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The Australian Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Science Survey 2026

Australian National Centre for the
Public Awareness of Science

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Key findings

The third iteration of the Australian Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Science survey finds that Australians continued to hold scientists in high regard. Almost nine in ten participants (87%) said scientists contribute at least some benefit to the wellbeing of Australia's society, 88% rated science as reasonably or very prestigious work, 84% said scientists are willing to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns, and 70% agreed that scientists are trustworthy. Nearly three-quarters (72%) said science has made life easier for most people.

The clearest theme for 2026, however, was uncertainty rather than opposition. On many questions the most striking group was neither those in favour nor those against a particular position, but those who gave no clear view. Climate change was the clearest case for this. The acceptance that there is solid evidence the Earth has been warming fell from 80% to 43%, but outright rejection did not rise in the same way, falling slightly from 17% in 2018 to 14%. What grew instead was the share saying the evidence is mixed, from around 1% of participants to 32%. The same movement toward uncertainty appeared elsewhere in the survey, on the contribution scientists make, the prestige of their work, interest in science and how well informed people felt about it. For science communicators, uncertainty of this kind poses a different problem from opposition and calls for careful consideration.

Other highlights in 2026:

- Around four in five agreed that scientific progress has helped manage or cure illnesses such as AIDS and cancer (82%), that science has made our lives healthier, easier and more comfortable (81%), and that it has created more opportunities than previous generations had (80%). However, each matched statement about the future was two to five percentage points

lower in support than its equivalent about the past, indicating that at least some people value the contribution science has made but are less confident that science will make similar steps forward in the future.

- While 70% agreed that scientists are trustworthy, 44% also agreed that scientists often hide evidence that would challenge established views, and only 22% disagreed, indicating that in the view of a small number of people, scientists frequently keep evidence from wider view.
- Many participants gave no clear view, neither agreement nor disagreement, on bioengineered organs for transplant (34%), gene editing to reduce disease risk (37%) and the safety of genetically modified foods (35%) and crops (40%).
- None of seven applications of science we asked about attracted majority support, though opposition was mostly low. Nuclear power was the exception, drawing both the highest levels of strong support (20%) and the second strongest opposition (18%) of any application.
- Australians split evenly on artificial intelligence, with 37% agreeing it is a positive for society and 33% disagreeing. The benefits they named were personal, led by saving them time (48%), while the risks they named were more collective, led by threats to jobs (37%). Only 16% said AI provides accurate information, fewer than the 27% who named inaccuracy as a concern.
- The clearest consensus on a question of policy was biosecurity, with 80% agreeing that we all have a responsibility to help protect Australia from pests, diseases and invasive

species, even when doing so is inconvenient.

- Live television remained the most used news source at 51% daily, while generative AI tools are now used to access news by 16% of participants daily and 42% at least weekly, ahead of Reddit, X/Twitter and podcasts.

Notable differences from 2017 and 2018:

- The share saying scientists contribute a lot fell from 81% in 2017 and 80% in 2018 to 64%, and the share rating scientists very prestigious fell from around 62% to 53%. In both cases most of the movement went to the adjacent, more moderate category rather than to outright criticism.

- Australians who felt very or fairly well informed about science fell from 70% to 55%.
- Interest in science remained broad but became less deep. The proportion very interested in new medical discoveries fell from 64% to 35%, in new scientific discoveries from 61% to 39%, and in environmental issues from 51 to 34%.
- Support for required childhood vaccination fell from 85% in 2017 and 84% in 2018 to 67%. Unlike climate change, both uncertainty and opposition grew on this topic. Those giving no clear view rose from around 3% to 14%, and those saying parents should be able to decide rose from 13% to 19%.

