



# RESPONSIBLE DEBATE

for a sustainable future



The Young Academy of Scotland brings together entrepreneurs, academics, business leaders, teachers and other professionals to work collaboratively for the benefit of society.

Our **mission** is to help Scotland's people and policy-makers build a future that is equal, enterprising, sustainable, healthier, smarter and international.



We are recruiting now!

We also have an At Risk Academic and Refugee membership scheme.

# THE YOUNG ACADEMY OF SCOTLAND

*New Members' Recruitment*

**APPLICATIONS  
OPEN**

13 January -  
17 February 2020



- work on the challenges/opportunities of going carbon-neutral
- research into the impact of climate change on marginalised communities
- practitioner-focused debates on the future of Higher Education in Scotland, to amplify the views of those 'at the coalface'
- Mosul University library (with Book Aid International)

youngacademyofscotland.org.uk

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I'm looking for... search

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### Creating a Charter for Responsible Public Debate



"Social acts of mind...can have no existence without the intervention of some other intelligent being, who acts a part in them." — Thomas Reid, Founding Fellow of the RSE

#### Latest News

-  **Responsible Debate: what does it mean to you?**  
24th July 2019
-  **Public Debate: The Ethics of Borders and Migration Control**  
24th July 2019
-  **European report on transforming the future of aging**  
27th June 2019
-  **Dr Theodore Koutmeridis wins RSE Henry Duncan Medal**  
14th June 2019

# #YASResponsibleDebate

## Key Question:

## What makes public discussion of controversial issues go better or worse?

## #YASResponsibleDebate



When does public debate of contentious issues go wrong?

What can make contentious public debate go well?

What responsibilities do we have when debating important issues?



#YASResponsibleDebate



**Community:** Treat each other as part of a common group with shared concerns and goals.

**Accuracy:** Prioritise evidence and trustworthiness in communicating with others.

**Passion:** Speak with conviction for what you believe, but appeal to emotions responsibly.

**Respect:** Don't use offensive or disrespectful language.

**Informed:** Seek out people with different beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.

**Inclusive:** Be mindful of imbalances in power, knowledge and accessibility.

**Listen:** Hear others' viewpoints carefully, open-mindedly and empathically.

**Acknowledge:** Recognise when others change your mind; show appreciation for concessions.

**Purpose:** Value attainment of common ground and shared purpose over winning the argument.

## DRAFT CHARTER

(December 2019,  
revisions ongoing)

Collective

Informed

Respectful

#YASResponsibleDebate

# What do YOU think?

Do our draft principles make sense to you? How might you adjust or rephrase them?

Are some of these principles more important than others? How might you rank them? Would you cut any out?

Are there any gaps? What other principles might you suggest?

[www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

code: 97 13 83



#YASResponsibleDebate

## Future plans

check out <https://changeaview.com>  
= a good teaching tool!

- Schools workshops
  - Public discussion events
  - Trials in workplace/teaching/public life/social media
- ... all leading to the drafting of a White Paper and the public launch of our finalized Charter, which we hope will be adopted by lots of institutions around Scotland

# RD in education

Education = a major influence on culturally embedded habits of debate and on attitudes to knowledge, authority figures, etc

A key part of tackling climate change *collectively* is finding better ways to discuss problems and solutions

Education for a sustainable future should involve learning how to debate contentious public issues in constructive, collective ways



#YASResponsibleDebate

THANK YOU for your input  
and please **stay in touch!**

1. Jot down your contact details if you would like updates on the project
2. Tweet in more ideas about Responsible Debate, and get your family, friends and colleagues involved

#YASResponsibleDebate

3. Use our draft charter in your workplace or teaching and let us know how you get on with it! Email: [info@youngacademyofscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@youngacademyofscotland.org.uk)