Brazil, with the project 'Jangada Dinâmica'. He has been elected as an affiliated member of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences for the period 2024–2028.

Mónica Elizabeth Mazariegos Posadas

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Mónica Mazariegos is a researcher at the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) Research Center for the Prevention of Chronic Diseases. She obtained a Doctor of Science degree in population nutrition from the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico. She was recently recognized as a Global Health Fellow by the Vanderbilt-Emory-Cornell-Duke Global Health Fellowship Consortium, and as a 2023 Young Scientist Researcher by the Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences. With over 12 years of experience in nutritional epidemiology, she specializes in the identification and analysis of health challenges from a life-course perspective, applying complex longitudinal data analysis and multilevel approaches in population health. Her research focuses on the epidemiology of all forms of malnutrition, the design and evaluation of nutrition and health policies, maternal and child health, pregnancy and reproductive health across the life-course, and the social and urban determinants of obesity and diabetes. Mazariegos has authored over 25 peer-reviewed publications and continues to contribute to evidence-based solutions for improving the population's health.

Sub-Saharan Africa

TWAS Regional Partner for Sub-Saharan Africa (TWAS-SAREP) at the Academy of Science of South Africa in Pretoria, South Africa

Wyvine Ansima Bapolisi

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Wyvine Ansima Bapolisi obtained a bachelor's degree in general medicine, surgery, and delivery from the Catholic University of Bukavu, in 2012, and a master's degree in public health-community health at the Regional School of Public Health, in Bukavu, both in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She also earned a PhD in epidemiology from the University of Basel at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Switzerland. She has been practicing as a medical doctor since 2013, mentoring undergraduate and postgraduate students in their academic and professional journeys. Her research interests include child, newborn and maternal health, reproductive health and infectious diseases, sociocultural determinants of health, and community engagement. She has extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative research, operational research, and project evaluations, with particular consideration to gender-related issues. Since 2024, she has joined the Youth Academy of Science in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, contributing to promoting sciences.

Maleika Heenaye-Mamode Khan

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Maleika Heenaye-Mamode Khan is an associate professor and dean of the Faculty of Information, Communication and Digital Technologies at the University of Mauritius, in Mauritius. She teaches machine learning, data analytics, object-oriented software development, and data structures and algorithms. She holds a Bachelor of Science and a PhD in computer science and engineering, both from the University of Mauritius. Her research interests are in computer vision, medical image processing, artificial intelligence, biometrics and data analytics. She is a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and an active reviewer of several reputed international journals in her research areas. Heenaye-Mamode Khan has secured various research funds at national and international level. She has also initiated the setting up of a specialized Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics (AIDA) laboratory at the University of Mauritius.

Delfina Fernandes Hlashwayo

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Delfina Hlashwayo is a faculty member and researcher in the Department of Biological Sciences at Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), in Mozambique. She holds a Bachelor of Science in biology and health and a Master of Science in food safety, both from UEM. Hlashwayo earned a PhD in biosciences and public health from UEM, receiving the distinction 'excellent' for her thesis. Her research focuses on public health and One Health approaches. Passionate about science diplomacy, she collaborates with international organizations such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations. Hlashwayo is an experienced consultant for the European Commission and has been an academic editor for the Public Library of Science (PLOS) since 2022. In recognition of her contributions to science and development, Hlashwayo was a joint winner of the 2024 Policy and Deliberation Challenge at the UN World Food Forum, and was named a Fellow of the 2024 UN Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship. In 2022, she received the Rising Star Award for emerging HIV investigators from the San Diego Center for AIDS Research.

Brice Landry Koloko

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Brice Landry Koloko is a senior lecturer in molecular biology at the University Institute of Technology, University of Douala, Cameroon, where he earned his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in animal biology. He received his PhD in molecular biology at the Centre of Excellence in Molecular Biology (CEMB), University of the Punjab, Pakistan, under the CEMB-TWAS Postgraduate Fellowship (2016–2020). In 2017, he won the TWAS-Elsevier Foundation Sustainability Case Studies Competition. For his achievements as a young promising scientist, TWAS nominated him to attend the 72nd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting (in physiology and medicine) in 2023, in Germany. In 2024, he was awarded a fellowship offered by the Committee for International Cooperation and Development from the University of Pavia, Italy. He was recently awarded under the 2024 TWAS-DFG Cooperative Visits Programme from TWAS and DFG (German Research Foundation) to pursue a research collaboration in Germany. His research interests cover the molecular and therapeutic aspects of chronic liver diseases, including viral hepatitis, steatosis, fibrosis, cirrhosis, and hepatocellular carcinoma, using plant-based natural compounds.

Rawlance Ndejjo

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Rawlance Ndejjo is a lecturer in the Department of Disease Control and Environmental Health at Makerere University School of Public Health, Uganda. He holds a bachelor's degree in environmental health science from Makerere University, a master's degree in environmental health from the University of the West of England, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and a PhD in medical sciences from the University of Antwerp, Belgium. His research interests are in non-communicable diseases, climate change and health, and epidemic preparedness and response. Due to his contribution to science and development, in 2020 he was selected by the African Academy of Sciences to attend the prestigious Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, in Lindau, Germany. In 2021, he received the Consortium of Universities for Global Health Dr. Anvar and Pari Velji Young African Leader Award for exceptional ability and commitment to improving the wellbeing of individuals in low-income settings. In 2024, he received the Makerere University Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Award in the early career researcher category for his contribution to the body of knowledge through scholarly publications.