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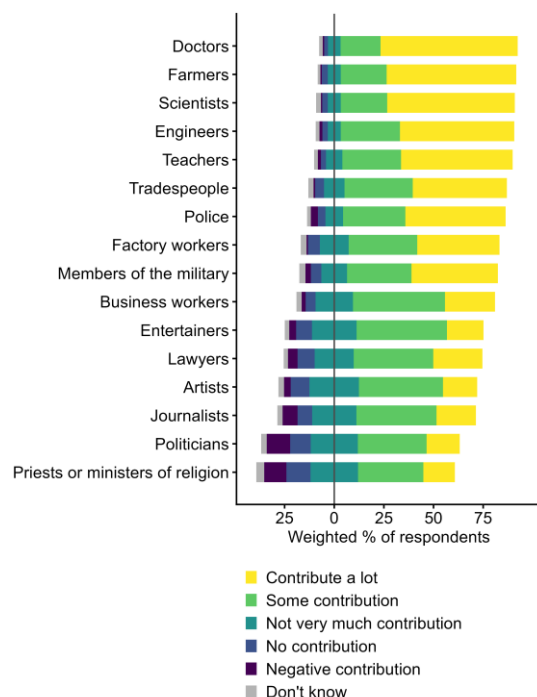
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Perception of scientists compared to other occupations

Most Australians believe scientists contribute a lot to society – but this may be slipping

Australians credited a wide range of occupations with contributing to society. Doctors headed the list, with 69% saying they contribute a lot, and farmers, scientists and engineers were clustered together just below them. Teachers, tradespeople and police followed close behind. At the bottom, priests or ministers of religion and politicians were the only occupations where positive and negative ratings were nearly balanced, and both attracted the highest rates of outright negative contribution, 11% and 12% respectively (see Figure 1).

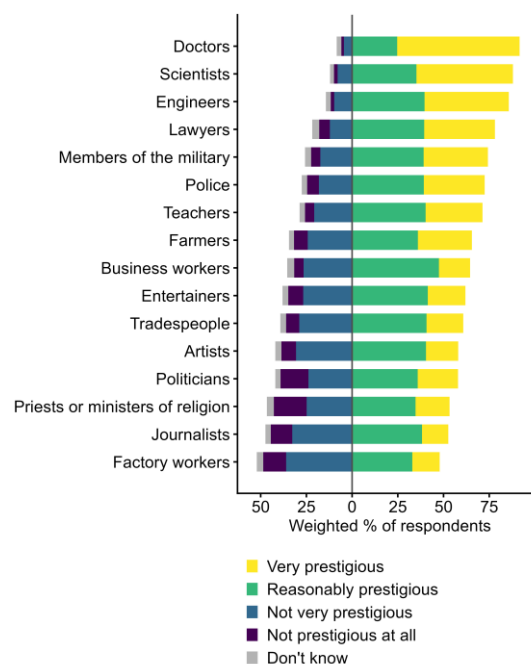
Figure 1. Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society?



Science is a prestigious occupation

Prestige produced a different ordering. Doctors, scientists and engineers again came first, but below them departs from the order in the previous figure (see Figure 2). Lawyers rose from eleventh on contribution to fourth on prestige, a gap of 13 percentage points in the share of people who rated them positively. The movement in the other direction was far larger. Factory workers fell from ninth most for contribution to last in prestige, and were the only occupation in either battery with a negative net score for prestige, even though three-quarters credited them with contributing to society. Farmers fell from second to eighth (a gap of 23 points) and tradespeople from sixth to eleventh (21 points), with teachers, police and business workers showing smaller drops in the same direction. Occupations involving manual or practical work were widely credited with contributing to society without being accorded status for it.

Figure 2. How prestigious do you think the occupations below are?



