



Engaging Labour Party supporters about R&D

A guide for engaging with politicians and voters ahead of the Autumn 2026 party conference season.

This briefing summarises attitudes of Labour voters and offers advice on how to better engage this group. It draws on qualitative research and a nationally representative survey of 4,173 UK adults (17-21 July 2026) from [CaSE's R&D in a Shifting Voter Landscape project](#). Full results are on CaSE's website.

Voting intentions

Some 19% of the public name Labour as their first-preference vote, the highest of any party. When including those who rank them in their top three choices, their potential voter base reaches 34%.

To understand voter leakage, we can look at where those who voted Labour in 2024 would now consider placing their vote (see right). Most would still consider Labour, but there are large proportions who would consider the Greens (39%) and Liberal Democrats (35%).

Of current Labour voters, 38% say they would vote only for Labour.

Fluidity of Labour's 2024 vote

Table shows the proportion of those who voted Labour at the 2024 General Election that would consider voting for the parties below when asked to select up to three.

Conservative	16%
Green	39%
Labour	72%
Lib Dem	35%
Reform	15%
Restore Britain	10%
Would not vote	5%

Table: Who would you consider voting for if a General Election was called tomorrow? Please select UP TO THREE parties. [Question truncated. Base: Those who voted Labour in 2024] • Source: Icaro and Yonder Data Solutions polling for CaSE • July 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Who they are

Demographically, Labour voters are the closest of any party to the national average: age profile, housing status, ethnicity and religion are all within a few points of the population averages. The group has a higher proportion of graduates (58%) and above-average news engagement across nearly every channel tested. This group is somewhat more concentrated in larger urban areas.

“Research and development has to be done, and [is] a good thing... if the Government undertakes that research and development... then that’s an investment.”

Steven (Qualitative research)

Engaging Labour Party supporters about R&D

How they see the world

Labour voters are notably more positive about Britain and its future, with more trust in Government and majority support for a range of Government ambitions from eldercare support and equal opportunities to global cooperation and wealth redistribution.

When asked about their **cultural outlooks**:

- 31% say they agree with the idea of “Broken Britain”, the lowest of any group and lower than the UK average of 50%.
- 61% are hopeful Britain can turn its fortunes around, higher than the UK average of 41%. Some 42% say the UK is badly in need of a recovery plan, compared with the UK average of 65%.
- 35% say they don’t trust the Government to tell the truth, lower than the UK average of 61%.
- 26% say immigration has made the country worse and 50% say globalisation has more upsides than downsides (compared with the UK averages of 45% and 37%, respectively).

When asked how **anxious** they were:

- They tend to report less high anxiety than the UK average on all measures, reaching a peak of 53% who expressed high levels of anxiety about the direction the world is heading in.
- A notably smaller proportion of Labour voters express high anxiety about direction the country is heading in, at 30% compared with the UK average of 48%.

When asked about their **personal ambitions**:

- The most-selected ambitions are financial security (66%) and health and wellbeing (64%), in line with the UK average (64% and 60%, respectively).

- Their ambitions are very close to the average, being only slightly more likely to select work-life balance (37%, compared with the UK average of 31%) and slightly less likely to select crime and safety (24%; 27%).

When asked about **Government ambitions**:

- Around two-thirds agree with ambitions of scientific ingenuity (67%; compared with the UK average of 59%), eldercare support (66%; 63%), job security measures (66%; 54%) and regional levelling-up (66%; 53%).
- They are less likely to agree with reducing immigration (44%; compared with the UK average of 55%) and more likely to agree with public ownership (60%; 48%), home ownership (56%; 46%), equal opportunities (62%; 50%) and global cooperation and leadership (56% vs 45%).

When asked where they find **pockets of hope**:

- The most selected source of hope is their family and friendships (52% compared with the UK average of 51%).
- They are more likely to select our public services (51%; compared with the UK average of 37%, which is the highest of any group), the UK’s cultural and creative industries (43%; 31%) and the country’s diversity and tolerance (30%; 19%).

Engaging Labour Party supporters about R&D

Attitudes to R&D

- Self-reported knowledge is the highest of all groups, although still low, with 27% saying they feel they know a lot about UK R&D, compared with the UK average of 16%.
 - Support for R&D is consistently strong and often the highest of all voter and non-voter groups. Some 78% think Government should invest in R&D, 73% say it makes a significant contribution to the economy, 72% see investing now as the right approach, and 66% see it as a national strength.
 - When asked what aspects of R&D support the Government should prioritise, the most-selected answer is jobs for the new generation of homegrown scientists (52%, compared with the UK average of 47%). Support for global collaboration (37%), global excellence (34%) and attracting the best scientists from around the world (32%) are higher than many other groups.
 - 61% choose biology and medical technologies as a priority for Government investment, followed by clean energy technologies (55%).
-

Messaging that will resonate

- **Frame R&D as a tool to tackle society's problems using tangible examples:** This group is receptive to R&D and has high levels of support for many Government ambitions where R&D can play a role, meaning advocates have many potential connection points.
- **Emphasise global links and job creation at home:** This group show more positivity towards international collaboration than right-leaning voters, so narratives about either domestic or international talent could resonate.
- **Think about how to tailor messages within the voter base:** Retention of 2024 voters is lowest among Labour, with leakage largely towards the Greens; for this group, consider messaging that appeals to left-leaning, climate-conscious values.
- **Use good practice principles that resonate with broad audiences:** Use messaging that makes R&D feel more human, more local and more relatable. It is also vital to avoid stereotyping voter groups and consider how to tailor messaging to different subsets of their audiences.

This briefing is part of a series covering the main vote groups. To read the full results and recommendations from the study, and briefings on other voter groups, please see the [R&D in a Shifting Voter Landscape webpage](#).

Vote intention figures are drawn from our own general population survey and are not the output of a dedicated political opinion poll. We use this question to segment our sample by political affiliation for analysis, not to estimate election outcomes. Read more in [our Methods](#).

This work was supported by Wellcome [318810/Z/24/Z]