



The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)

MTA

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences is the most trusted public institution in Hungary, performing public duties related to the cultivation, support and representation of science. Its self-governing public association of more than 19,000 members is celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2025.

The greatest institution of Hungarian science was established by Count István Széchenyi, who offered a year's income from his estates to found the Academy on 3 November 1825 at the Diet of Hungary. Thus, the Hungarian Learned Society was formed, which has been officially known as the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1845. In 2025, the Academy is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its foundation. The Hungarian research community has been marking the bicentenary with large-scale exhibitions and a variety of events and publications, with the website mta200.hu serving as the central information platform on current events and interesting stories from the past of the Academy.

Mission of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

- The Academy is a public association that promotes Hungarian science. It represents the unity of the Hungarian scientific community, embracing science in Hungary and beyond its borders.
- The Academy preserves and cultivates the Hungarian language and is the guardian of the scientific and cultural heritage of the nation.
- The Academy contributes to the creation of an excellent research environment and represents the interests of Hungarian scientific research.
- The Academy is the custodian of scientific quality and ethics. It safeguards the freedom of scientific research and expression, free from the influence of external interests.
- The Academy's mission is to expand the international relations of Hungarian science, to present its results and to represent its interests.
- The Academy is an advisor to the nation. The knowledge of its members stands at the disposal of the nation and the government of the day.
- The Academy communicates the results of scientific research to society. It fights against pseudoscience and unscientific views by widely disseminating scientific methodology and results.

The Palace of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) is located in the historic centre of Budapest, on the banks of the Danube. It was inaugurated in December 1865. The



35.5-metre-high, approximately 11,000-square-metre palace is Hungary's first public building constructed in the neo-Renaissance style. Its design and spirit have had a decisive influence on the further development of Hungarian architecture. The first phase of its renovation, which began in the spring of 2024, was completed in 2025.

Public association and types of membership

The public association of the Academy is open to all Hungarian scientists holding a PhD degree, and it currently counts 19,000 members in total. Members with outstanding scientific achievements are encouraged to apply for the title of "MTA Doctor of Science", a recognition issued after a long and thorough process of peer review and the presentation and evaluation of a doctoral thesis. The most highly regarded MTA Doctors of Science may be elected corresponding members of the Academy, and may eventually be admitted in the ranks of full members. The Academy awards external membership to scholars of Hungarian nationality based outside Hungary who maintain close ties with Hungarian science and research. Honorary members are eminent foreign scientists whose scientific achievements are particularly acclaimed by the members of MTA. Corresponding, full, external, and honorary members of the Academy are together also referred to as "academicians".

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ASSOCIATION OF THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

19,808

Hungarian members: 17,908
External members: 1,901

MEMBERS OF THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

756

Full members: 291
Corresponding members: 71
External members: 198
Honorary members: 190

(Based on data as of 26 September 2025)

General Assembly

The General Assembly is the Academy's supreme decision-making body; it meets at least once a year. The Assembly is attended by Hungarian members and 200 non-academician members of the public association elected as representatives with equal voting rights. The General Assembly elects the full-time leaders of the Academy for a three-year term. Between two assemblies, the Presidium is the ultimate decision-making body of the Academy.

Scientific Sections

Composed of academician and non-academician members, MTA's public association ensures the representation of all fields of science, including Social Sciences and Humanities, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences and Engineering. Scientists are organised into eleven scientific sections as follows:

- I. Section of Linguistics and Literary Scholarship
- II. Section of Philosophy and Historical Sciences
- III. Section of Mathematics
- IV. Section of Agricultural Sciences
- V. Section of Medical Sciences
- VI. Section of Engineering Sciences
- VII. Section of Chemical Sciences
- VIII. Section of Biological Sciences
- IX. Section of Economics and Law
- X. Section of Earth Sciences
- XI. Section of Physical Sciences

The work of each section is directed by a section chair elected by the members for a three-year mandate.

Elected leaders of MTA (2020–2026)

President: Tamás Freund, neurobiologist
Secretary-General: László Kollár, civil engineer
Deputy Secretary-General: Anna Erdei, immunologist
Vice-Presidents: György Kosztolányi, research physician
Ferenc Hudecz, chemist
Vanda Lamm, legal scholar

Regional Committees and Hungarian science abroad

The Regional Committees of MTA play an essential role in organising scientific life within their respective geographical regions in Hungary, fostering cooperation between MTA and higher education institutions, and promoting the dissemination of the latest scientific results to society. In addition, MTA has a statutory duty to support Hungarian science abroad and maintain contact with scholars based outside Hungary who are engaged in research carried out in Hungarian or on a Hungarian subject matter. Around 1,900 Hungarian researchers based abroad are members of MTA's public association.

