



Building a Stronger Research Community in the Middle East

Abolfazl Mehbodniya,

Chair

Marie Curie Alumni Association- Middle East Chapter (MCAA-ME)

The MCAA at a glance



MCAA Annual Conference and General Assembly 2025 in Kraków, Poland

- The MCAA is a global network of researchers who **currently benefit or have benefited** from the European Commission's **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** research funding.
- Currently, the MCAA has **24,000+ members from 155+ countries**, at all career stages and from diverse research fields.

The principles of the MCAA

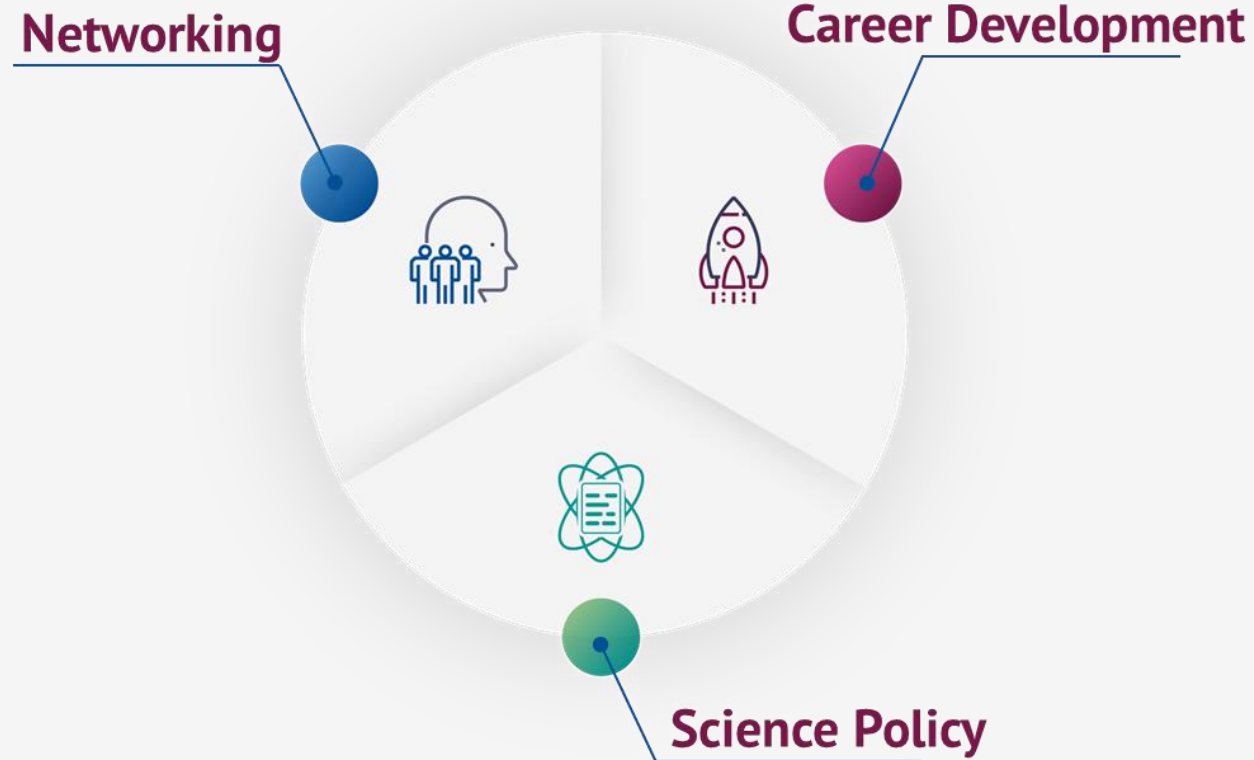
Vision

To create an inclusive and sustainable research environment that enables knowledge to benefit society.

Mission

To bring together the MSCA community, support the career development of present and past MSCA beneficiaries at all career stages, and be a voice for researchers across regions and disciplines.

Key pillars of activity



Key pillars of activity of the MCAA

Networking

MCAA Annual Conference

Flagship event for the MSCA community.

MCAA Policy Forum

Annual event to connect with policymakers.

Chapter & Working Group events

Networking, professional development, and advocacy at regional and national levels.

Career development

Courses & webinars

- MCAA Learning Programme
- MCAA Training Programme

Mentoring

- PEP-CV
- MCAA Academy

Microgrants

Financial support to members to foster their professional growth.

Awards

MCAA Awards in several categories to members for their achievements and contributions to the community.

