

Public Attitudes to R&D 2025: Benefits

This briefing summarises findings on the public's attitudes to the benefits of R&D from CaSE's Public Attitudes to R&D 2025 study, which comprised a nationally representative survey of 8,000 UK adults, eight focus groups and 20+ follow-up interviews. Full results can be found on [CaSE's Public Opinion Research pages](#).

Many people feel disconnected from R&D and its benefits

- 41% say that R&D is relevant to their lives and just 29% say they feel connected with R&D.
- Just 29% could immediately think of lots of ways R&D benefits the UK, falling to 18% when asked about either their local area, or them and their family.
- Qualitative research supported this finding, as participants struggled to think of benefits, especially on a personal level.
- However, personal benefits are desirable: 80% say it is important R&D delivers benefits for "me and my family" and participants wanted to hear about tangible benefits that were closer to home.

“ I struggled to connect R&D to benefits felt by 'me' - I know what R&D is, but I could not relate it to my life.”

Female, 25-34, Clacton

“ I think we as human beings are selfish. So, we very much want to see what is relevant to us, how it affects us, how it affects our family.”

Female, 45-54, Taunton

R&D's role in addressing some priority issues is not always clear

- A majority believe R&D has an important or essential role to play in challenges such as improving the NHS (79%) or generating more clean or low carbon energy (77%).
- However, there was a disconnect between some of the public's highest priority issues and R&D's perceived role: although 94% say reducing the cost of living is a priority, just 58% say R&D has an essential or important role to play in addressing it.

Many believe the benefits of R&D are not felt equally across society

- 45% say R&D benefits some more than others, with this group tending to describe the wealthy or elite and the private sector as the main perceived beneficiaries.
- 43% said R&D happens much more in some areas of the UK than others, and 69% think that ensuring that R&D is spread evenly across the UK should be a Government priority.