

Public Attitudes to R&D 2025: R&D and place

This briefing summarises findings on attitudes to R&D and place 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](#).

Awareness of local R&D is low, but appetite for more information is high

- 74% say they know hardly anything or nothing about R&D in their local area, but 70% agree they would like to hear from researchers about the R&D happening in their area.
- Case studies of local R&D were positively received in focus groups, particularly when related to issues people cared about or where they made a link to job creation.

More local R&D is seen as beneficial to communities

- 83% could identify advantages from more R&D being in their local area, selecting growing the local economy, opportunities for young people and well-paid jobs.
- In focus groups, economic benefits and more jobs were recurring themes, although there was some doubt about whether jobs would be for local people.
- 56% would support a new R&D laboratory in their local area, and 68% a new science museum or discovery centre.

“ I would feel great if there was a new research and development laboratory in my town... There would be more jobs for local people and hopefully whatever comes out of it would benefit from the local area as well.”

Female, 45-54, Taunton

The UK is not seen as a world leader in R&D but many support this ambition

- Just over half believe the UK is either a world leader in R&D (17%) or is keeping pace but not leading (37%). Some 24% think the UK has fallen behind in R&D.
- 81% say the UK should aim to be either a world leader or keep pace with other major economies.
- The US, China and potentially Germany and Japan are perceived as R&D leaders.

“ As a country, I strongly believe that we should be aiming for being leaders [in R&D]. I think if we try to keep up with the pace, we run a risk of actually falling behind.”

Female, 18-24, Nottingham