

Press Release

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AGYA Opens New Office in Cairo: Arab-German Research Cooperation in Action

On 25 October 2018, the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) celebrated the official opening of its new Regional Office located within the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Cairo. The AGYA Regional Office will provide a sustainable structure for Arab-German scholarly dialogue and facilitate the extension of AGYA research activities in the region.

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) has expanded its presence in the Arab world with the opening of an AGYA Regional Office in Cairo, Egypt on 25 October 2018. The regional focus of the office will be on Egypt and Sudan. It is located within the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), which is affiliated with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. AGYA is the first non-Egyptian organization to open an office in an Egyptian governmental institution.

Opening Festivities on 25 October 2018

'ASRT decided to support AGYA in fostering Arab-German research exchange, particularly exchange between young scholars. The AGYA Regional Office is both the consequence of our cooperation and elevates it to a new level', said Prof. Dr. Mahmoud M. Sakr, President of ASRT and AGYA Advisory Board member, at the opening festivities held in the city's historic Al-Salam Theatre on 25 October 2018, under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Over 300 participants were in attendance from a wide range of scientific sectors from Egypt, Germany and across the Arab region. In his speech, Germany's Ambassador to Egypt Julius Georg Luy emphasized Germany and Egypt's mutual respect and commitment to scientific cooperation as 'one of the key pillars' of the countries' bilateral relations. 'With the opening of the AGYA office in Egypt,' he declared, 'we are articulating and marking a truly new form of scientific cooperation between our two countries. AGYA, with members coming from Germany, Egypt and the Arab world, is the ideal format to continue the proud tradition of great polymaths and scientists like Imhotep, Ibn Al-Nafees and Leibniz'. On the occasion of the opening ceremony of the new AGYA Regional Office in Cairo at ASRT, Representative of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) Peter Webers announced another important milestone in the recent history of AGYA: The BMBF will support AGYA with an additional 3.3 million euros through January 2020. Peter Webers credited this decision to AGYA's 'dynamic development and outstanding networking through research collaborations between AGYA members in Germany and the Arab world'.

Arab-German Research Exchange on a New Level

AGYA has been active in Egypt since its founding in 2013. Project examples include cooperation with the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo on the question of the new museum's mission and sustainability; a study on innovation processes; a strategic workshop in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) on health policy; as well as a training for Egyptian students on the application of renewable energy systems. The launch of the AGYA Regional Office at ASRT will further enhance AGYA's priority efforts to support north-south-south research cooperation. 'The AGYA regional office provides a sustainable

structure for Arab-German dialogue characterized by mutual acceptance and esteem', says AGYA Principal Investigator Prof. Dr. Verena Lepper. 'With this newly established cooperation, ASRT and AGYA aim to foster innovative collaborative research with social impact and to raise capacities of young researchers in Egypt, the Arab world and Germany. I am convinced that we can expect to see this strong partnership flourish'. The AGYA Regional Office within the premises of ASRT in Cairo will bring Egyptian and German academic institutions even closer together.

From a Memorandum of Understanding to an AGYA Regional Office at ASRT

The establishment of the AGYA Regional Office at ASRT underlines the mutual respect and trust between both academies, ASRT and AGYA, and is the outcome of a successful history of cooperation. In July 2017, the Egyptian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Prof. Dr. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, visited the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) during his official diplomatic trip to Germany. In a milestone event, a Memorandum of Understanding between AGYA and Egypt's ASRT was formally agreed. On the German side, the agreement was signed by Prof. Dr. Verena Lepper, AGYA Principal Investigator, and Prof. Dr. Martin Grötschel, President of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) and Co-Chair of the AGYA Advisory Board. On the Egyptian side, the agreement was signed by Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Sakr, President of ASRT and member of the AGYA Advisory Board. On 26 November 2017, AGYA and ASRT reaped the fruits of their longstanding cooperative partnership: In a festive key hand-over ceremony in Cairo, both academies laid the foundation for the AGYA Regional Office at ASRT in Cairo.

Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt

The Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, established in September 1971 by Presidential Decree No. 2405 as the national authority responsible for science and technology in Egypt. ASRT conducts comprehensive planning for developing Egyptian science and technology. It supports relevant Egyptian ministries and national research institutions in creating an integrated system of scientific research that aims to increase the number of well-trained scientists in Egypt and elevate science and technology to a leading role in Egypt's national development process. ASRT also promotes and encourages female and youth participation in science, technology and scientific leadership.

Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA)

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) is based at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) and at the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt. It was established in 2013 and is the first bilateral young academy worldwide. AGYA promotes research cooperation among outstanding early-career researchers from all disciplines who are affiliated with a research institution in Germany or any Arab country. The academy provides partnership-building opportunities and funding to support the innovative projects of its members in various fields of research as well as in science policy and education. More than 50 members—in equal number Arab and German scholars—have been selected to join AGYA since 2013. AGYA is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and various Arab cooperation partners.

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