

## Personal Statement – Dina Dragija

Over the past years, I have been honored to serve WAAS as a Junior Fellow and as a long-standing youth leader, contributing meaningfully to its interdisciplinary and intergenerational mission with deep gratitude and continued commitment to the values of the World Academy of Art and Science.

My academic and professional background is grounded in international relations, diplomacy, and the anthropological study of politics, violence, and crime prevention (MSc). I have complemented this foundation with a recognized certificate in Sustainable Business Strategy from Harvard Business School, enhancing my ability to bridge policy, private sector leadership, and civil society in service of global sustainability goals. My expertise lies in building cross-sector solutions, platforms, partnerships, and projects for peace, sustainability, and innovation, uniting disciplines, cultures, and projects for a sustainable transition.

Since 2020 as Vice President and now President of the Youth Leadership Network, I have engaged with WAAS activities as young leader and served as a Junior Fellow of WAAS and, since 2022. As YLN, an affiliated youth initiative championing meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes. Through YLN, I have co-developed projects that promote SDG implementation, intergenerational dialogue, and strategic cooperation with WAAS institutions and leadership. As YLN, we were proud to partner with WAAS on the Leadership for the 21st Century initiative at UNGA, marking the inclusion of youth in global governance dialogues and I have continued to represent WAAS at high-level conferences, contribute to its thematic programming, and facilitate the engagement of young leaders, bridging generations and sectors in search of common solutions.

From 2022 to early 2024, I also served as Partnership Manager for the Human Security for All (HS4A) campaign, a joint initiative of WAAS and the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. In this role, I engaged with international stakeholders to align local and global voices around a redefined understanding of security—centered on human dignity, sustainability, and peace.

Currently, I am organizing the UNWASTED 2025 Forum as a co-founder under the patronage of the World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS). This cross-border, multi-stakeholder platform brings together thought leaders, policymakers, and innovators from science, technology, governance, and civil society. The international initiative reflects WAAS's values through its interdisciplinary approach, systems thinking, and commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The forum fosters actionable collaboration on sustainable transitions across sectors, connecting private and public leaders to partner around best sustainable practices and innovations. We have successfully secured strategic partners, including the Ministries of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian and Italian Chambers of Commerce, the Italian Embassy, and others, reinforcing WAAS's influence and relevance in current global dialogues.

Throughout my journey, I have continued to represent WAAS at high-level conferences, contribute to its thematic programming, and facilitate the engagement of young leaders, bridging generations and sectors in search of common solutions. My ambition is to continue and expand this service as an Associate Fellow—supporting WAAS's mission, representing it on international stages, and fostering new collaborations through my expertise in diplomacy, sustainability, cross-sector innovation, and youth engagement.

I remain committed to WAAS's interdisciplinary vision and to building bridges across sectors in the service of a more just, secure, and sustainable world.

#### Future Goals:

- Continue representing WAAS at scientific and international conferences, deepening involvement in its interdisciplinary programs and projects.
- Expand the reach of youth initiatives by integrating youth-led projects within WAAS frameworks and fostering stronger academic and institutional partnerships.
- Leverage expertise in sustainability, innovation, and youth engagement to drive actionable change through projects and conferences aligned with WAAS's mission.
- Support the development of cross-sector solutions and platforms that unite disciplines, cultures, and projects for a sustainable transition.
- Advance WAAS's vision by fostering intergenerational cooperation, promoting sustainable development, and driving innovation across sectors.

With deep appreciation,

Dina Dragija

President, Youth Leadership Network (YLN)

Junior Fellow, World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS)

Co-Founder, UNWASTED 2025 Forum

Croatia Stop Ecocide Coordinator

Partnership Manager, HS4A Campaign (2022–2024)