



Why Your Advocacy Matters

“It seems like not much gets done on Capitol Hill because of gridlock. How do I affect change?”

“How does Congress affect neuroscience anyway?”

“Politics aren’t my favorite, can you help me understand the role I play?”

“My members of Congress already support my issues! Now what?”

Your policymakers work for *you* and when advocates use their collective voice to send emails, hold meetings, make phone calls, and engage on social media, it makes an impact. Advocates — on their own and as part of a larger group — have affected change in the past and will continue to do so when they make themselves heard.

Building relationships with policymakers is the best way to secure robust funding for biomedical research and favorable research policies. To ensure that the interests of neuroscientists are understood and well represented, SfN members should also be prepared to contact their policymakers during critical moments in the legislative process.

Policymakers rely on their constituents and other stakeholders to inform their decision-making. Your expertise could help to avoid unintended consequences of new or changing policies. By starting a dialogue with your members of Congress, which is as simple as sharing information about your federally funded neuroscience research, you could help to advance neuroscience priorities.

For example, when a neuroscientist speaks at town hall meetings about biomedical research funding, it demonstrates to the policymaker that science is a priority for their constituents. If you foster this relationship, you may become a trusted resource for feedback on policies that affect scientific research.

It’s always in a policymaker’s best interest to listen to and engage with constituents. The more voices that speak up and speak out about a topic, the more it stands out.

Join SfN and the community of scientists to advocate for neuroscience. SfN is prepared to support you by providing tools and tactics to help you engage effectively with policymakers. We’ll also alert you to important messages on public funding issues and the critical times to take action.

SfN’s international members who are interested in advocacy should contact your SfN staff partners at advocacy@sfn.org for assistance connecting with your national organization.