

# Request for Proposals – December 2024

## CaSE Public Opinion: Understanding and tracking public attitudes to R&D

Deadline: 09:00 Tuesday 21 January 2025

CaSE works to champion research and development (R&D) as a political and societal priority that can transform lives and livelihoods. We are generating public opinion insights and data-informed advocacy tools that can support a behaviour change in how our sector advocates for R&D, with the aim of making R&D matter to more people.

From 2021-2024, our Discovery Decade programme built a foundation of public opinion research, comprising nine nationally-representative polls of UK adults (samples sizes between 2,000 and 8,000) and 20 focus groups. The programme achieved a high profile across the R&D sector – attracting senior endorsements, coverage in sector-facing media, engagement from international organisations, and adoption across funders, universities and R&D businesses. To build on this, CaSE is seeking to commission a public research agency to:

1. Ensure CaSE establishes a robust data series to track public attitudes to R&D and R&D investment.
2. Ensure CaSE is able to rapidly respond to opportunities to support the policy development processes of CaSE, our members and the wider R&D sector through ad-hoc quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research.

The two workstreams will be contracted separately, but we are looking to commission a single supplier to deliver both, to ensure consistency of approach and effective working between CaSE and the supplier.

This programme aims to develop a landmark, widely-used data source that can sit at the heart of the R&D sector, feeding into policy development processes across public, private and charitable organisations. The supplier will be working with an engaged CaSE team, who are keen to explore new methods and ensure that this work attracts broad attention.

Please submit your proposal to [publicopinion@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:publicopinion@sciencecampaign.org.uk) by **09:00 Tuesday 21 January 2025** and contact public opinion and involvement manager Rebecca Hill ([rebecca@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:rebecca@sciencecampaign.org.uk)) with any questions.

First interviews (central London) will be on Tuesday 4 or Wednesday 5 February, with second interviews (virtual) the following week. We aim to offer a contract on Monday 17 February.

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.

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## Background

From 2021-24, CaSE ran the Discovery Decade programme, which sought to make R&D matter to more people by providing advocates with evidence, advice and spaces to trial new approaches that aimed to strengthen the connection between the public and the R&D community. CaSE was recently awarded a further five-year grant from Wellcome to extend and evolve our work on public attitudes to R&D.

From 2021-24, our work included [extensive public opinion research](#), encompassing nine nationally-representative polls of UK adults (samples sizes between 2,000 and 8,000) and 20 focus groups. This included our [2022-23 major study into public attitudes to R&D](#), which created 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.

Further polls and focus groups in 2024 aimed to [support R&D advocates ahead of the 2024 UK General Election](#); explore how R&D can be linked to the Government’s missions; and explore attitudes to global-facing R&D. Separately, CaSE commissioned a [public dialogue exploring society’s stake in R&D](#), with a focus on public involvement in R&D. CaSE is increasingly seeking to integrate our public opinion work with policy development and advocacy activities, building on successful joint working in the election.

CaSE’s Discovery Decade programme has found supportive advocates across funders, universities and R&D businesses, including at a senior level, and our resources have become widely used by these groups. The next phase of work will need to maintain the high-quality and robust outputs expected from CaSE, to further feed this appetite.

The outputs of this programme of work are aimed at organisations and individuals across the R&D sector who could take steps to build a stronger connection with the public. We include in this the full range of academia, charities, research funders, private sector and communications and public engagement organisations. CaSE takes a broad view of R&D, which covers disciplines from STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) to social sciences, the arts and humanities.

## Objectives

The CaSE Public Opinion team is seeking to commission a public research agency to:

### **Workstream 1: Ensure CaSE establishes a robust data series to track public attitudes to R&D and R&D investment.**

The supplier will deliver two waves of large-scale opinion polls (in 2025 and 2028) at a size that allows for detailed breakdowns by different demographics, including by UK regions. These would be based on a set of core questions to be developed primarily from [our 2022/23 polling](#), to establish a data series that tracks attitudes over time. Quantitative data collection will be supported by qualitative research. We welcome suggestions for the exact methodology used to ensure a high-quality and robust data set that is compatible with our 2022/23 study.

### **Workstream 2: Ensure CaSE is able to rapidly respond to opportunities to support the policy development processes of CaSE, our members and the wider R&D sector through ad-hoc quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research.**

The supplier will deliver a series of reactive quantitative and qualitative research to support CaSE's policy development and influencing activities, as well as those of the wider R&D sector. This work will run from early 2025 to late 2029 and will likely include 8-15 nationally representative polls along with other quantitative and qualitative research to support understanding and evaluation of public attitudes to R&D at local, regional and national levels.