Women and equal opportunities in science

Wishing to capitalise on the unique perspectives and assets that women scientists contribute to scientific research and science policy debates, MTA makes considerable efforts to support the career of women researchers through targeted programmes and grants. Accordingly, it strives to ease the return of young female scholars to their scientific careers after a parental leave and to even out differences in professional advancement between men and women. In the spring of 2025, the proportion of women among corresponding and full members of MTA attained 17 and 8 per cent, respectively, and the goal is to achieve a steady increase in female membership.

MTA as an advisor to the nation

In accordance with the Academy Act, MTA carries out its scientific policy advisory activities based on broad cooperation with various actors of the state and society including the central and local governments, the Parliament, actors of the Hungarian research, development and innovation ecosystem, and educational institutions. To this end, it participates in the work of advisory bodies engaged in policy development.

MTA for scientific integrity and quality assurance in science

The Academy recognises individual scientific excellence with the title "Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences" (**MTA Doctor of Science**). This title may be

awarded to those who have contributed original scientific results to their discipline since obtaining their PhD, who are well-known and esteemed members of the scientific community of their discipline, and who have performed outstanding scientific research and presented their scientific results in a doctoral thesis.

Since 2021, the Academy has extended its recognition of excellence to scientific institutions by establishing the prestigious certification of **MTA Centre of Excellence**. This distinction is awarded by the Academy to research centres, research groups and industry research units operating in Hungary with the highest level of scientific excellence and outstanding performance in research management.

MTA for research funding

The **Bolyai János Research Scholarship**, a highly prestigious, merit-based, national scholarship established by MTA in 1997, aims to promote excellence in research and development among the youngest researchers and to assist them in qualifying for the title of “MTA Doctor of Science”. The **Lendület (Momentum) Programme** has been established to strengthen the pool of young Hungarian researchers by dynamically reviving research conducted in research institutes, universities, public collections and public institutions, and by attracting outstanding talent from abroad and offering competitive conditions for them in Hungary. Moreover, the Academy runs a number of top-down programmes that are strategically important for Hungary’s future. In 2022, MTA launched **national research programmes** in the fields of **Brain Research, Sustainable Development and Technologies, Science for the Hungarian Language, Post-COVID, and Ageing**. Within the framework of its **Research Programme for the Development of Public Education**, it supports research aimed at providing scientific foundations for the development of public education and methods of knowledge transfer and value transmission.

MTA for a science-friendly society

Hungarian Science Festival

In accordance with its public duties, the Academy regularly organises and hosts scientific conferences and science popularisation events of all kinds to present scientific results to the general public and decision-makers alike. The Hungarian Science Festival (MTÜ), organised each year throughout the month of November, is MTA’s flagship event of science communication. Open to the general public, it aims to bolster trust in science, explore and showcase the various scientific aspects of critical social problems, provide a comprehensive overview of the latest scientific achievements, and spark the younger generations’ interest in science.

mta.hu/tudomanyunnepe

MTA High School Alumni Programme

Launched by MTA President Tamás Freund in 2020, the MTA High School Alumni Programme allows researchers to visit their alma mater or any other secondary school and talk to students about their work and scientific research. The aim of the programme is to promote scientific careers and critical thinking among the youth in order to lay the foundations of a science-friendly society. As of June 2025, nearly 1,700 members of MTA’s public association have volunteered for the programme, and close to 300 schools have joined the Alumni initiative.

mta.hu/alumni

Science-friendly cities

In 2025, MTA has approached over 500 cities in Hungary offering partnership and cooperation in promoting science in the everyday life of local inhabitants and the decision-making processes of local governments, as well as in raising awareness of the scientific heritage and present-day achievements of the regional scientific community, and in any other areas in which science can support the life of local communities. The most successful cities in sharing, creating and applying scientific content approved by the Academy will be awarded a special title in recognition of their efforts.

International relations

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences is a member of more than 60 European and regional scientific organisations, and cooperates with over 40 scientific academies and science funding organisations. Moreover, MTA is committed to supporting the science—policy—society nexus on a global level also as the founding partner and regular host of the biennial World Science Forum conference series. Powered by the alliance of the most significant international organisations of science, WSF is a leading event of global science diplomacy that provides an opportunity for open discussion on the role of science and its relationship with society and policy.

worldscienceforum.org

Hungarian Young Academy

Established as a grassroots scholarly society in 2019 and supported by MTA, the Hungarian Young Academy aims to be the voice of young researchers and represent their interests both in Hungary and abroad. While taking an active part in the scientific activities of MTA, the Hungarian Young Academy seeks to support the professional development of young researchers and strengthen the relationship between researchers and society.

<https://fka.mta.hu/en/>