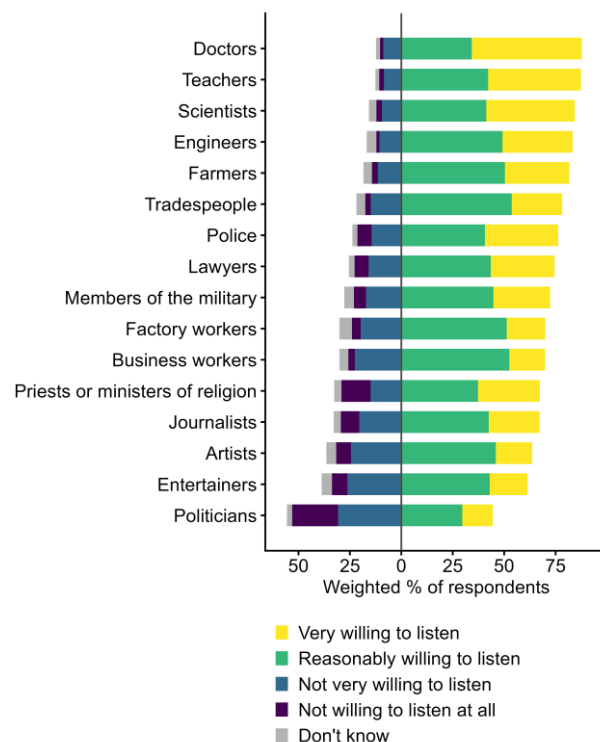
However, the news is not all good for scientists. The share of Australians who say scientists contribute a lot to the wellbeing of society has fallen substantially compared to previous surveys. In 2017 and 2018, 81% and 80% gave that answer respectively, but in 2026 this fell to 64%. At the other end, the proportion of people saying that scientists contribute not very much, nothing or a negative contribution rose from 2% in 2017 to 10% in 2026.

Perceptions of the prestige of scientists have also declined, though less steeply. The share rating scientists very prestigious was 62% and 63% in the two earlier waves and 53% in 2026, a fall of around nine points. As with contribution, most of the movement went to the adjacent category rather than to the sceptical end: "reasonably prestigious" rose from around 31% to 35%. The share rating scientists not very or not at all prestigious grew from about 6% to 10%, and "don't know" from around 1% to 2%. Taken together, nearly nine in ten participants still regard scientists as prestigious.

Scientists are regarded as good listeners

We also asked participants how willing these occupations were to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns. Figure 3 shows that doctors and teachers topped the list, with 88% and 87% of participants saying they are reasonably or very willing to listen. Scientists came third at 84%, ahead of engineers (83%) and farmers (82%). Politicians ranked last by a wide margin with 44% of participants reporting that they are willing to listen, and they were the only profession that more Australians rated as unwilling than willing.

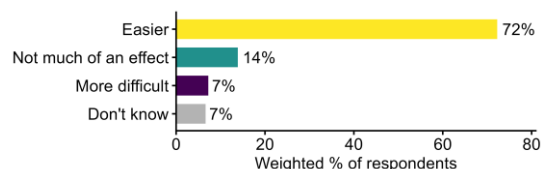
Figure 3. How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns?



Australians recognise what science has achieved but are less sure about the future

Australians hold a favourable view of the contribution that science has made to their lives. When asked whether science has made life easier or more difficult for most people, 72% of participants said that it had made life easier, while just 7% said that it had made life more difficult and a further 14% reported that it had not had much of an effect (see Figure 4).