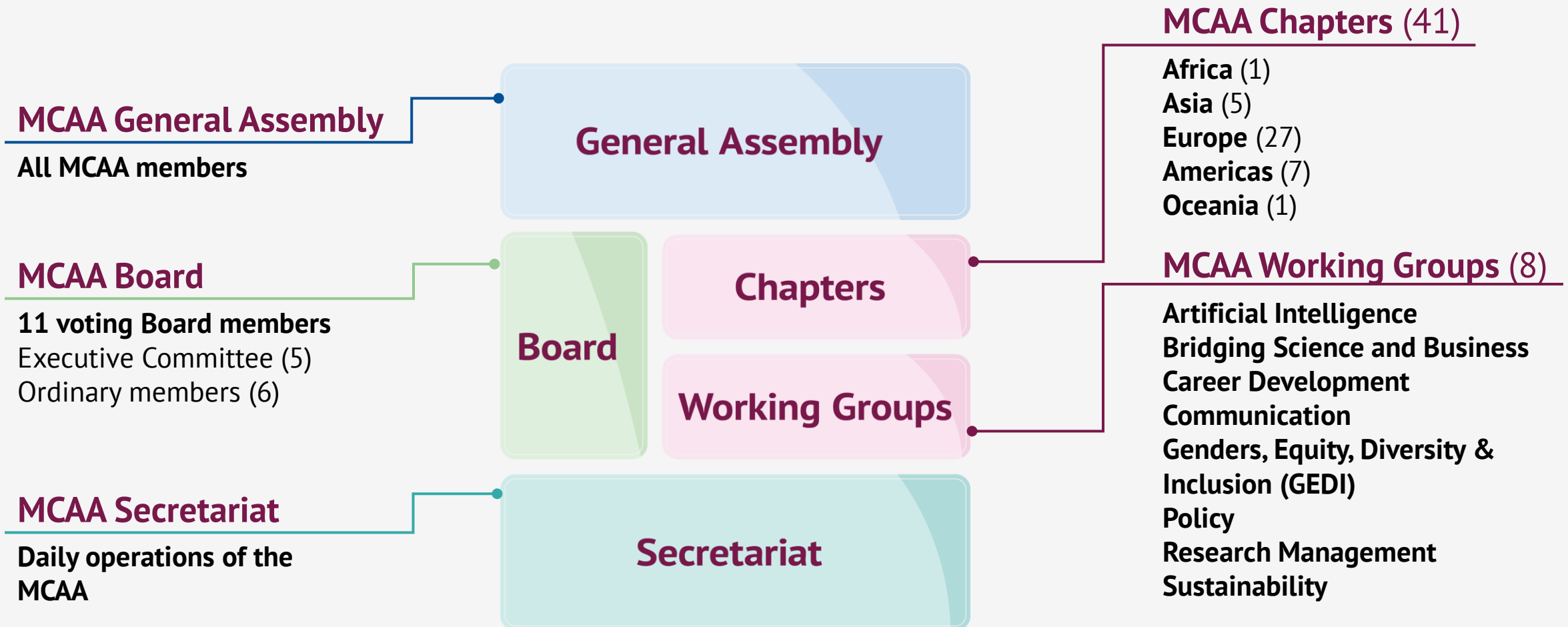
Science policy

Policy & advocacy

Amplifying researchers' voices and shaping the EU science policy sphere by:

- Collecting evidence-based insights
- Shaping the future of the MSCA programme
- Engaging with the European research community
- Connecting researchers to policymakers
- Leveraging key memberships

The MCAA structure and governance



The MCAA projects



CAPTAIN

Bolstering the impact of the MSCA by supporting operations and goals of the MCAA while introducing enhanced services.



ECS

Widening and strengthening the European Citizen Science community through capacity-building and awareness-raising activities.



CoARA Boost

Enhancing CoARA operational capacity and providing means to investigate and implement new models for research assessment.



PEP-CV

Resource for the R&I community to collaboratively create narrative-style CVs.



MSCA-GLOPOL

Supporting global cooperation in the MSCA by strengthening ties with 26 key countries and regions.



SECURE2

Implementing recommendations from the European Framework for Research Careers (RCF) to improve career progression and mobility.

ME Chapter BOARD (2026-2028)



Abolfazl Mehbodniya
Chair

a **Professor at the Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST) in Kuwait**, and I previously conducted research in Europe through a **COFUND fellowship in the Republic of Ireland**. Having benefited greatly from the opportunities provided by the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie** community.



