Science funding facts & figures

Health

Cancer kills nearly a third of us.

We spend less than £5 per person per year looking for a cure, and it's arguably the best-funded condition.

Energy

Energy costs everyone in the UK £2200 per year.

We spend around £10 per person per year on energy research, which could make energy cheaper and greener.

Curiosity

Discovering the Higgs boson literally cost peanuts.

The UK subscription to CERN is £1.50 per person per year, about the same as we spend on peanuts.

Medical research has extended lifespans and provided treatments for many deadly diseases.

Science has helped us to recognise the threat of climate change and provides our best chance of developing energy-saving technologies and finding alternatives to fossil fuels.

Fundamental discoveries from the nature of electromagnetism to structure of DNA have already changed the world, and new ones, like the Higgs boson and graphene, will shape the future.

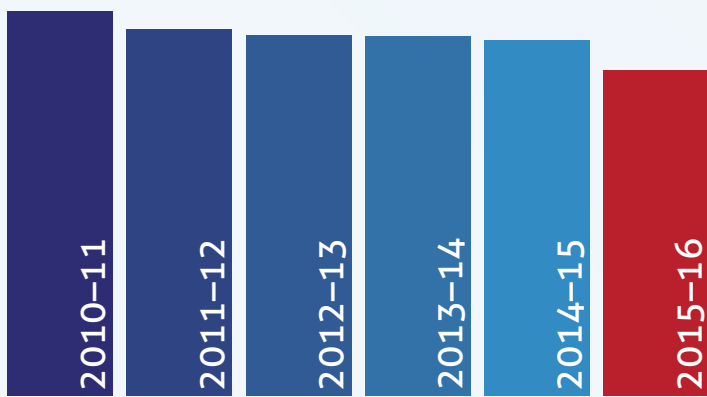So you might be surprised at how little funding scientific research receives from government...

Managed decline

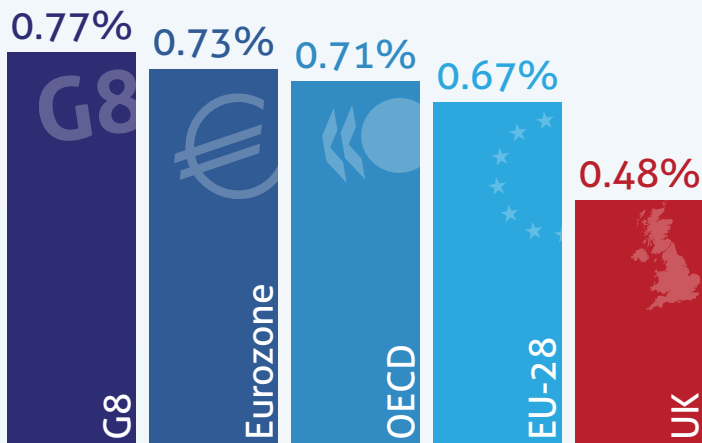**2010–11** | **2011–12** | **2012–13** | **2013–14** | **2014–15** | **2015–16**

£5.7bn ••••••••••► **£4.8bn**

UK government direct funding of research (the 'science budget') in 2012 GBP

George Osborne claims that science and technology are central to the government's 'long-term economic plan'.

But the 2010 cash freeze means that the government's direct spending on research will have fallen by over 15% in real terms by the end of this parliament.

World-trailing

0.77% — G8
0.73% — Eurozone
0.71% — OECD
0.67% — EU-28
0.48% — UK

Public funding of science as a fraction of GDP

The UK spends less than 0.5% of GDP on public-funded research and development. That's less than any major group of countries in the world.

The UK is in danger of losing its competitive edge internationally if funding continues to decline.

We believe that
**the UK government should set
a target to spend 0.8% of GDP
on research and development**
in line with the G8 average

Scienceogram UK
Making sense of science spending