

CULTIVATING YOUTH ACTIVISM

A global conversation
in a time of
democratic crisis



PANELISTS

**OCTOBER 6-7, 2020
9AM-2PM EST**

Register today at

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Adetunji Adeniran

FOUNDER/PRESIDENT, YNAG

Adetunji Adeniran is the founder/president of YNAG, a global platform for teaching young people (age 17–30 years) action-based civic education. He started the organization in 2017 with students of Obafemi Awolowo University and has grown the platform to become one of the prominent civics education organizations in Africa promoting action civics through innovative programs and policy changes.

YNAG is the lead organization for Global Network for Youth Action, a network of over 20 civil society organization across Africa and the Middle East.

He is also a sales & route-to-market strategy expert with one of the fastest growing multinational food companies in Africa.



Hahrie Han

*INAUGURAL DIRECTOR, SNF AGORA INSTITUTE AND PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, KSAS*

Hahrie Han is the Inaugural Director of the SNF Agora Institute, a professor of political science, and faculty director of the P3 Research Lab at Johns Hopkins University. She studies American politics and specializes in the study of civic and political participation, social movements, collective action, and organizing, particularly as it pertains to democratic revitalization.



Scott Warren

SNF AGORA VISITING FELLOW

Scott Warren is the CEO of Generation Citizen. He co-founded the organization at Brown University with fellow student Anna Ninan during their senior year, working with students in the local Providence community. From that starting point in 2008, Warren has grown Generation Citizen to become one of the preeminent civics education organizations in the country, promoting action civics across diverse geographies through best-in-class programming and concrete policy change. Warren has served as a Social Entrepreneur in Residence at Brown University and Tufts University, and published a book in 2019, *Generation Citizen: The Power of Youth in Politics*.

Warren was named an Echoing Green Fellow in 2010 and a Draper Richards Kaplan Fellow in 2012. He continues to write on subjects ranging from youth political engagement to African politics to sports, and has been published and featured in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Education Week*, *New York Daily News*, *Huffington Post*, *San Diego Union Tribune*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Providence Journal*.

PANEL 1

YOUTH ACTIVISM IN THE TIME OF COVID-19



Abdulrazaq Alkali

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ORGANIZATION FOR COMMUNITY
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT*

Abdulrazaq Alkali is the executive director of the Organization for Community Civic Engagement (OCCEN), a nongovernmental organization devoted to working with young people to promote democracy and civic participation in Nigeria. Alkali is an alumnus of the Reagan-Fascell democracy fellowship program at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Washington, DC, and a Champions for Change (C4C) fellow with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Nigeria.

For over a decade, Alkali has directed projects that seek to enhance government transparency and accountability through advocacy for policy reforms, good governance, voter education, election monitoring, public oversight of government budgets, and the youth mobilization to take part in democratic process.



Mawa George Lazarus

CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FOR REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mawa George Lazarus is a South Sudanese youth activist and the co-founder and executive director of Community Empowerment for Rehabilitation and Development (CEFoRD). CEFoRD is a youth-led organization in South Sudan that is committed to empowering communities through participatory approaches that spark meaningful public debates on core democratic governance and development issues,

With his team, Lazarus focuses on creating and identifying spaces of engagements that influence change in policy(ies) and practice for the common good of the people of South Sudan. Through partners and donors of CEFoRD, Lazarus has participated in various advocacy platforms at local, national, regional, continental, and global levels in South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Senegal.



Griffen Saul

FOUNDER, WE ARE ABLE

Griffen Saul founded We Are Able in 2016 in tribute to his father, Brad Saul, who passed away in December 2015. We Are Able is a nonprofit dedicated to raising awareness and promoting empathy and acceptance for people with disabilities while educating the public on proper disability etiquette. The organization has engaged nearly a thousand students and corporations through its initiatives. An accomplished motivational speaker, Saul was chosen to address 15,000 youth at the 2016 We Day Illinois, was named the 2017 We Day Illinois youth co-chair, was featured as part of Allstate's Good Starts Young campaign at the Aspen Ideas Festival, was selected as an Obama Foundation peer adviser for their Boston Training Day event, and was named the 2018 Newman Civic Fellow for Tufts University. Saul is passionate in his belief that we are all able to be the change we want to see in the world.



