

Public Attitudes to R&D: Terminology

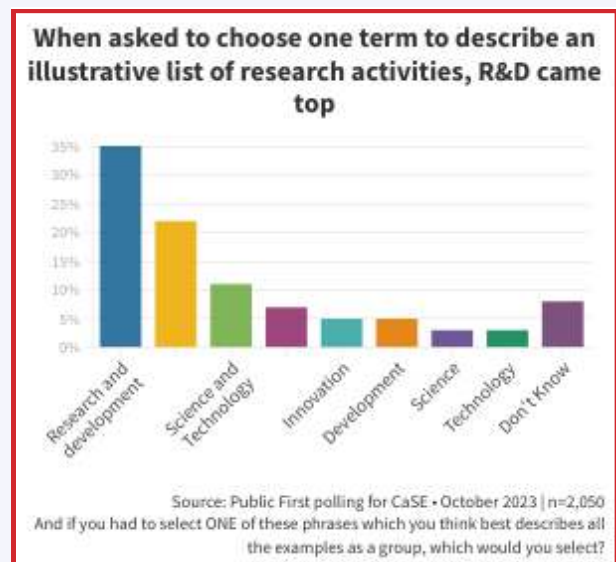
This briefing covers responses to terminologies tested in CaSE's Discovery Decade 2022-23 public attitudes study, which comprised five nationally-representative surveys polling a total of 20,000 people, and 14 focus groups. Full findings on [CaSE's website](#).

Terminology clutter risks confusing our audiences

- Advocates use many different terms to describe the research sector's activities. This fragments our sector and its impact on society, and risks confusing our audiences
- We are encouraging the sector to better align its terminology to provide a **coherent, clear message** that demonstrates the breadth and depth of the research system

'Research and Development' is a familiar phrase

- There is no 'silver bullet' term, but **Research and Development performed consistently well**
- **44%** of people have heard of 'R&D' and know what it means
- At the end of our May 2022 survey, **87%** said R&D was a clear way of talking about the topic
- 'Research and Development' was most often chosen to describe a broad list of research activities and was usually **preferred over any other term** in a range of scenarios



R&D gains support in the context of investment, jobs and education

- **70%** of people said it was important for the Government to invest in R&D
- Words chosen to describe investing in R&D included **valuable, smart and reassuring**
- Most people think jobs in R&D are **important and interesting**
- **82%** of people think R&D skills are important for children to learn at school

'Innovation' and 'Research and Innovation' also perform well

- Across our first four polls, **'innovation'** was the best-performing alternative term to R&D
- When tested across multiple questions, **'Research and Innovation'** performed similarly to 'Research and Development', despite being less well known as a phrase
- 'New Discoveries' consistently performed worse than others, with the public viewing doubling investment in this as "risky", "worrying" or "unnecessary"