

# Introducing ‘Letters to Young Scientists,’ a new column from Science Careers

August 29, 2018

Pursuing a scientific career can be a daunting journey. Yet many of us are not taught how to navigate the tasks and challenges—giving a high-quality presentation, surviving the academic job market, and becoming a mentor, to name just a few—as part of our standard scientific training. And even the best mentor can’t provide advice to *everyone* or cover *everything* when it comes to succeeding in science and academia. So where can young scientists go for practical, reliable advice?

In a tradition that dates back nearly a century, prominent scientists used to dispatch “letters” of advice and guidance to the next generation. In 1936, Nobel laureate [Ivan Pavlov](#) offered kernels of wisdom in a [letter](#) in *Science*. More than 80 years later, the letter from the famed physiologist remains as fresh and relevant as his research on conditioning. Countless other scientists have written similar dispatches. The list includes biologist E.O. Wilson’s 2013 book [Letters to a Young Scientist](#) and psychologist John Cacioppo’s “[A Letter to Young Scientists](#).” Building on this rich history, we wanted to start our own ongoing conversation with young scientists with a new column: Letters to Young Scientists.