

# Scientists are doing their most creative work later in life

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In another illustration of the contributions older people make to society, an article in the current edition of *Chemical & Engineering News* (*C&EN*) describes how older scientists are winning Nobel prizes more often these days than in the past. *C&EN* is the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society, the world's largest scientific society.

C&EN Senior Editor Bethany Halford describes new research showing that the average age at which Nobel laureates in chemistry, physics and physiology or medicine do their prize-winning work is increasing. It shows that since 1960 most Nobel prizes in chemistry have been awarded for work done after the laureate's 40th birthday, while between 1901 and 1960 work done before age 40 predominated.

The research suggests several explanations, including the fact that younger [scientists](#) now are spending more time getting advanced doctoral degrees and in temporary research positions afterwards. The study also describes a transition from awarding prizes for theoretical research (which favors younger scientists) to that based on extensive experiments (which favors older scientists).

**More information:** Scientists Are Doing Their Most Creative Work Later In Life, [cen.acs.org/articles/89/i49/Scientific-Creative-Work-Later.html](http://cen.acs.org/articles/89/i49/Scientific-Creative-Work-Later.html)

Provided by American Chemical Society

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