



ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

2020-2021



Washington University in St. Louis

McDONNELL INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS ACADEMY

OVER 15 YEARS OF GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP IN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

McDonnell International Scholars Academy continues momentum

2020 was a very difficult year for everyone, including the McDonnell Academy. Yet, our Scholars, faculty and staff adapted remarkably well to each of the challenges they faced. I am grateful to all of you for your hard work, flexibility and perseverance, and I am proud of everything we have accomplished despite these challenges! Together, we have made huge progress both at the University and at the McDonnell Academy. Let me share a couple of examples from the Academy.

- Despite the challenges for international travel and exchange, we continue to attract the most talented international students. The number of applications to the McDonnell Scholars Program has tripled. This is the strongest applicant pool we have ever had.
- The pandemic did not put an end to international collaboration and research; it only reinforced the importance of working together to tackle shared global challenges. The McDonnell Academy awarded \$250,000 in seed funding to initiate 11 new research projects with our international partners to help address the public health and social ramifications of Covid-19.

We pivoted to a virtual International Symposium. Faculty and students from around the world tuned in for our Global Town Hall: 'Hope in a Time of Uncertainty' and shared hundreds of photos and videos reflecting on the theme of hope and resilience. Our faculty continued engaging their international collaborators in virtual workshops throughout the fall semester.

All of this gives me much optimism that the future looks bright for our international education and research. As we continue to build momentum for our global initiatives, the McDonnell Academy remains a key driver. It contributes to each of these three pillars that are critically important for the University:

- Talent & diversity: Enriching the talent and diversity of WashU by recruiting premier students from across the globe.
- Education: Giving students an international perspective through their educational experience.
- Research: Advancing research that has impact and recognition internationally.

These highlights provide a small sample of the McDonnell Academy's impact in these areas over the last year.

Kurt Dirks

Vice Chancellor for International Affairs
Director, McDonnell International
Scholars Academy
Bank of America Professor of
Leadership

Kurt Dirks



BY THE NUMBERS

MCDONNELL INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS ACADEMY

3X
TRIPLED
APPLICATIONS
WORLDWIDE



2020
COHORT
HIGHLIGHTS

1ST GLOBAL SCHOLARS FROM NEWLY
REPRESENTED COUNTRIES: GEORGIA,
IRAN, KAZAKHSTAN, NIGERIA, UGANDA,
UNITED KINGDOM

1ST SCHOLAR FROM NEW UNIVERSITY
PARTNER | MAKERERE UNIVERSITY,
UGANDA

1ST CANCER BIOLOGY PHD SCHOLAR |
GLOBAL SCHOLAR, NIGERIA



91
CURRENT
SCHOLARS
FROM
26
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITIES



34
WASHU PROGRAMS
ACROSS EVERY
SCHOOL



141
ALUMNI



\$3
MILLION
MCDONNELL ACADEMY
ANNUAL ENDOWMENT
& CORPORATE SPONSORS
TO SUPPORT GRADUATE STUDENT
FELLOWSHIPS AND EDUCATION

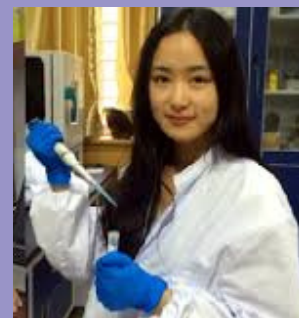
New Global Scholars bring additional international diversity to Washington University

The Academy broadened participation in the McDonnell Scholars program by welcoming our first cohort of **Global Scholars**, graduate students from international universities outside the partner network. **The initiative helped triple applications**, drawing interest from more than 100 nationalities. The partner network will remain the core of the program, and this initiative will contribute to the diversity and talent of the McDonnell Academy community.

McDonnell Academy Alumni Spotlight

The first author of a paper in the January issue of *Nature Biomedical Engineering* was Xi'an Jiaotong University McDonnell Scholar, **Dr. Jingyi Luan** (her second first-author *Nature Biomedical Engineering* paper.) Jingyi and a collaborative team of experts have designed a sensing technique potentially to be employed in point-of-care settings to facilitate rapid disease diagnosis.

Jingyi is currently working as a senior research scientist at Auragent Bioscience (who has licensed the "plasmonic-fluor" technology) for further development, scale-up, and commercialization of plasmon-enhanced fluoroimmunoassays.