The two workstreams will be contracted separately, but we are looking to commission a single supplier to deliver both, to ensure consistency of approach and effective working between CaSE and supplier. The contracts would specify review stages (between each wave in workstream 1 and on an annual basis in workstream 2) and include appropriate break clauses, including if performance does not meet agreed standards.

## Scope of services

We are seeking a supplier with a strong track record in delivering large-scale public opinion research and experience working with stakeholders from the UK's research system. CaSE is an engaged client, and the successful supplier will need to work closely with CaSE staff on the design of the approaches for both workstreams, including questionnaires and discussion guides, and in the review and analysis of results. For qualitative work, CaSE would seek to act as an observer wherever appropriate.

The supplier will benefit from CaSE and other stakeholders' knowledge, working primarily the CaSE Public Opinion team, but also Policy and Communications – as well as relevant Board members or external advisors.

The supplier will meet a series of deliverables in a manner that demonstrates value for money. For ease, this section sets out the specification of services divided by the two workstreams.

Workstream 1: Ensure CaSE establishes a robust data series to track public attitudes to R&D and R&D investment

The supplier will deliver two waves of large-scale opinion polls (in 2025 and 2028) at a size that allows for detailed breakdowns by different demographics, including by UK regions. These would be based on a set of core questions to be developed primarily from [our 2022/23 polling](#), to establish a data series that tracks attitudes over time. Quantitative data collection will be supported by qualitative research.

For both waves, we require quantitative and qualitative fieldwork, cleaning and editing of the data, data analysis and reporting, along with support for CaSE in its own write-up, further content and communication of the results. In our Discovery Decade work, CaSE worked closely with the supplier to produce detailed write-ups of public opinion research, which were published in CaSE's voice on our website. We expect to take the same approach for workstream 1, but we would welcome input on other ways of working.

The successful supplier is expected to use industry best practice methodology to ensure high quality data collection that is representative of the UK population. Suppliers must use a rigorous and robust sampling method and a core expectation is that CaSE and the R&D sector will be able to look at detailed breakdowns by different demographics, including UK regions (NUTS1/ITL1).

To provide context, CaSE's 2022-23 study comprised five nationally-representative surveys, with the first being a smaller sample size of 2,000 to trial questions and approach, followed by our core 8,000 person poll. The three remaining polls explored certain issues or aspects of R&D messaging in significant detail. We imagine the two waves being commissioned here would deploy a single survey, potentially with a pilot survey if deemed helpful.

Quantitative research will be supported by qualitative research. Our 2022-23 study involved 14 focus groups across the UK. CaSE expects each of the 2025 and 2028 waves to require qualitative work to support and further explore results of the quantitative research. We imagine this would again involve a series of focus groups across the UK, focusing on specific aspects of R&D or R&D investment, but we are open to a range of methodologies.

Suppliers should set out their proposals for the exact methodology to support the development of a rich and robust set of both quantitative and qualitative research outputs. We are open to using different methods than those used in our previous public opinion research to allow for suppliers to suggest innovative approaches.

### Workstream 1: Timeline

Suppliers should include a proposed timeline for both waves. CaSE wants to run these studies on a three-year cycle, following on from our largest survey in July 2022, with wave one conducted in 2025 and wave two in 2028. We have set out an indicative timeline below for wave one but are open to proposals for reasonable adjustments.

- **December 2024 – March 2025:** Tendering and contracting process
- **April – July 2025:** Questionnaire development, including review and piloting as necessary, and qualitative research design
- **August 2025 – September 2025:** Data collection

- **September – October 2025:** Data analysis and reporting
- **November 2025:** Wave one findings published
- **December 2025 – May 2026:** Further dissemination of wave one's findings

### Workstream 1: Deliverables and requirements

CaSE expects the following from the supplier. This list is not exhaustive, and we are open to discussion on additional or alternative deliverables, or the exact form they take to maximise efficiency and value for money:

- Regular meetings with the CaSE team
- Observing R&D sector stakeholder engagement during study design/development – suppliers are expected to attend at least three in-person or virtual meetings to hear stakeholders' perspectives and priorities during the study design, for each wave.
- Provision of data tables for internal and external use. This programme requires that the data tables are published on CaSE's website for any organisation or individual to download. In addition, individual level data should be provided to CaSE for external use on a request basis. All data must be provided in a widely usable format (i.e. Excel, CSV).
- Reporting and analyses – CaSE expects:
  - A short written or verbal presentation of the key findings promptly after fieldwork has been carried out
  - A summary of the trends from the quantitative research, suitable for external publication (up to 10 pages, PDF)
  - A summary of the trends from the qualitative research, suitable for external publication (up to 5 pages, PDF)
  - A more detailed analysis of the full results by survey section, including commentary on demographic splits, for internal CaSE use to inform fuller write up (up to 20 pages)
  - A summary of future directions and potential questions to explore in future research, for CaSE's internal use (1/2 pages/slides)
- Detailed review of CaSE outputs – CaSE expects suppliers to review detailed write-ups and data visualisations (CaSE uses Flourish) ahead of publication
- Support in development of press and communications materials – suppliers are expected to review press materials and offer quotes where appropriate
- Support in dissemination of results to R&D sector stakeholders – suppliers are expected to attend at least three in-person or virtual meetings to discuss results and one virtual webinar to coincide with the launch of each of the waves