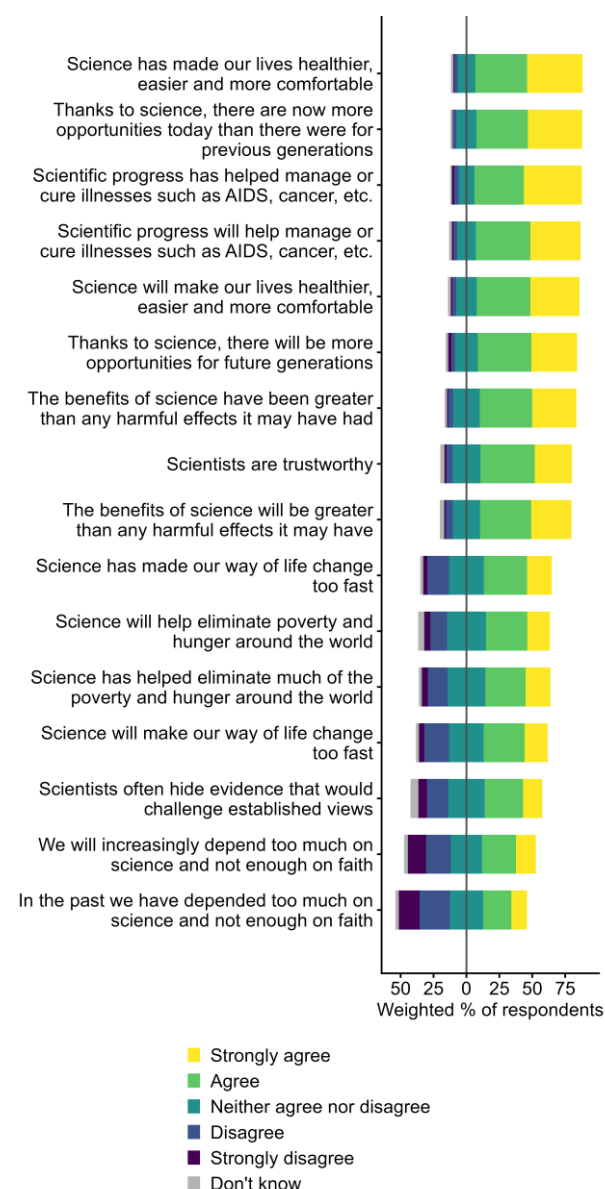
Figure 4. Overall, would you say science has made life easier or more difficult for most people?



This general disposition was reflected in more specific topics where scientists might have provided a benefit. For example, 82% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that scientific progress has helped manage or cure illnesses such as AIDS and cancer, 81% agreed that science has made our lives healthier, easier and more comfortable, and 80% agreed that science has created more opportunities today than were available to previous generations (see Figure 5). Fewer than one respondent in twenty disagreed with any of these three statements. Support was somewhat lower, (at 73%), for the broader proposition that the benefits of science have been greater than any harmful effects it may have had, suggesting that when participants were invited to weigh costs against benefits rather than simply to affirm a benefit, a portion of them become more circumspect.

Questions in this section pair each statement about what science has already achieved with a matched statement about what it will achieve in future, and the comparison between them is consistent in direction. On

Figure 5. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?



every one of these pairs, expectations of the future sat below assessments of the past. For example, agreement that scientific progress will help manage or cure illnesses was two percentage points lower than agreement that it has already done so, agreement that science will make our lives healthier three points lower, agreement that the benefits will outweigh the harms four points lower, and agreement that science will create more opportunities five points lower. Individually, these differences are small. Taken together, however, their uniformity is notable.

This pattern is perhaps best characterised as a mild discounting of the future rather than as pessimism

about it, as optimism remains high in absolute terms. It appears simply to be held slightly less firmly, and by slightly fewer people, than confidence in what science has already delivered.

Two claims stood apart from this generally positive view about what science has achieved and what it could achieve. The first of these concerns global development. Only 50% of participants agreed that science has helped eliminate much of the poverty and hunger around the world, with 29% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 19% disagreeing, and the prospective version of the claim fared no better at 49%. The second concerns the pace of change, where 52% of participants agreed that science has made our way of life change too quickly, falling slightly to 49% for the equivalent claim about the future. That approximately half the sample endorsed a critical statement of this kind while four in five simultaneously endorsed the benefit statements indicates that these are perhaps not opposing ends of a single dimension. Rather, many Australians appear willing to hold both that science

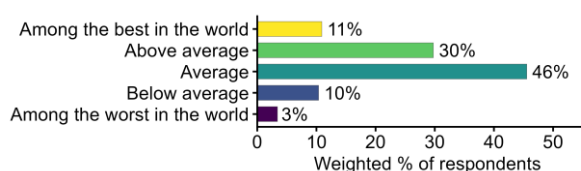
has improved their lives and that it has done so with some disruption.