Jingyi Luan, PhD'20
McKelvey School of Engineering

New alumni panel series highlights insights and impact from around the world

The McDonnell Academy has organized a special **panel series** featuring our McDonnell Academy Alumni. Our distinguished *Scholars for Life* will lead discussions on career insights and regional trends in their field, followed by a live Q&A from the audience. We will join alumni virtually from anywhere in the world.

New sponsors support our commitment and aid mission to sustain international education

In a year of unprecedented challenges for international education and research, the McDonnell Academy had several new sponsors step forward to help us keep up the momentum. **McDonnell Academy sponsors** create opportunity by providing funding for Scholar education and leadership development, and university-wide research initiatives.

NEW SPONSORS

Hongmosoomin Foundation
Seoul, Korea

Raymond Ting
Hong Kong

Dr. Lin Tsung-I Foundation
Taipei, Taiwan

Global Alumni & Parents Fellowship
Provided by international alumni and parents of WashU

RENEWED SPONSORS

Nestle Purina PetCare Company
St. Louis, MO

China Risun Group (Hong Kong) Limited
Hong Kong

NEW RESEARCH SPONSOR

Bethany & Bob Millard
New York, NY

New dual masters program strengthens partnership

A new collaboration between the McKelvey School of Engineering and **Indian Institute of Technology Bombay**, a **McDonnell Academy partner**, will accept fourth-year students in the IITB bachelor of technology track to apply to a **new Aerosols and Air Quality Master's Degree Program** in collaboration with both universities.

Rajan Chakrabarthy, Associate Professor, Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering and Ambassador to Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, heads the program.



Virtual pivot ensures a community of future global leaders

The McDonnell Scholars who gave their Global Leadership Visions (GLV) presentations this year were still able to convey their ideas even while socially distanced. These **7-minute public presentations on issues of global concern** enhance their communication skills. Although the restrictions resulting from the pandemic created a necessary pivot from in-person to virtual presentations, the Scholars performed successfully to a live audience followed by Q&A via Zoom.

[Watch GLV on McDonnell Academy YouTube.](#)



40% Increase
Taiwanese PhD Candidates to WashU

Tuition & Stipend Paid for up to 20 students per year

Taiwan MOE Alumni Careers

- Assistant Professor
- Research Engineer
- Research Fellow
- Scientist

Partnering with Taiwan MOE for PhD education

Washington University and the Taiwan Ministry of Education (MOE) will be continuing their partnership to attract and educate some of the top PhD students coming to the US for a PhD.

Since 2012, the Taiwan MOE-WashU fellowship program has supported 39 PhD students in a range of programs such as biomedical sciences, engineering and applied sciences, and various social sciences. During that time period, Washington University has experienced a 40% increase in applications from Taiwanese students. The Taiwan MOE has provided half of the tuition and fellowship funding, and Washington University has provided the other half. After graduation, the students have gone on to positions in academia, industry and government across the world.

The McDonnell Academy has provided a key infrastructure to support this program, as well as other collaborations with Taiwanese universities. Tuan-Hua David Ho, Professor Emeritus of Biology Department of Biology, Arts & Sciences has been the faculty leader in developing the program and ensuring its success. The McDonnell Academy, and the students who are enrolled in the program, are very appreciative of Professor Ho's commitment to international education and research.

Tuan-Hua David Ho, PhD
Professor Emeritus of Biology
Department of Biology, Arts & Sciences
McDonnell Ambassador, National Taiwan University



Reimagining the McDonnell Academy International Symposium

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person proceedings of the 8th International Symposium were postponed. Nevertheless, the McDonnell Academy continued to advance dialogue and engagement among partner institutions through a series of virtual events held throughout fall 2020. The first event of the McDonnell International Symposium was the virtual **GLOBAL TOWN HALL: Hope in a Time of Uncertainty** featuring experts across disciplines and countries as they shared which societal problem has them most concerned and what gives them hope for the future. **More than 300 students, faculty and university leaders from partner institutions participated**, including experts from St. Louis, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Mexico and Uganda. Key takeaways and outcomes are available in the [International Symposium Executive Summary](#).

Reflections on hope and resilience from around the world

In the lead up to the International Symposium, the McDonnell Academy launched several initiatives to engage students, faculty and staff from partner institutions. One of these was a photo contest on the theme of **“Hope and Resilience Around the World.”** We received more than **170 submissions from every corner of the globe**. The winning entries, featured below, were from St. Louis and Istanbul. Visit our website to view a collection of photos and video responses from around the world at [Symposium Snapshot](#).



