

A Plea for Better Working Conditions for Young Scientists

February 16, 2022

It's been a while since I took the lead on writing one of these columns. The last time I did so was in June 2020, when I wrote about [my experiences as a Black scientist](#). I have been relatively quiet since then not because I haven't wanted to share advice with our readers, but because lately I just really don't know what to say to young scientists that would be helpful.

When we started this column 4 years ago, I had just started my faculty position and I agreed to join the team because I believed in the [theory of change that inspired the column's creation](#). I believed that providing practical advice, especially to young scientists who might not otherwise have access to the “hidden curriculum” that governs so much in science, might help make navigating the stages of scientific careers less daunting for those starting out. I still think that can help. But I also realize this kind of approach is not enough on its own.

The reality is that many of the issues early-career researchers face are systemic, so they won't be solved by me writing letters to *young* scientists, who are rarely in a position to make the necessary changes. Instead, they are issues that senior scientists and administrators need to take the lead in addressing. So today, I'm writing a column for those people—the people who actually have the power to change how the system operates.

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