

## Request for Proposals – August 2023

### People’s Vision for R&D: A public dialogue to explore society’s stake in UK research

The Campaign for Science and Engineering’s Discovery Decade project is aiming to make R&D matter to more people by helping R&D organisations and advocates connect with a broader base of public supporters.

We are seeking to drive a behaviour change in how the sector advocates for R&D, and to do so are creating a space for those championing R&D to work together to articulate a clear and compelling vision of a future with R&D at its heart.

To support this process, CaSE is seeking a supplier to deliver a public dialogue exploring the extent to which members of the public feel agency and ownership in the UK’s research system; what could change to increase that agency and ownership; and how this could contribute to a society-centred vision for R&D.

### Background

Successive UK Governments have committed to increasing investment in R&D to over £20bn - but betting big on R&D means that advocates have a responsibility to make a clear and compelling case for R&D being a national priority, especially at a time when public finances are tight.

In 2022-23, CaSE led a [major study into public attitudes to R&D](#), using quantitative and qualitative methods, to create a comprehensive dataset revealing how different people think and feel about R&D. This shows that while R&D is seen as important, many people do not feel a strong connection to it and would not prioritise it over other important societal issues.

Our research suggests that if advocates want R&D to be seen as a societal priority then the sector must work towards a society-centred vision for R&D in the UK. To do this, we must first understand whether the UK public feels it has a stake in the UK’s research system, and explore whether and how they would like that to change.

### Objective

Strengthen the Discovery Decade programme’s public attitudes research through a public dialogue exercise to explore the question: To what extent does UK society feel agency and ownership in the UK’s research system, and do participants feel this could and should change?

We expect this would consider questions such as:

- Whether, and to what extent people feel agency and ownership over the decisions, processes and outputs of the UK research system
- What could it look like for people to have more agency and ownership? What would the benefits and risks be?
- If that change was to be achieved, what expectations would participants have of the R&D system, and actors within it?
- *Potential suppliers are encouraged to suggest additional issues that could be explored within the scope of this project to address the overarching question.*

The outputs of this project are aimed at organisations and individuals across the R&D sector who could take steps to build a stronger connection with the public, including considering how to increase the public's agency and ownership in the UK's research system. We include in this the full range of academia, charities, private sector and communications and public engagement organisations. We are also taking broad view of R&D, which covers disciplines from STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) to social sciences, the arts and humanities.

## **Scope of services**

We are seeking a supplier with a strong track record in delivering public dialogue exercises and would welcome bids from teams expert in working with stakeholders from the UK's research system. Working closely with the Discovery Decade team, our Expert Group of external advisors, and the wider CaSE team, the supplier will:

### **1. Gather evidence from R&D sector stakeholders**

- CaSE will host six workshops with stakeholders from across the UK's R&D system to identify stakeholder perspectives on priorities, barriers, and solutions for a stronger relationship between the public and R&D advocates. CaSE will identify participants, develop discussion materials and produce a set of meeting summaries
- The supplier will use these workshops to inform the design and development of materials for the public workshops, including by: meeting with CaSE in advance to discuss the questions and materials for the sector workshops; observing at least three workshops; analysing the workshop outputs
- Supplier to assess whether additional stakeholder interviews are needed and carry out as required

### **2. Design, develop and deliver a public dialogue exercise**

- Recruit a group of 30-50 people broadly reflective of the UK public
- Design and prepare materials for public workshops, informed by stakeholder perspectives
- Design and facilitate two to three dialogues between the public and R&D advocates to explore the issues outlined in Objectives
- Work with participants to set expectations for a stronger relationship between society and the UK research system that offers the public more agency and ownership, which supplier and CaSE team will use to produce a set of recommendations for the sector
- NB: To include space for one or two observers at each of the public workshops

### **3. Produce an external-facing report and contribute to dissemination, to include:**

- Produce an external-facing report to reach different audiences, including sector stakeholders and media, detailing participants' attitudes to society's role in the UK research system and their expectations for a long-term relationship with R&D where the public have more agency and ownership
  - Supplier will be responsible for report writing and design, with input from CaSE project team and Expert Group during approx. three rounds of comment
  - Supplier will work with CaSE team to produce a) a set of conclusions and b) translate public expectations into a set of recommendations for the sector to meet them
- Contribute to additional dissemination activities to engage R&D advocates and stakeholders after the project, including a launch webinar or event

**4. Produce an internal-facing briefing, to include:**

- A set of informal (not designed) reflections and recommendations for the CaSE project team, developed through end-of-project meeting(s)

**5. Attend/provide regular meetings and updates**

- The supplier will attend regular meetings with the CaSE project team (frequency to be agreed at project kick-off) and provide timely updates throughout the project. The supplier will engage with the Expert Group convened by CaSE, including presenting to the group at project milestones

### **Project oversight and timeline**

The project must be completed by 31 July 2024. We expect the commissioning process to be complete by mid-October 2023, and for the latter part of 2023 used to develop the project. We foresee sector workshops being held in early 2024 and public workshops before and June 2024.