Sangita Shresthova

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, CIVIC PATHS GROUP, BASED AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sangita Shresthova is the director of research of the Civic Paths Group based at the University of Southern California. Her work focuses on intersections among online learning, popular culture, performance, new media, politics, and globalization. She is also one of the authors of *Popular Culture and the Civic Imagination: Case Studies of Creative Change* (2020) and *By Any Media Necessary: The New Activism of Youth* (2016), both published by NYU Press. Her earlier book on Bollywood, *Is It All About Hips?*, was published in 2011 by Sage. She is one of the creators of the Digital Civics Toolkit (digitalcivicstoolkit.org), a collection of resources for educators, teachers, and community leaders to support youth learning. Her own artistic work has been presented in academic and creative venues around the world, including the Schaubuehne (Berlin), the Other Festival (Chennai), the EBS International Documentary Festival (Seoul), and the American Dance Festival (Durham, NC).

PANEL 2

THE IMPERATIVE FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE



Habon Ali

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL YOUTH

Habon Ali is a Somali-Canadian community builder involved with initiatives including the Prime Minister's Youth Council, Toronto Public Health's Youth Health Action Network, and the Mosaic Institute. She is passionate about removing systemic barriers for youth, especially youth from marginalized and vulnerable communities. Currently, Ali is an intern at MaRS Discovery District, where she is working towards removing barriers to youth employment for NEET youth (not in education, employment, or training). Previously, she was actively involved in the creation of Canada's first National Youth Policy, the development of Canada's Service Corps, and the Amplify Lab with Apathy is Boring.

Ali is a graduate student at McMaster University working towards an MSc in global health. She recently completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto in biology and environmental science. She is passionate about creating spaces and opportunities for meaningful youth engagement, participation, and change in our democracy. Ali believes a strong democracy is one where all citizens can participate.



Francesca Désulmé

OUTREACH COORDINATOR, APATHY IS BORING

Grab a mixer.

Add creativity, open-mindedness, and positivity. Shake well. You now have a taste of what it's like to know Francesca Désulmé. As she grew up in Haïti, Désulmé developed a strong desire to see positive changes happen in her community. She soon found out that not all actors in power, nationally or globally, were truly citizen-focused.

Wanting to “mix” her desire for change and her passion for communications, she pursued a diploma in communications and international development at the Université du Québec en Outaouais and a graduate diploma in public relations at McGill University.

Désulmé dreams of a world where each of our intersectional identities could coexist in harmony with a preserved environment. During her free time, you can find her enjoying nature, creating artistic projects, and spending time with family.



Alcinda Honwana

CENTENNIAL PROFESSOR AND STRATEGIC DIRECTOR, FIROZ LALJI CENTRE FOR AFRICA, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Alcinda Honwana is Centennial Professor and the strategic director of the Firoz Lalji Centre for Africa at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Her extensive research on youth and conflict, youth socio-economic transitions, and youth political protest and social movements earned her the reputation as one of the most influential scholars in these fields. More specifically, her widely cited work on youth in “waithood” has greatly contributed to shaping current youth studies in Africa and the global South. She was the chair in international development and director of the International Development Centre at The Open University, UK.

Honwana’s career has straddled both academia and policy, which allows her to bring critical policy insights into her academic work. She was an inter-regional adviser on social development policy at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA); research coordinator at the United Nations Office for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG/CAC); and program director at the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in New York. Honwana was appointed the Prince Claus Chair for Development and Equity in the Netherlands from 2007 to 2008.

PANEL 3

SPARKING AN
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH
ACTIVIST MOVEMENT

Mohamed Abubakr

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND PEACEMAKER

Mohamed Abubakr is a Sudanese human rights activist and peacemaker with a decade and a half of civil society experience. Since high school, he has founded and led organizations and initiatives focused on humanitarian, human rights, youth empowerment, and peace programs across the Middle East and Africa (MEA), including in Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, and beyond. Abubakr has also documented, reported, and mobilized against human rights abuses across MEA, and since arriving in the United States, has become a sought-after voice at the State Department and in Congress concerning policy and human rights issues in the region.



Jude Feranmi

FOUNDER, RAISING NEW VOICES INITIATIVE; EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TOBUILDANATION

Jude Feranmi is the founder of the Raising New Voices Initiative, the pioneer executive director of ToBuildANation, a citizens movement towards political reforms in Nigeria with members in more than 25 states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and former national youth caucus leader of KOWA Party. Under Feranmi's leadership of the youth caucus, KOWA Party became a brand name amongst the Nigerian youth discussing politics. Through these efforts at KOWA Party and Raising New Voices Initiative, Feranmi and his team have inspired and supported more than 40 young people to run for office both in Nigeria and Ghana. He is a Changemaker at the African Leadership Institute Pakati Initiative, which brings together over 450 youth-led organizations on the continent advocating and collaborating for youth inclusion in governance and politics. Feranmi holds a double masters degree in public policy and human development from the United Nations University in the Netherlands and is the author of two books, *The Pragmatics of Real Change* and Okadabooks bestseller *Lead The People*.