First Place: The Next Generation by Colleen Smyth | Washington University in St. Louis

"This photo was taken in June 2020 in St. Louis City, Missouri. The photo is dad and daughter. Dad works on a project called Dream Builders 4 Equity in St. Louis, which envisions a community where all people thrive. Dad is looking down at daughter, the next generation, and she is staring at the camera fiercely, giving hope and showing resilience in this moment."—Colleen Smyth



Runner-Up: Smile in Spite of Everything by Huseyin Seyyid Kaplan | Bağaziçi University, Istanbul

"I took this photo in Istanbul. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this photo gives me hope. When I saw this guy sitting in his garage, I asked him: 'Can I take your photo?' He answered 'yes' and said to me 'let me take off my mask'. He said this because he wanted to show his smile under his mask. Nothing covers anyone's smiling. It is very powerful."—Huseyin Seyyid Kaplan

Faculty-led workshops and panels form core of the Symposium

Faculty-driven research workshops on specific topics were a core part of the International Symposium. This fall, a series of workshops proceeded in a virtual format. Key takeaways and outcomes are available in the executive summary.

McDonnell International Scholars Academy
Highlights from the 2020 International Symposium



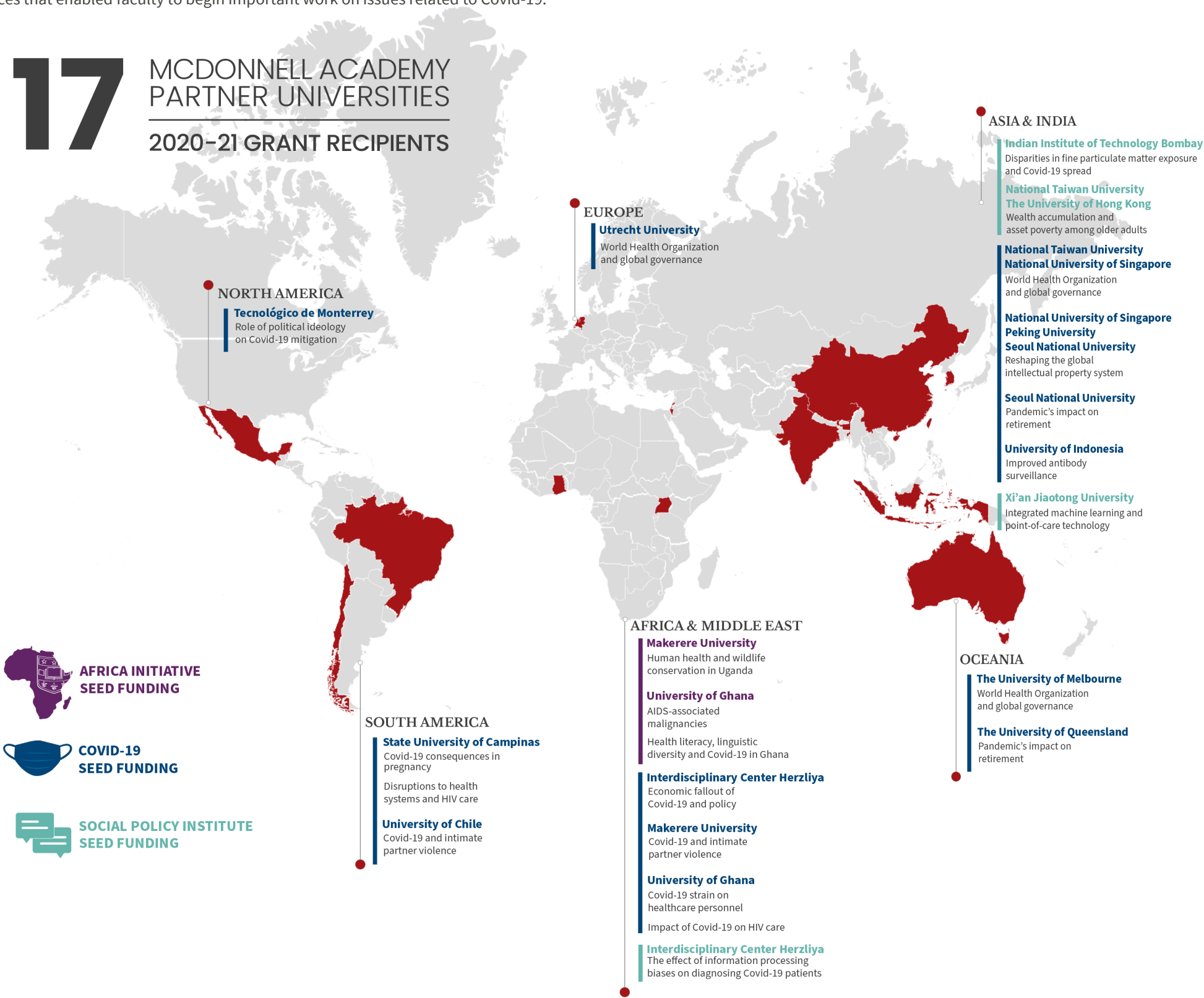
Looking ahead to 2021

The McDonnell Academy will host a virtual version of our International Symposium in October 2021. Please look out for more details during the summer.

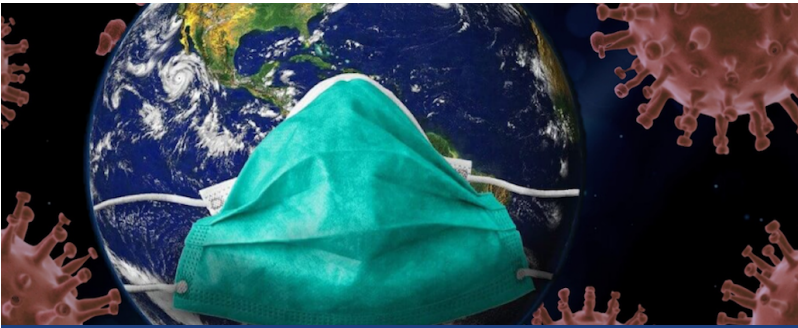
SEED GRANTS HELP LAUNCH NEW INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

The McDonnell Academy continued to advance collaborative research among its network of partner universities around the world. As the global pandemic unfolded, the McDonnell Academy responded quickly to provide much-needed resources that enabled faculty to begin important work on issues related to Covid-19.

17 MCDONNELL ACADEMY
PARTNER UNIVERSITIES
2020-21 GRANT RECIPIENTS



RESEARCH



Infectious diseases and societal impact of Covid-19

