

THE POWER OF MEDIA REPRESENTATION

FOR YOUTH



SCIENCE ROLE MODELS

What scientists
do we want to see **more** of
in our favorite series and movies?*



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LIFESTYLE: A SCIENTIST AS COOL AND SOCIAL

Enough: The scientist as a nerd, geek, unpopular, and socially awkward.
Because: Students shared that this stereotype makes them doubt a science career. A lonely life centered around science is not appealing.
More: We need to see more scientists with a rich life, filled with friends, family, hobbies, at least the occasional party, and who are skilled at dancing.

APPEARANCE: SCIENTISTS WITH HOODIES AND NAILPOLISH

Enough: Scientists with white labcoats, glasses, tubes, Petri dishes, and microscopes.
Because: Even for STEM scientists a lab coat is not the default lab attire. Plus, the lab coat as a symbol of science overlooks the wide variety of non-lab-based disciplines.
More: We need scientists in hoodies, jeans; with a pencil or microphone; on top of a mountain or at a science festival. Scientists with nail polish, high heels, colorful dresses or shirts, or VR headsets.

2





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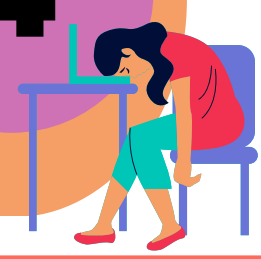
EXPERTISE: SOCIAL SCIENCES, HUMANITIES AND ARTS AND (SSHA) ARE SCIENCES TOO

Enough: The majority of scientists in fictional content are medical doctors or researchers in STEM-related research areas
Because: Students in the SSAH research areas will be key players in tackling current societal challenges, such as climate change, mis- and disinformation, migration, and responsible technology.
More: We want to see more variety in the sciences represented on screen, from marine biologists to art historians and media scientists. We imagine pandemic movies where virologists and social scientists can share the lead.

SKILLS: STRAIGHT A'S NO WAY - THE ROAD TO DR IS NOT ALWAYS EASY OR LINEAR

Enough: Genius scientists who were meant to be academics from the day they were born and excel at any test.
Because: Becoming a scientist is not always a calling and the road is not always easy. Science is more than crystallized intelligence.
More: We want to celebrate scientists who got where they are through trials and tribulations. And, yes a scientist can also have a learning disability, whether it is ADHD, ADD or dyslexia, and bring home report cards without straight A's.

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PROCESS: SCIENCE IS SLOW AND ZIGZAGS

Enough: Individual AHA moments and shouts of EUREKA
Because: Science is a process of trial and error, with moments of failures, insecurities, doubts and starting over. It is a collaborative effort. To build trust in science, it is important to show how it works. We need do do away with the misconception that one experiment brings the truth.
More: Show the nuances of the scientific process, that science is teamwork, and let scientists provide input in shows with science in it.

IDENTITIES: ANYONE CAN BE A SCIENTIST

Enough: Einstein lookalikes.
Because: When asking children (and also adults) to draw a scientist, they all draw Einstein. Many children do not imagine they can be a scientist, because they never see anyone like them in media or books. Anyone can be a scientist. If they want to.
More: The list of scientists we would like to see is endless. In short, we need a greater variety of identities, women, people of color, people with disabilities, for example. We hope you will share who you want to see @SeeMeBeMe_

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MAKE ROOM FOR THE - UNTIL NOW - UNLIKELY SCIENTIST

SEE ME BE ME
The Power of Media Representation

SeeMeBeMe_

*Acknowledgments - we thank all participants of the science role model event we held on the 18th of January 2023 for their input for this first SeeMeBeMe GUIDE