

Nature Aging coming of age

 Check for updates

As we embark on our sixth year of publication, we reflect on what the journal has achieved and highlight some of its successes. This anniversary issue also features two Q&As. One pulls back the curtain on the work of the journal's backstage team. The other samples the thoughts and opinions of some of the many researchers who supported the journal early on, as authors, advisers or reviewers.

It has already been five years since *Nature Aging* launched, on 14 January 2021. We have seen so many discoveries and developments that have kept us both busy and excited that these five years have flown by in an instant. From the early days of the journal, part of our vision has been to bring high-impact aging research from different corners of the field – including the life, clinical, health and social sciences – together in one place with high visibility and broad reach. Five years later, this remains what makes *Nature Aging* unique: a journal dedicated to aging research, from the basic knowledge of the intricate biology of aging to the impact of population aging on society.

Over the past five years, the journal has grown substantially. Our issues have increased in size, from only 4 to 6 research articles in 2021 to 11 or 12 today. Our reviews and opinions section has flourished, featuring a growing number of researchers and leaders voicing their opinions, synthesizing evidence and offering new perspectives on the science of aging and its impact on our societies. Since its launch, the journal has published over 550 research articles, authored by more than 6,700 researchers who together form a global network distributed over 60 countries.

The number of citations accumulated by the journal since its launch adds up to nearly 10,000, contributing to a 2-year impact factor of 19.5 and rising, and a 5-year impact factor of 22. Papers published in the journal have been

read and talked about abundantly and widely, with over 2.5 million downloads and close to 27,000 Altmetric mentions in 2024 alone.

Since the journal's launch, we have published four special issues, on the themes of **ageism**, **dementia**, **reproductive aging** and **immune aging**, and contributed to 11 **Collections** across the *Nature* Portfolio. The editorial team has also been attending and contributing to many conferences and workshops, and co-organized four *Nature* Conferences, on the biology of **stem cells across the lifespan**, **brain aging**, **dementia** and how to measure **healthy aging** in humans.

We improved the journal's peer-review experience by formally giving early-career researchers credit for their peer-review contributions and by offering our authors the choice to publish peer-review reports alongside their article¹. We have also been experimenting with artificial intelligence by integrating its new language capabilities into some of our processes, in the first instance to support the production of research highlights². Our team is growing to five permanent editors, with a new member joining us in 2026.

Behind the journal's original vision was the idea that bringing different strands of aging research together – an idea captured in the cover image of **this anniversary issue** as a developing weave – can promote unity across disciplines, foster cross-pollination and ultimately lead to the strengthening and amplification of the science of aging. This approach has served the journal well, and hopefully it has also helped the community. Going forward, the selective and rigorous curation of diverse disciplines in aging research will continue to be a guiding principle for *Nature Aging*.

As part of this anniversary issue, we are publishing two Q&As. The first one features interviews with our production, art and copy editor colleagues, as well as our editorial assistant, who help us to put each issue of the journal together every month. This conversation gives a peek at what happens backstage at the journal, something that is rarely on display in the pages of journals. In the second Q&A, we

interviewed over 40 scientists who contributed to the journal in its early days, as either authors, advisers or peer reviewers. Collectively, their thoughts and opinions on the field form a rich, high-level perspective on the past and future of aging and age-related disease research and its impact on human health. They point to existing gaps, challenges and opportunities, and offer some advice for researchers entering the field. Recurrent themes among the answers include the importance of sex differences in aging, the growing recognition of the role of the environment in shaping how we age, the heterogeneity of human aging, and how aging biology is progressively but steadily entering the clinical space, creating new opportunities for disease prevention and for public health. One frequent piece of advice to new aging researchers was to cultivate broad interests, a recommendation that aligns with the interdisciplinary mindset of aging researchers.

Launching a new journal is a challenging task, one which would not have been possible without all the early supporters who believed in the idea behind *Nature Aging* and we are thankful for their contributions. Beyond early adopters, we are also greatly appreciative of all the other authors, reviewers and readers who have since contributed to the journal and supported its growth.

In our first Editorial, we wrote that it was “an exciting time to be working on aging”³. As we look back at the past five years and imagine what the future holds, it seems that now is an even more exciting time to be working on aging. As the journal is coming of age, we will continue to strive to publish stimulating articles and to improve the services we offer, and we look forward to the next five years of working with and for the broad community of aging researchers.

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References

1. *Nat. Aging* **5**, 951 (2025).
2. *Nat. Aging* **3**, 1167 (2023).
3. *Nat. Aging* **1**, 1 (2021).