

FDI World Dental Congress 2023 – Young Dentists Forum Impact outcomes: one year later

New to World Dental Congress Sydney 2023 program was the inaugural Young Dentists Forum (YDF). The two key objectives of the session were:

- **To provide Young Dentists with the opportunity to learn about various career paths within dentistry, and**
- **To encourage the next generation of leaders within their field.**

The immediate survey results post event showed great promise across the three activities, with early career dentists and dental students attending the Young Dentist Forum in Sydney saying:

Program	88% would consider taking on leadership roles
Panel Session	75% agreed the panel discussion provided insights on career opportunities/advancements
Networking	75% agreed they made professional connections during the networking sessions

Over 40 young dentists participated in the Forum, with an average 65% survey response rate.

Survey results of participants one year later showed that:

100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had been able to apply the content to their professional dental environment
86%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have maintained connections made during networking sessions • agreed their learnings have enabled them to strengthen their professional relationships, and build networks • agreed the inspiration and motivation taken away from the event has helped advanced them professionally
71%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreed the panel discussion insights have benefitted their career opportunities/advancements • have greater awareness and improved understanding of the benefits and requirements for young dentists seeking leadership roles • have enhanced professional development / understanding of networking, connecting with influential people / speakers, and exposure to different perspectives

Additionally, 43% had actively promoted future FDI dental congress programmes to encourage more young dentists to attend and a further 43% of respondents had promoted FDI dental congresses to other young dentists if asked. This was primarily done via social media including Linked In, and via sharing the invitation to country based peers.

57% of respondents had increased their engagement and/or participation with their national dental association and 43% with the FDI World Dental Federation, with two participants now executive members of their local dental association branch. A further three participants stated they would definitely pursue a leadership role within their national dental association in the next 1-2 years.

While the sample size of respondents one year later was small (7 respondents) the outcomes and sentiments expressed with extremely positive.

Learnings and successes carried into the WDC2024 Young Dentist Forum

YDF 2023 was the inaugural event. While participation in Sydney was limited due to a number of external constraints, participation at the 2nd YDF as part of the World Dental Congress Istanbul 2024 (WDC2024) was exceptional with 330 participants attending the keynote session.

Organisers invited Sanika Shorey, former president of the Australian Dental Student Association to join and help engage with young dentists. Sanika had been involved in YDF 2023 in a panel and in the promotional podcast to attract attendance to the 2024 event. <https://fdiworlddental.org/shaping-future-young-dentists-forum-wdc24>

Another new opportunity for young dentists was the Young Dentists Speaker contest across FDI members, allowing members to present a candidate for a clinical lecture. 15 applications were received and two winners retained. This contest also created some initiatives locally as some members created their own contest at national level to select their candidates and received many good applications, leading them to consider this for their next national congress.

With the help of the YDF sponsor, internationally renowned speaker Dr Miguel Stanley was recruited. The sponsor is now also looking at developing educational assets for young dentists, focusing on leadership, and considering a regional forum in addition to the one to be held at WDC2025.

This is a great example of how change and connections started in Sydney can then be taken on to the next host city destination for the event owner to grow the impact even further.