CaSE has worked closely with our existing supplier in the Discovery Decade programme to develop detailed write-ups, briefings and data visualisations for publication on CaSE's website. We are open to other ways of working, and ask suppliers to outline suggestions that can make best use of the supplier's expertise and CaSE's capacity.

### Workstream 1: Contracting and costing

This contract will cover the delivery of both waves of the study (in 2025 and 2028), including design, delivery, communication and dissemination. These waves will involve quantitative

and qualitative research methods, and must allow for detailed breakdowns by different demographics and the creation of a robust a data series that tracks attitudes over time.

CaSE's 2022-23 study comprised five nationally-representative surveys and 14 focus groups. We imagine the two waves being commissioned here would deploy a single survey, potentially with a pilot survey if deemed helpful. We imagine qualitative work would involve a series of focus groups across the UK, but we are open to a range of methodologies.

**CaSE will be guided by the supplier as to what is a reasonable budget for this activity (both waves), although we expect it will fall into the range of £200,000 to £250,000.**

CaSE expects to have a standard break clause in the contract, in case agreed standards have not been met, and we will schedule a review point six months following the publication of the wave one results.

Workstream 2: Ensure CaSE is able to rapidly respond to opportunities to support the policy development processes of CaSE, our members and the wider R&D sector through ad-hoc quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research

The supplier will deliver a series of reactive quantitative and qualitative research to support CaSE's policy development and influencing activities, as well as those of the sector. This work will run from 2025-2029 and will likely include 8-15 nationally representative polls along with additional quantitative and qualitative research to support understanding and evaluation of public attitudes to R&D at local, regional and national levels.

CaSE is integrating public opinions and perspectives into its day-to-day policy development, political engagement and influencing, and strategy development. We expect that this will require a series of public opinion polls and supporting qualitative work. To ensure consistency between our two major studies and these smaller, ad-hoc or responsive studies, we would like to commission the same supplier for both workstreams.

This work will support CaSE's strategic aims ensure UK R&D has sustained and productive investment, empowered people and places, and strong local, national and global connections.

Workstream 2 will necessarily be responsive, and we particularly welcome suppliers proposing new approaches to achieve the following outcomes.

- **Inform CaSE's policy development processes** by providing information and advice to support CaSE's members and the wider R&D sector, and explore public attitudes to R&D issues with public and political salience. We expect that this will involve 8-15 nationally-representative polls over 2025-29, but are open to suppliers' proposals for additional or alternative approaches. We expect each of these projects to last between three and 12 months from conception to launch.
- **Support CaSE's new programme of work focused on using place as a strong connection point with the public**, building [on previous work](#) that has included small pilot studies in UK locations. We expect that this will involve mixed-methods research at regional, local or hyperlocal levels, to understand specific audiences' attitudes and

measure how these change. We expect each of these place-based projects to last between six and 18 months.

- **Evaluation of the impact of public messaging activities** developed and tested by CaSE and partner organisations through CaSE's public opinion work, where this is best achieved with quantitative or qualitative research. For instance, assessing the reach and impact of a week-long out-of-home advertising campaign in a UK town. The time for these projects will vary depending on the specific piece of work.

The exact methodologies will be chosen on a case-by-case basis, with input from the CaSE team and the supplier, with input from external advisory sources where necessary. As such, the supplier is requested to provide an outline of the different methods that could be used to achieve these outcomes alongside indicative prices for each.

We expect the supplier to bring their own expertise when designing and developing questions, discussion guides and other materials. We would also welcome suppliers outlining their ability to accommodate different perspectives during the development process, including from stakeholder or public stakeholders.

Due to the ad hoc nature of this workstream, suppliers are asked to outline how they would ensure sufficient resourcing within their organisation to manage requests.