Mutaal Girshab

*DIRECTOR, REGIONAL CENTRE FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
OF CIVIL SOCIETY*

Mutaal Girshab is the director of the Regional Centre for Training and Development of Civil society (RCDCS) in Sudan. RCDCS is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization. It aims at strengthening and empowering civil society organizations and promoting more productive state-civil society relations, thereby enhancing people's participation in the policies and decision-making that affect their daily lives. The overall goal is to develop a viable and vibrant civil society countrywide, which can play an effective and improved role in expanding democracy, and promoting peace and sustainable development.



Jessica Taft

PROFESSOR OF LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

Jessica K. Taft is a professor of Latin American and Latino studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her research agenda focuses on the political lives of children and youth in North and South America, with an emphasis on youth activism and the ways that girls, children, and youth participate in social movements. She is the author of *Rebel Girls: Youth Activism and Social Change Across the Americas* (NYU Press 2011) and *The Kids Are in Charge: Activism and Power in Peru's Movement of Working Children* (NYU Press 2019).

PANEL 4

IS DEMOCRACY AT RISK?



Larry Diamond

SENIOR FELLOW, HOOVER INSTITUTION AND FREEMAN SPOGLI INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies (FSI) and a Bass University Fellow in Undergraduate Education at Stanford University. He is also professor by courtesy of Political Science and Sociology at Stanford. He leads the Hoover Institution's programs on China's Global Sharp Power and on Taiwan in the Indo-Pacific Region. At FSI, he leads the Program on Arab Reform and Democracy, based at the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, which he directed for more than six years. He also co-leads with Eileen Donahoe, the Global Digital Policy Incubator, based at FSI's Cyber Policy Center.



David Riveros Garcia

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REACCIÓN

David Riveros Garcia is the executive director of reAcción, a grassroots NGO in Paraguay that promotes transparency, citizen engagement, and anti-corruption. He founded reAcción at age 17 after leading a three week-long peaceful demonstration against corruption in the education system. For his anti-corruption work he was named a Youth Ambassador by the U.S. Department of State and a Global Changemaker by the British Council. His research focuses on the impact of social media on democracy, particularly on demonstrations since the Arab Spring. He has presented at the World Economic Forum, the International Anti-Corruption Conference, and the Civil Society Policy Forum at the WB-IMF Annual Meetings.



Yascha Mounk

SENIOR FELLOW, SNF AGORA INSTITUTE, AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
OF THE PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, SAIS

Yascha Mounk is a political scientist known for his work on the rise of populism and the crisis of liberal democracy. His third and most recent book, *The People vs Democracy: Why Our Freedom is In Danger and How to Save It*, has been translated into 10 languages and recognized as a “Best Book of 2018” by the *Financial Times* and other publications.

Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Harvard University, Mounk is a contributing editor at *The Atlantic*, a senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund, and host of The Good Fight podcast. He is also a frequent contributor to international newspapers and magazines including *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, and *Foreign Affairs*. He is a frequent keynote speaker at high-profile events like the Aspen Ideas Festival and a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Fluent in English, German, French, and Italian, he provides commentary for leading radio and television programs around the world.

Janjira Sombatspoonsiri

RESEARCHER, INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES, CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY;
ASSOCIATE, GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL AND AREA

Janjira Sombatspoonsiri is currently researcher at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, and an associate at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies. Her research focuses on nonviolent activism and social movements in the context of democratization and autocratic pushbacks. She is the author of *Humor and Nonviolent Struggle in Serbia* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2015). Her articles also appear in several academic journals, including the *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* and *Journal of Civil Society* (forthcoming). She also serves as an academic adviser for the International Center for Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), a member of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Civic Research Network, and a board member of the International Peace Research Association Foundation (IPRAF).

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP 2

LEADERSHIP IN CIVIL
RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS:
FOUR KEY ROLES THAT
ACTIVISTS PLAY



Hardy Merriman

PRESIDENT AND CEO, INTERNATIONAL CENTER ON NONVIOLENT CONFLICT

Hardy Merriman is president and CEO of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC). He has worked in the field of civil resistance for over 18 years, presenting at workshops for activists and organizers around the world; speaking widely about civil resistance movements with scholars, journalists, and members of international organizations; and developing resources for practitioners and scholars. His writings have been translated into numerous languages. From 2016 to 2018, he was also an adjunct lecturer at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.