



CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP/GETTY

Demonstrators gather in Saint Paul, Minnesota, on 2 June as protests against racism spread across the United States and around the world.

## Systemic racism: science must listen, learn and change

**Nature commits to working to end anti-Black practices in research.**

**T**he killing of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police department, and President Donald Trump's crushing of protests across the United States, has angered the world, and led to marches in cities globally. The repeated killings of Black people in the United States serve as reminders – reminders that should not be needed – of the injustice, violence and systemic inequality that Black Americans continue to experience in every sphere of life.

Black people are more likely than white people to die at the hands of the police; more likely to become unemployed; and, as COVID-19 has laid bare, more likely to be burdened with ill health. Black people are similarly marginalized in most nations where they are in the minority.

**Black researchers have long been denied a platform in established institutions such as this one.”**

*Nature* condemns police prejudice and violence, we stand against all forms of racism and we join others around the world in saying, unequivocally, that Black Lives Matter.

Such statements are necessary, but they are not sufficient. They need to be followed by meaningful action.

Black people, including researchers, are taking to social media to spell out what that action should look like, calling attention to decades of literature on the steps necessary to make academia and science equitable. This outpouring is, in part, because Black researchers have long been denied a space and a platform in established institutions and publications such as this one.

We recognize that *Nature* is one of the white institutions that is responsible for bias in research and scholarship. The enterprise of science has been – and remains – complicit in systemic racism, and it must strive harder to correct those injustices and amplify marginalized voices.

At *Nature*, we will redouble our efforts to do so, and commit to establishing a process that will hold us to account on the many changes we need to make.

In addition, we commit to producing a special issue of the journal, under the guidance of a guest editor, exploring systemic racism in research, research policy and publishing – including investigating *Nature's* part in that.

Together with the rest of the research community, we must listen, reflect, learn and act – and we must never shirk our responsibility to end systemic racism.