### Workstream 2: Deliverables and requirements

CaSE expects the following from the supplier. This list is not exhaustive and we are open to discussion on additional or alternative deliverables or the exact form they take:

- Regular meetings with CaSE team and any advisory boards set up for individual projects as the study is developed
- Appropriate advice on the best methodologies to use based on the supplier list provided at commissioning, based on CaSE producing a clear brief
- Timely delivery of the evidence gathering, to help CaSE keep pace with fast moving issues
- Provision of data tables for internal and external use. This programme requires that the data tables are published on CaSE's website for any organisation or individual to download. In addition, individual level data should be provided to CaSE for external use on a request basis. All data must be provided in a widely usable format (i.e. Excel, CSV).
- Reporting and analyses – CaSE expects:
  - A short written or verbal presentation of the key findings promptly after fieldwork has been carried out
  - Reports for each research project, to include a summary of key trends from quantitative and qualitative research and more detailed analysis of survey results, suitable for external publication (up to 30 pages, PDF). *Please note that this is a different approach to reporting from Workstream 1.*
  - A summary of future directions and potential questions to explore in future research, for CaSE's internal use (1/2 pages/slides)
- Review of CaSE outputs – CaSE expects suppliers to review any write-ups produced as part of this work, including additions to our 'live' summary of all public opinion

research results, analyses for the CaSE website and data visualisations (CaSE uses Flourish) ahead of publication

- Support in development of press and communications materials – suppliers are expected to review press materials and offer quotes where appropriate
- Support in dissemination of results to R&D sector stakeholders, for instance at a limited number of CaSE webinars or other external events when new results are published

### Workstream 2: Contracting and costing

To ensure the production of high-quality datasets and continued competitiveness for CaSE, we propose a break clause in this contract based on quality of work produced and value for money. These terms will be agreed upon award of the contract, but suppliers are requested to provide outline terms as part of the application process. (See below.)

**As part of the proposal, we are seeking the supplier to set out a price list for activities they consider relevant to our objectives.** These prices would be set for 2025 and 2026, and then revisited annually starting in January 2027 to allow for any inflationary changes. Any new prices would be mutually agreed upon, with the option for either party to break the contract if a satisfactory agreement cannot be found.

### Applications

Suppliers are asked to submit:

1. Background and contextual information, in no more than 4 A4 sides or 8 slides
  - A biography or overview of your organisation
  - Your track record and expertise relevant to the deliverables
  - Names of one or more previous client(s) and a brief description of the work you did for them
2. Your proposed approach for Workstream 1, in no more than 8 sides of A4 or 20 slides:
  - Your proposed approach for Workstream 1
  - 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
3. Your proposed approach for Workstream 2, in no more than 8 sides of A4 or 20 slides:
  - The methodologies you would recommend using to achieve the objectives outlined, an explanation of why and examples of where you have successfully used these methodologies
  - A price list for each of the methods outlined (inclusive of VAT) for 2025 and 2026



4. Core wording for a proposed contract for each of Workstream 1 and 2 (allowing for unknown elements), setting out your proposed wording of break clauses to meet our requirement specified above.
5. Copies of your organisations' insurance and EDI policy and details of membership of relevant industry or oversight bodies

We are assessing proposals on factors including:

- Value for money
- A track record in producing high-quality and rigorous research for professional organisations
- A track record of working collaboratively with clients over years-long projects or programmes
- 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

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 [publicopinion@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:publicopinion@sciencecampaign.org.uk) by **09:00 Tuesday 21 January** and contact public opinion and involvement manager 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	Wednesday 17 December 2024
Deadline for submissions	09:00 Tuesday 21 January
Shortlisted suppliers notified	Monday 27 January
Supplier presentations (in person)	Tuesday 4 or Wednesday 5 February
Second interviews (virtual)	Wednesday 12 February ( <i>provisional</i> )
Contract offered	Monday 17 February ( <i>provisional</i> )

## About the Campaign for Science and Engineering

The Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE) works to put science and engineering at the heart of the UK's future. By offering responsive and non-partisan solutions, we aim to help research and innovation thrive in a way that improves people's lives and livelihoods. We are an independent, membership body representing over 100 scientific organisations including businesses, universities, learned societies, and research charities as well as individual scientists and engineers.

### About CaSE Public Opinion

CaSE's public opinion work aims to help R&D organisations and advocates to connect with a broader base of public supporters. This work began with a three-year Discovery Decade programme, funded by Wellcome, which created 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.

From 2022-24, CaSE has carried out a [series of studies into public attitudes to R&D](#), which comprised nine nationally-representative surveys, polling more than 30,000 people, and held 34 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.

CaSE has worked to translate our public attitudes insights into practice, including a series of [tools and guidance](#), an [ambitious brand strategy for the R&D community](#), and work with stakeholders in local areas to [develop innovative campaign prototypes](#).

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