The project will be led by the [Discovery Decade](#) team within CaSE. We have convened an Expert Group from across public engagement and research to advise on the project, including overall direction, design of public workshops and final report. In addition, the Discovery Decade programme has an advisory board, which will be kept updated on the project's progress by the CaSE team.

### **Budget**

We are seeking a supplier with a track record of delivering high-quality public dialogue projects and expertise in working on projects within the research and innovation system. We have a budget of up to **£90,000 (inclusive of VAT)** for this work, with proposals being selected based on value for money.

### **Applications**

Suppliers are asked to submit, in no more than 4 sides of A4 or 20 slides:

- A biography or overview of your organisation
- Your track record and expertise relevant to the deliverables, in particular public dialogue methodology and experience (and in report writing and qualitative data analysis)
- Names of one or more previous client(s) and a brief description of the work you did for them
- Your proposed approach (800 words / 10 slides), including:
  - Overall approach/methods and workshop design, including suggestions on appropriate demographic recruitment and recruitment method
  - Recommendations for in-person or virtual public workshops, or a combination, including detailing how they would ensure inclusivity
  - An indicative timeline
- A budget breakdown (inclusive of VAT) for all elements of the project (in tabulated format) with an indication of team day rates attributed to each major component of the project
- Your organisation's insurance and EDI policy

We are looking for:

- A track record of delivering impactful public dialogue projects
- A track record in producing high-quality and rigorous reports for professional organisations
- Confidence in advising which approach(es) will work for CaSE's particular context
- Enthusiasm to engage with the project team
- Knowledge of the R&D sector, including industry groups, higher education organisations, professional groups or learned societies, and major employers
- Value for money

We invite suppliers to respond with a proposal to the questions described, but also to highlight any challenges or proposed improvements, including to the outlined timeline and approach.

Please submit your proposal to [discoverydecade@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:discoverydecade@sciencecampaign.org.uk) by **09:00 on Tuesday 5 September 2023** and contact Rebecca Hill ([rebecca@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:rebecca@sciencecampaign.org.uk)) with any questions.

We are committed to making our commissioning exercises accessible to everyone. If you have accessibility requirements, please get in touch and we can offer adjustments to the response format.

### **Timeline**

Request for proposals issued	Monday 21 August
Deadline for submissions	Tuesday 5 September, 09:00
Shortlisted suppliers notified	Tuesday 12 September
Supplier presentations (in person)	Wednesday 4 and Thursday 5 October
Second interviews (virtual)	Tuesday 10 October
Contract offered	Thursday 12 October

### **About the Campaign for Science and Engineering**

The Discovery Decade project is part of the Campaign for Science and Engineering, and funded by a grant from the Wellcome Trust. CaSE is the UK's leading independent advocate for science and engineering. Our mission is to ensure that the UK has the skills, funding and policies to enable science and engineering to thrive. CaSE represents over 115 organisations including industry, universities, professional bodies, and research charities, as well as individual scientists and engineers. CaSE is an independent, non-partisan charity funded entirely by our membership.

### **About the Discovery Decade**

The Discovery Decade programme is helping R&D organisations and advocates to connect with a broader base of public supporters. We are creating a space for those championing R&D to work together and articulate a clear and compelling vision of a future with R&D at its heart.

Over the course of 2022 and 2023, CaSE worked with the research agency Public First to carry out a major study into public attitudes to R&D, which comprised four nationally-representative surveys, polling a total of 18,000 people, and 14 focus groups across the UK.

Our research found that R&D is seen as important - 70% of people said it was important for the Government to invest in R&D – but not urgent, with many struggling to see how R&D benefits them, their loved ones or their communities. We found that making stronger connections to the purpose of R&D and the place it is happening are vital in effective messaging that will reach more people. A summary of the findings and the major trends can be found in our [Eight Key Trends report](#).

In addition, we are creating working with creative agency Luna 9 to translate our public attitudes data into an ambitious brand strategy for the R&D community, including working with stakeholders to [develop innovative campaign prototypes](#).

More information on the programme and its work can be found on [CaSE's Public Opinion pages](#).

## Resources

Relevant projects and resources include:

- [Creating Our Future](#) (Science Foundation Ireland)
- Various projects from [Sciencewise](#), which supports projects to ensure that the public informs science and technology policy and decision-making
- [The future of health research in the UK: An online dialogue project for the Academy of Medical Sciences](#) (Academy of Medical Sciences)
- Work to involve citizens in the civic universities discussion, for instance [Greater Manchester Universities' Citizens' Panel](#)
- [People's Plan for Nature](#) (WWF, RSPB, National Trust)