Editorial

A farewell to 2023

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As 2023 draws to a close, the *Nature Neuroscience* editors reflect on the year in neuroscience and in our pages.

This has been a busy year for neuroscience and for our journal. We marked the 25th anniversary of our first issue, and we've been celebrating this by publishing special Q&As throughout the year. It's been such a joy to have these conversations and to share them with our readers. We've been speaking with established leaders in the field, as well as with those earlier in their careers to provide a more diverse perspective. Our goals in this project have been to honor the breadth and excellence of our field and to allow our guests' authentic personalities, struggles, wisdom, and insight to shine. We plan to continue publishing these pieces, and we look forward to more stimulating dialogs in the new year.

We've also enjoyed sharing content that advances the discourse in our field. On the topic of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in neuroscience, we published a Perspective on addressing exclusionary practices in acquiring and analyzing neuroimaging data, a Comment on how global collaborations can minimize racial and ethnic bias and a Perspective providing a European view on structural barriers to women's career progression in neuroscience. We've also published pieces that are meant to spark conversation, such as a Comment on the need for more research on the neuroscience of hormonal contraceptives and a Perspective on the ethical implications of genetic research on brain- and behavior-related traits.

It's also been about a year since we added the figshare tool to our submission portal, which allows authors to make their primary data available to reviewers (and to readers, once their paper is published). An additional editorial in this issue highlights the success of this endeavor and discusses our commitment to open science more broadly.

We are, of course, deeply proud of the primary research content that we have been privileged to publish this year. We are consistently dazzled by the papers that come across our desks, and we take great satisfaction in helping them to develop via our editorial process. It's difficult to choose among so many superb papers, but a few discoveries that stand out to us are developing a decoder that can read out perceived speech based on fMRI data, showing that the antidepressant-like effects of psychedelic drugs are mediated by direct binding to the BDNF receptor TrkB, using neural recordings to predict chronic pain state, characterizing local protein translation in microglial processes, and revealing that myelin can promote axonal degeneration in the context of autoimmunity.

Beyond sharing our own content, we love having the opportunity each month to feature interesting papers published in other journals via our Research Highlights section. In this issue, we're using this section to do a Year in Review — a round-up of exciting papers published this year — with a bit of discussion about how they fit into the context of the field and what the future may hold. The highlighted papers reflect emerging trends in neuroscience, including the role of oligodendrocytes and myelin in neurodegenerative disease, neurotechnology for restoring motor and speech function, studying pregnancy and women's health, and, yes, octopuses.

Still, we must acknowledge that 2023 has also brought tremendous suffering. At the forefront of our minds as we write this are the horrors of the October 7th attack perpetrated by Hamas in Israel and the ensuing Israel–Hamas war, along with the waves of anti-semitism and Islamophobia that are reverberating internationally. We also feel the pain of the many ongoing armed conflicts in the world, including in Sudan, Ukraine, and the Sahel region of Africa.

During these difficult and uncertain times, we find hope and comfort in science. The scientific community is an example of the value of international cooperation toward shared goals. Scientific research is an inherently optimistic endeavor, and new discoveries bring with them the possibility of a better world. We wish all our readers a safe and hopeful end to 2023 and a brighter year to come.