



Campaign for Science & Engineering Monthly update – October 2008

What we are working on

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/members/projects.htm>

- **Impact of Publicly-Funded Research Opinion Forum:** Our next Opinion Forum is scheduled for the 12 January in London. The meeting will look at the social and economic impact of publicly-funded research and how it can best be measured and facilitated. In September CaSE had meeting with the Science Minister and high-level officials in Number 10, HM Treasury and DIUS to discuss the project. IBM and the Institute of Physics are sponsoring the Opinion Forum and report.
- **New Science Minister:** CaSE welcomed the appointment of Lord Drayson as the new Science Minister. We look forward to working with him in his new role.
- **Science Diploma Consultation:** CaSE sits on the Science Diploma working group. There is a consultation underway regarding its development. We encourage people to respond by 14 October.
http://www.sciencediploma.co.uk/diploma_in_science.aspx
- **Science and Society Consultation:** Our response will focus on putting forward our proposals to increase the diversity and uptake of science and mathematics. We will also discuss the Government's use of science and engineering. Deadline is 17 October. You can feed your thoughts through DIUS's interactive website:
<http://interactive.dius.gov.uk/scienceandsociety>

CaSE News

- **New member:** Microsoft, London Mathematical Society and The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications have agreed to join CaSE as organisational members.
- **Science in the Scottish Parliament:** CaSE will be taking part in this year's event in Edinburgh on 5 November 2008. If you are interested in attending, please visit the Royal Society of Chemistry's website:
<http://www.scienceandtheparliament.co.uk>

CaSE Diary – September

<http://savebritishscience.org.uk/about/diary/>

26/09/08 CaSE founders

Nick Dusic, CaSE's director, met with two of its founders, Professor Denis Noble and Dr John Mulvey, and discussed a variety of issues including continuity of the campaign over a change of Government.

26/09/08 Nick Dusic met with Robert Campbell from Wiley-Blackwell today.

25/09/08 CaSE at DIUS

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever met with officials at Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and primarily discussed issues around the impact of publicly funded research.

25/09/08 CaSE at DCSF

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever met with an official at the Department for Children, Schools and Families to discuss many concerns about science education. It was a very interesting and helpful conversation which focused on triple science provision in schools, but also covered CaSE proposals to increase uptake of science and mathematics in schools.

24/09/08 Science Diplomas

Hilary Leever participated in a meeting of the Science Diploma Development Partnership (SDDP). Hilary Leever joined many voices at the meeting expressing serious concern over the short-timetable for development and CaSE urges Government to extend this. The organisational complexity, collaborative requirements, its unclear status for university entrance, and the demands that will be put on science and mathematics teachers are also worrying. CaSE encourages its members to contribute to the consultation or to contact us with further comments.

Participate in the Science Diploma Consultation

23/09/08 Primary Science Testing

Two reports published by the Wellcome Trust today add to a growing body of evidence and concern about the negative impact of testing on children's primary science education. CaSE supports the view that science should remain at the core of the curriculum at both primary and secondary levels, but that the prevalence of "teaching to test" resulted in an early rise in test scores that was not accompanied by any tangible evidence of improvement of scientific knowledge in other measures. Hilary Leever commented that "The current SATS fiasco may give the Government the ideal opportunity to step back from its obsession with testing and look at what science and mathematics education should really be about."

19/09/08 CaSE met with representatives from Microsoft and Pfizer today.

17/09/08 CaSE met with a special adviser to the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills to discuss STEM skills and other science policy issues.

16/09/08 DIUS EXP08

Nick Dusic took part in the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills EXP08 in Manchester. Commenting, Nick Dusic said "One year on from its creation, DIUS has made progress on bringing together higher education, skills, science and innovation. It is critical that going forward it makes the research and skills agenda a cross-governmental one."

16/09/08 TUC resolution on Science and Engineering

CaSE welcomed the TUC resolution that supported science and engineering skills. Commenting, Nick Dusic said, "I was pleased to find that the trade unions have agreed

to take a stronger role in arguing the case for improving the scientific and engineering skills of the country."

09/09/08 Meeting with HM Treasury

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever met with officials at HM Treasury to discuss science and engineering policy issues and CaSE's forthcoming Opinion Forum on the social and economic impact of publicly funded research.

08/09/08 Nick Dusic and David Hawksett met with Professor Ian Lesley, Pro Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Cambridge.

05/09/08 Royal Society on Education

The Royal Society "State of the Nation" report published today argued that political short-termism rather than proper consideration has driven many flawed educational reform. Although the Government frequently offers an upbeat assessment of the numbers of students taking STEM subjects, when these numbers are examined subject by subject the gains mostly occur in the biological sciences and particularly in psychology and sports science. If percentages of overall student population are examined rather than actual numbers, then there is little evidence that the plethora of initiatives to the increase student preference for STEM subjects are having impact at all. As CaSE complained at the time, the announcement of the new Science Diploma to start in 2011 was an overtly political move that has left inadequate time to develop let alone pilot-test the new qualification.

03/09/08 Nick Dusic and David Hawksett met with Professor Julia Goodfellow, Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent and member of CaSE's Advisory Council. We discussed both CaSE policy issues and Professor Goodfellow's work for John Denham MP, Secretary of State for DIUS, on how universities could work with schools to improve the uptake of STEM subjects.

03/09/08 CaSE at Number Ten

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever had a meeting today at Number 10 where they discussed Government science policy, investment in R&D and STEM skills. Nick Dusic commented afterwards "Today we took our critical concerns straight into the heart of policymaking, continuing CaSE's engagement with the highest levels of Government."

02/09/08 CaSE meeting with Science Minister

Nick Dusic and Hilary Leever met with Ian Pearson, the Minister for Science, today. They discussed current issues in science and engineering policy including investment in R&D and how to increase STEM skills. The Minister was interested in hearing more about CaSE's proposals on increasing UCAS points for STEM subjects, awarding STEM diversity bursaries, and improving overall diversity in science and engineering, including funding a resource center for disabled scientists and engineers. CaSE and the Minister have made plans to continue discussions over the coming months.

CaSE in the Media

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/inthemedial/index.htm>

For more information on our activities go to our website
www.sciencecampaign.org.uk

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