



Campaign for Science & Engineering Monthly update – 2nd May 2008

What we are working on

- **Science Budget Allocations:** CaSE continues to engage in the debate about the Government's last Science Budget Allocations, particularly on the Government's use of Haldane Principle and the STFC funding crisis.
- **Higher Education at Work Consultation:** CaSE will be responding to this consultation, which looks at STEM skills. The deadline for responses is 7 July. CaSE welcomes input from our members.
<http://www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/>
- **Triple Science GCSEs:** CaSE is beginning to assess if the new entitlement for high achieving students to study triple science GCSEs will be implemented successfully this September. We are already hearing that some schools are not prepared for this and would welcome any information that you may have on this matter. CaSE will be lobbying to make sure that the Government delivers upon this commitment.

CaSE News

- **New Members:** CaSE welcomes the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) as a new member.
- **Science and the Welsh Assembly:** CaSE is a collaborator in this year's Science and the Welsh Assembly (20 May) organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry.
<http://www.rsc.org/ScienceAndTechnology/Parliament/Events/>
- **Science Communication Conference:** Nick Dusic will be a panelist discussing science policy at The BA's Science Communication Conference (19-20 May).
<http://www.the-ba.net/ScienceinSociety/>
- **The Biochemist:** Nick Dusic was interviewed about CaSE's work in this month's Biochemist.
<http://www.biochemist.org/bio/default.htm>

April Diary

30/04/08 Science Budget Allocations

CaSE supports many of the findings of the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee report on Science Budget Allocations. Commenting, CaSE's Director, Nick Dusic, said, "The Government needs to respect the Haldane Principle and stop interfering with how Research Councils allocate their funding. The Science Budget Allocations targeted funding at various government priorities leaving most Research Councils unable to maintain their investment in fundamental research. The STFC was the hardest hit by this and the Government must now find a solution to the funding crisis in physics and astronomy before the UK's loses its scientific standing in these areas."

29/04/08 Science Funding

CaSE welcomed John Denham's speech today on Science Funding. Commenting, CaSE's Director Nick Dusic, said "It was good to hear the Secretary of State supporting the Haldane Principle and fundamental science. However, the last Science Budget Allocations did not reflect today's good words. The Government had too much influence over how Research Councils allocated their funding. It is critical that DIUS, Treasury and the Research Councils come to a better understanding about the importance of scientific independence and fundamental research before the next CSR."

28/04/08 **Crucible 2008**

CaSE enjoyed the opportunity to meet early career researchers. After attending the NESTA Crucible reception for 2008, Hilary Leever commented that "it was great to see how enthused these up and coming researchers were to broaden the range of their collaborations." She was also pleased that they were keen to understand and influence science policy as well as to engage with the media.

23/04/08 **Implementation of the REF**

CaSE welcomes the Government's acknowledgement that the Research Excellence Framework proposals need more work and the provision of an extra year to develop them. CaSE voiced serious concerns about the use of bibliometric indicators and it is critical that over the next year a workable and appropriate system is developed with genuine input from the science and engineering community. Nick Dusic, Director of CaSE added: "The revised proposals for science and engineering subjects must include greater flexibility including provision for meaningful peer review. As the REF will have a significant impact on the practice of science and engineering in the UK, it is critical that the Government and HEFCE gets this right."

22/04/08 **DfID Research Strategy**

The Department for International Development launched its long awaited Research Strategy today and announced that it would spend up to £1 billion on research over the next five years. Commenting, Nick Dusic said "DfID's is taking the right steps to make science and technology a key component of their mission to achieve the Millenium Development Goals."

17/04/08 Nick Dusic met with specialists in the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee and the director of the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology.

14/04/08 **Women in Science**

The Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee of the European Parliament voted to adopt a new report on the under-representation of women in science. The report made many recommendations including improving stereotypes, supporting the scientific careers of women, improving transparency of recruitment procedures and the inclusion of at least 40% women (and 40% men) on evaluation and selection committees. Hilary Leever commented "We welcome all measures to improve the representation of women in science. Despite much effort, progress has been slow and it is time to make sure that real change is occurring. We are looking forward to launching our own report on under-represented groups in science and engineering soon, entitled Delivering Diversity, which we hope will precipitate effective action in this area."

14/04/08 CaSE met with Oxford Instruments.

09/04/08 CaSE met with EADS Astrium.

08/04/08 CaSE met with Syngenta.

02/04/08 **Biology Policy**

Nick Dusic gave a presentation about CaSE to the Institute of Biology's Science Policy Board.

01/04/08 **Engineering Seminar**

Nick Dusic, Director of CaSE, participated in the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee seminar on engineering hosted by the Royal Academy of Engineering. CaSE earlier provided written evidence to this inquiry and was pleased to further support the Committee's work.

For more information on our activities go to our website

www.sciencecampaign.org.uk