

***ISOCARP'S COMMITMENT TO YOUTHS -
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO CONCEIVING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE
AND DEVELOPMENT***

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ISOCARP has long been committed to youths, embracing programs and initiatives that are designed to promote youths' inclusion in decision making processes and the development of communities.

Founded in 1965 as a global non-governmental association of experienced professionals, ISOCARP a society of over 700 members has since its inception brought together individuals and institutions from more than 80 countries worldwide. ISOCARP is officially recognized by the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHCS/UN-HABITAT), the Council of Europe, as well as the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Through a global and active network of practitioners, ISOCARP has for over 50 years encouraged the dissemination of knowledge amongst planners, fostering research, education, and training as well as enhancing public awareness and understanding of major planning issues at global level. The many and varied initiatives and programs within ISOCARP have and continue to date to provide knowledge for better cities with the objective of facilitating the improvement of cities and regions. Annual world congresses, regional seminars, workshops, publications, urban excellence and recognition awards, as well as projects are but a few of the programs.

Yet, ISOCARP's inherent belief in the role of youths in development and in promoting social and cultural change has prompted the initiation of the Young Planning Professionals Program (YPPs) in 1991. This intricate program is designed to bring together ambitious young planners from around the world to tackle 'real-world' planning issues and projects. It is designed to stimulate professional interest, develop necessary skills, and build capacities of young planners. The program strives to bridge the gap between theory and practice providing hands on experience. It serves as a platform for engaging young planning professionals from around the globe to interact, cooperate, brainstorm, and exchange ideas around real time issues thus affording them a unique intercultural experience and an opportunity to understand and appreciate world cultures, share experiences, and introduce positive social change.



ISOCARP's conviction stems on the one hand, from the understanding that community development is facilitated by the ability of local people to mobilize resources to address local needs, and on the other, that youths represent a vast and accessible untapped resource for development efforts constituting a permanent contributor to the process of development. The role of youths in decision making, problem solving, action, and evaluation of development is thus regarded by ISOCARP as fundamental for the well-being of communities and the creation of sustainable livable environments.

Youth represent our aspiration, our dream for a better and promising future. They are the one and only remaining source of optimism in a world full of discrepancies. Not only are youths full of zeal and innovation but they are an asset that stimulates enthusiasm lending a sense of hope and anticipation into the unknown future.

It is for this reason that ISOCARP has in the past few years expanded its youths related programs making available new initiatives and opportunities for youths' skill enhancement and development. By partnering with experienced professionals these programs offer youths a multitude of opportunities to build capacities and serve their communities. This partnership is crucial to the long-term success of development efforts and contributes to transforming would be passive citizens into proactive members of the community engaged in the process of development and committed towards the future.

Among the many newfound ISOCARP programs are Mentoring & Student Research Labs which coach youths and share experiences. Through these labs experienced professionals advise graduate students allowing for professional development through guidance, idea sharing and networking.

On a similar note, Urban Planning Advisory Teams (UPATs) comprising both experienced and young planners - seek to provide cutting-edge solutions to current spatial problems. Teams assist sponsor organizations by offering extensive ISOCARP expertise on local or international planning projects, programs, and policy initiatives.

Additionally, in recent years the ISOCARP Institute has been launched as a "Centre of Urban Excellence" and formal body for generating, documenting and disseminating knowledge for better cities. As a "World Class Think Tank" for planning excellence, the Institute is committed to enrich the knowledge base and develop the capacity of youth to achieve more sustainable human settlements through skill development, continuing education programs, research, and knowledge transfer.

As an "Urban Think Tank", the Institute delivers capacity building and intensive training programs to young planners across multiple thematic areas including: Sustainable Planning and Design; Urban Resilience and Hazard Mitigation; Place-making; Livable Cities; Community Planning; Urban Mobility; Urban Management; Urban Regeneration and Revitalization; Green Infrastructure; Urban Economy and Real Estate. Learning issues correspond to the "UN-Habitat Issue Papers" thus constituting a standardized foundation for youth in development.



ISOCARP's many programs and varied initiatives are instrumental in building capacities and developing much needed skills for youths committed towards their future. As such, they are crucial to the long-term success of youths' development efforts, and play a key role in creating and strengthening life-long global friendships prompting a culture of peace.

Khalid Z. EL Adli, Ph.D., Assoc. AIA, F. Assoc. ASLA
Vice President, Academic Development - ISOCARP Institute
ISOCARP Ambassador to UNESCO-NGO Forum 2017

Zeynep Gunay, Assoc. Prof. Dr., Urban Planner
ISOCARP Ambassador to UNESCO-NGO Forum 2017