

Public Attitudes to R&D and Charities

This briefing summarises public attitudes to R&D and charities. It is based on evidence from extensive quantitative and qualitative research carried out by CaSE since 2022. Full results can be found on [CaSE's Public Opinion Research pages](#).

Charities' role in R&D is valued but may not be fully understood

- 46% associate charities with R&D (July 2025). However, in separate polling just 18% thought charities fund large amounts of R&D (July 2022).
- Focus group participants rarely mention research charities unprompted, but when discussed, charities are generally seen as altruistic and valuable.

Research charities are well trusted

- 84% trust information about R&D from research charities, and 80% trust research charities to be honest about how much money the Government should invest in R&D. This ranks them top out of a range of R&D voices for both questions (July 2025).
- 73% trust information about R&D from patients or patient groups, and 69% trust them to be honest about how much money the Government should invest in R&D (July 2025).
- When a set of named messengers were tested on trust, reliability and agreement with specific messages, a named research charity performs best (July 2022).

Charities can use medical research and its beneficiaries to connect

- Focus group participants consistently cite medical research as an example of R&D, and when asked to prioritise extra R&D funding, 86% choose research into new medicines and treatments (July 2025).
- 17% would be interested in taking part in a clinical trial in the next 12 months and 77% say that researchers should engage more with the public about the social and ethical implications of their research (July 2025).
- Participants express an interest in hearing stories from beneficiaries of R&D, and charities are in a position to bring together information on R&D with personal stories.

“I think case studies and personalising it helps... It starts with a person who's got dementia, a person who's had cancer, a person who's lost a family member. You can tell that story from beginning to end. You can talk about the problem and the sadness and the solution and personalise it and ground it in a real story.”

Male, 45-54, Sutton/Croydon