Thanks to the generosity of Bethany and Bob Millard, in July 2020 the **McDonnell Academy awarded \$250,000 in seed funding to eleven research teams** working on collaborative projects related to infectious diseases and the societal impact of Covid-19. The funded teams are tackling far-reaching COVID-19-related issues, including the pandemic's impact on the retirement process in the United States, South Korea and Australia; HIV care in Ghana, Brazil and the United States; and intimate partner violence in St. Louis, Uganda and Chile. The teams expect to gain more insight into these problems by studying the phenomenon in multiple countries and by drawing on top experts from around the world.
[Read more about this initiative.](#)

Addressing Covid-19 through AI, technology and big data

For a second year, the **McDonnell Academy** and the **Social Policy Institute** partnered to provide seed grants for international research. The previous round supported three international social-policy focused projects. This year's focus was on **addressing the challenges of COVID-19 through artificial intelligence, technology, and big data**. Three new projects were selected to receive seed funding of up to \$30,000 each. The recipients include researchers from both Washington University and McDonnell Academy partner institutions in China, India and Israel.
[Read more about this initiative.](#)

Driving new research across Africa

In its second cycle, **The Africa Initiative Pilot Grant Program**, in partnership with the McDonnell International Scholars Academy and the Institute for Public Health, awarded grants of up to \$10,000 each to eight research projects. These grants, provided with support from Nestlé Purina, will **help initiate new collaborations between WashU faculty and scholars at institutional partners in Africa**. Several of the projects will tackle global health-related issues. Three teams will engage the McDonnell Academy's strategic partners in Africa—the University of Ghana and Makerere University in Uganda.
[Read more about this initiative.](#)

COMING SOON!

The McDonnell Academy will continue supporting international collaborative research. Look for the announcement of the **Global Incubator Seed Grants Competition** later this year.



McDonnell
International
Scholars
Academy

Kurt Dirks | Vice Chancellor for International Affairs and Director

Laura Benoist | Associate Director

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