



Turning twenty

Nature Reviews Neuroscience was first published in October 2000. In this issue, we therefore mark the 20th anniversary of the journal.



Nature Reviews Neuroscience was launched in 2000 into an already burgeoning field, which has continued to flourish over the past 20 years. To capture some of the progress that has been made over the past two decades, and mark the journal's anniversary, in this issue we feature a Viewpoint article in which some of the leading researchers who have recently published in the journal reflect on how neuroscience has developed in that time¹. They also provide some thoughts on the questions and lines of research that currently interest them.

The contributions to the Viewpoint piece collectively cover many subject areas within neuroscience. Perhaps unsurprisingly, as well as providing snapshots of the progress that has been made in understanding aspects of the workings and functions of nervous systems, the researchers' responses highlight some of the many advances in methodologies and new approaches that have emerged over this period. Moreover, they touch on some of the changes in how neuroscience is conducted — not least the rise of large-scale projects, involving many researchers and institutions, and many more samples or participants, and generating almost unfathomable amounts of data.

To reflect some of the progress in neuroscientific practice and the various methodologies, approaches and technologies being used, we have also launched a [20th Anniversary Collection](#) online that brings together past content published in the journal related to these themes. Although the Collection is mostly focused on topics we feel are particularly pertinent to the field now and as it moves forward, it also includes some older articles relating to notable methods and approaches as they emerged.

The Viewpoint also highlights some of the issues the field needs to address, including the difficulties that early career researchers have in forging a career and gender-biased practices. These issues, and others, such as the racism faced by Black scientists², existed long before 2020 and the tragic spread of COVID-19 that the year shall be globally remembered for, but all

of them have been brought into sharp focus by the pandemic. There is evidence already that the pandemic has disproportionately affected women scientists³. There are also justifiable fears around future funding as the global recession bites, particularly for younger generations of scientists⁴.

It also possible that more-positive developments may come out of the adversity of the global crisis. For example, many individuals in the scientific community participated in the [#ShutdownSTEM](#) initiative on 10 June 2020, in which they paused to reflect and educate themselves on racism toward Black scientists, and have committed to actions to effect meaningful change to tackle this issue. In neuroscience, this initiative was recently followed by the [#BlackInNeuroWeek](#), which celebrated “Black excellence in neuroscience related fields”. We hope these initiatives and others, which we fully support, and the commitments made by many, will bring about positive change on the issue of racism faced by Black researchers.

We, the editors of *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, recognize that we also need to do more to play our part in combating prejudice and bias in the field, and we commit to amplifying these issues in the journal's pages. Moreover, we will strive to increase diversity — in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, career stage and geography — among the authors we commission to write for the journal and in our pool of referees.

To end, we want to thank all the researchers who have contributed in some capacity to the journal since it launched and you, our readers, for your continued interest in the journal. We hope you find the Viewpoint interesting and insightful and the Collection useful.

1. Bassett, D. S. et al. Reflections on the past two decades of neuroscience. *Nat. Rev. Neurosci.* <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41583-020-0363-6> (2020).
2. Dzirasa, K. For Black scientists, the sorrow is also personal. *Cell* **182**, 263–264 (2020).
3. Viglione, G. Are women publishing less during the pandemic? Here's what the data say. *Nature* **581**, 365–366 (2020).
4. [No authors listed.] The future of neuroscience research after COVID-19. <https://www.bna.org.uk/resources/234/download/> (2020).