

centralized effort. In the past year, however, the team has been developing and trialling a prototype system, with the goal – while abiding by data-privacy regulations – of collecting information on the gender, career stage and location of journalistic sources, expert authors and other contributors. We hope to be able to use this to establish and report a set of baseline figures, and then to improve on them. We are also working hard to include more voices from all groups that are under-represented in research.

More than half of *Nature's* journalism team is female, but the overwhelming majority of its members are in Europe, the United States and Australia. We recognize that we need to strive harder to find diverse sources across the world.

Journalists, non-profit organizations and scientists have written excellent guides to diversifying sources, such as at the Open Notebook ([go.nature.com/3czei0k](https://go.nature.com/3czei0k)). They have also produced databases of diverse experts in many scientific fields. And, as personal testimonies from science reporters and other journalists attest, keeping track of the numbers, as Davidson and Greene are doing, is an essential part of this process, so we can be reminded of just how much more we need to do.

## Happy 21st birthday, Young Academies

**A global movement of younger researchers is making its mark on science and policy.**

**T**he new millennium coincided with the start of an important new movement in research. In June 2000, early-career researchers in Germany established the first in a wave of national Young Academies, organizations dedicated to looking after the needs – and advancing the aspirations – of researchers at the start of their careers. Twenty-one years later, there are Young Academies in 45 countries, as well as international ones such as the Global Young Academy and the Young Academy of Europe. And the wave is growing: 2020 saw Young Academies launch in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal and Romania.

Young Academies are a necessary development in international science, as the founders of Hungary's Young Academy, which launched in 2019, explain on page 599. Most early-career researchers are in a much more precarious position than were previous generations – a situation worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic and a year of financial losses for universities. As we have reported, funding agencies are not doing enough to support these scientists. By organizing and collaborating on a larger scale, young

researchers are making themselves heard.

One of the aims of the Hungarian academy's founders is to encourage the formation of more Young Academies, and to show their peers how this can be achieved. It's timely advice: there are still plenty of places where Young Academies do not exist, including China, England, the United States and most of the Middle East, where only Egypt and Israel have Young Academies.

There's no one model for a Young Academy – their structure and funding will depend on national circumstances. Some are independent non-governmental organizations; others have a formal relationship with a country's national science academy. Regardless of the model, it's essential that they are a platform for researchers to have a voice on the issues that matter to their careers and to society.

Young Academies offer a range of activities. In the past year, they have run events and workshops on such diverse topics as working during the pandemic, grant-writing, responsible research, and supporting refugee and at-risk scholars. They also provide research-informed advice for decision-makers. For example, Young Academy members have been urging funding agencies to ensure that research-evaluation systems incorporate credit for parental leave.

The academies' advice to decision-makers is often on the topics that are front and centre for young people – such as open science and open data, climate change and biodiversity loss. Last November, members of the Netherlands Young Academy published a study, *Flying High But Flying Less*, on how researchers could reduce carbon emissions from work-related air travel.

Despite the pressures that early-career researchers experience – Young Academy members and office-holders are often carers and parents of young children – members are committed to carrying out public-engagement activities to encourage younger generations to get into science.

It takes time for the seeds of new institutions to bear fruit, but the Young Academy movement is already having an impact on scientific advice, for example. Last month, the European Commission included representatives from the 14 European Young Academies in the latest meeting of its official Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. The group advises Europe's leaders on science-policy questions, such as those related to cleaner energy or dealing with future pandemics. It's a rare example of how younger people's voices are being incorporated into official scientific advice – yet it shouldn't be a rarity. More science-advice systems need to be doing the same. This message is now more important than ever. But even before the pandemic, younger people's voices struggled to be heard in science's established institutions – especially by the leadership of funding agencies, universities and national academies.

Just as climate-change policy has been electrified by the activism of younger people, science, too, needs to hear – and act on – the voices of the next generation, as it did in earlier times. Remember that it was younger scientists – several in their thirties – who founded the Royal Society of London.

Happy 21st birthday to all Young Academies. May there be many more to come.

 It was younger scientists who founded the Royal Society."