Institut national
de la recherche
scientifique



TOHOKU
UNIVERSITY



CHAPTER



Amani Alawamleh
Vice Chair

Coming from Jordan Background in Agricultural Sciences (Plant Protection) Worked as early-stage researcher in MSCA-ITN EID in the PhD project in Italy (2017-2021)



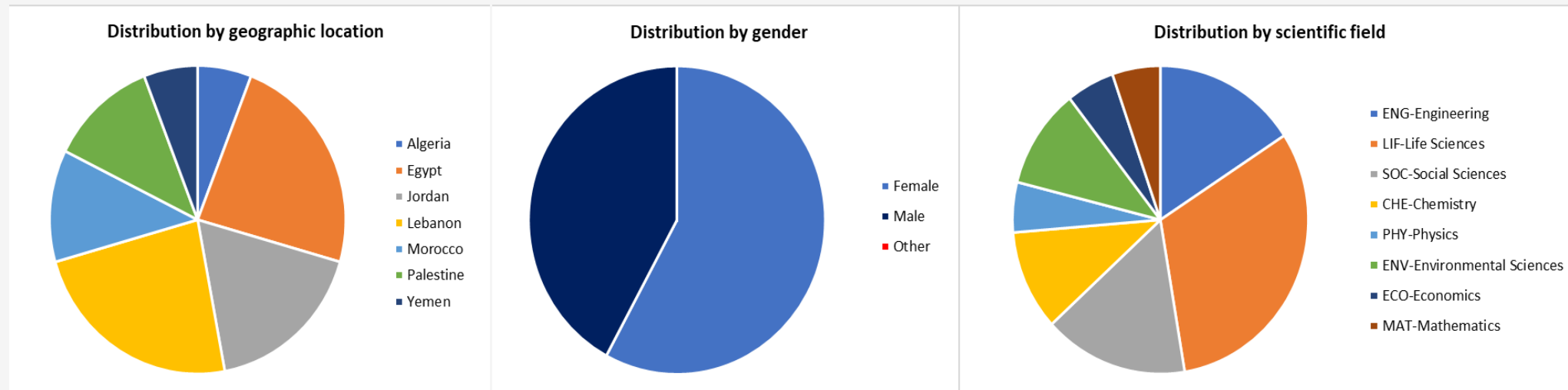
UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DEL MOLISE



FONDAZIONE
EDMUND
MACH

MCAA-ME at a glance

- The ME Chapter is a part of MCAA that acts as a network hub to focus members' activities in the Middle Eastern countries
- The chapter aims to introduce MSCA opportunities to start and develop productive collaborations between academia and industrial bodies in the EU member countries and institutions
- Currently, there are 34 active members distributed in different geographic locations, age groups and scientific fields



Who can join?

- ❖ MCAA members (MSCA fellows) who are residing or originated from Middle Eastern countries
- ❖ Membership is free

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES




**Marie Curie Alumni Association
Middle East Chapter
Webinar**

Thursday, 8th April 2021 (10:00-11:45 CET)

**Introduction to
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
(MSCA)**

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/afuPteO>

 MCAA Middle East Chapter  MCAA Middle East Chapter  Middle East Chapter MCAA



**TIPS AND TRICKS FOR PRESENTING THE MSCA
INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIP PROPOSALS**

**SPEAKER
DR. SANTI RELLO VARONA**

TUESDAY 8 JUNE 2021
16:00 - 17:00 CET



**SEMINAR
Introduction
to
Python**

19-20 JULY 2022
17:30-19:30 CEST



**INTRODUCTION TO MARIE
SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE
ACTIONS (MSCA) UNDER
HORIZON EUROPE**

HYBRID EVENT

Sunday 27 February 2022
11:00 - 13:30 CET



STORYTELLING IN SCIENCE

**ORGANISER:
MIDDLE EAST CHAPTER**

10 MARCH 2023
16:00 CET

**MCAA
AROUND THE
WORLD
WEBINAR
SERIES**



**MSCA
FELLOWSHIPS
(IF, COFUND,
RISE): Writing a
Successful
Proposal**

SUNDAY 28 AUGUST 2022
(14:00-15:00 AMMAN TIME)

**SPEAKER
DR. MOHAMMED WESAM AMER**

Organized by the Middle East Chapter of Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) and co-organized by the Cooperation and International Relations Unit of Al Balqa Applied University (Al Salt, Jordan)

Visiting Professor at Harvard University, MA, USA
Founder of the MCAA-Middle East Chapter
Dean of the Faculty of Mass Communication and Languages, Gaza University, Palestine

Call for Board members

We are looking for ME members to support:

- Events coordinator
- Communications Officer
- Secretary
- Etc,

Strategic Goals for the ME Chapter

1. organize regular networking events
2. host regional webinars
3. create mentorship programs
4. build partnerships with universities and research institutes
5. promote MSCA opportunities in the Middle East

Our chapter is:

A platform for collaboration, innovation, and leadership.

Why the Middle East Chapter Matters

The Middle East has:

1. rapidly growing research ecosystems
2. strong international collaboration potential

However, the region is still **under-connected within the MCAA network.**

Our chapter can become a bridge between:

1. Europe
2. the Middle East
3. global research communities

Activities We Can Organize





<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mcaa-middle-east-chapter-38b7031b6/>



<https://x.com/home?lang=it>



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This Chapter/Working Group is part of the Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA). Any views and opinions are, however, those of the Chapter/Working Group only and do not necessarily reflect those of the MCAA.



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