Attitudes towards scientists themselves were positive, but qualified. Seventy per cent of participants agreed that scientists are trustworthy, an assessment of perceived trustworthiness rather than a measure of trust. At the same time, 44% believe that scientists often hide evidence that would challenge established views, with a further 28% neither agreeing nor disagreeing with this statement. Agreement that scientists hide evidence was associated with a lower perception of scientists' trustworthiness, at 67% among those who did not regard scientists as trustworthy compared with 44% among those who did ($p = .001$). The coexistence of these two positions among a substantial proportion of participants suggests that a general regard for scientists does not preclude a more specific suspicion about how scientific institutions handle findings that they find inconvenient.

Australia's contribution to science

Australians rated their country's scientific achievements favourably. Just over 41% put Australia above average or among the best in the world compared with other industrialised countries, while 46% judged it about average. Only 13% rated Australia below average or among the worst (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Comparing Australia to other industrialised countries in terms of its scientific achievements, do you think Australia is ...

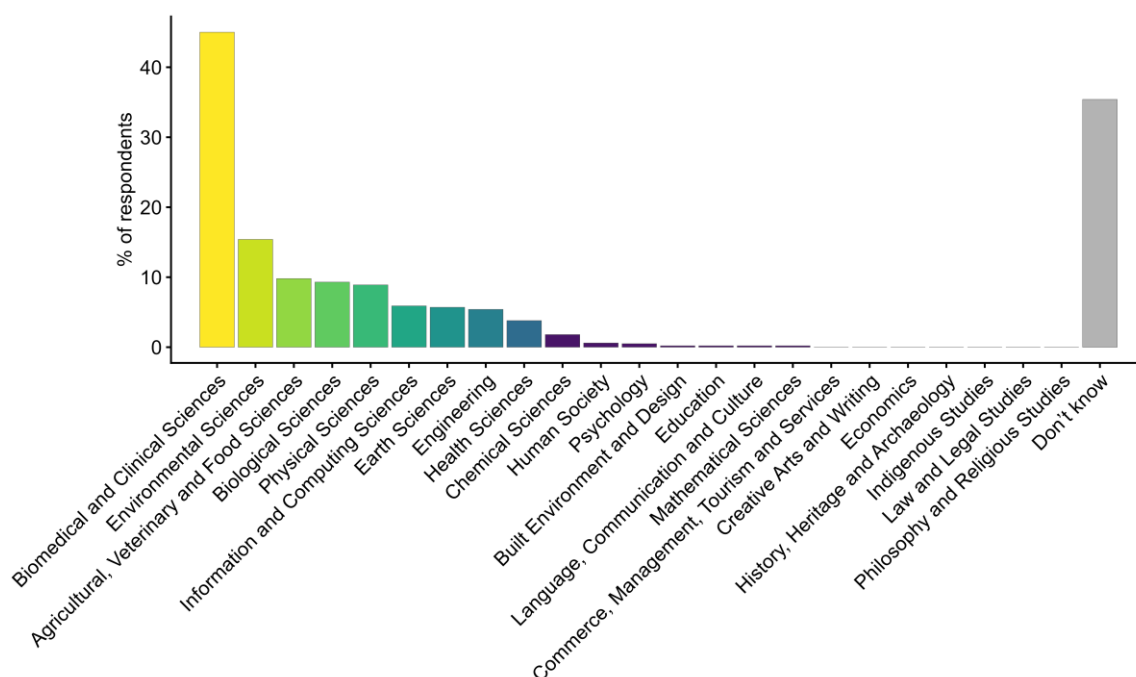


We asked participants 'what types of science is Australia actively involved in?', with responses provided in an open text box. Our goal in this question was to understand – without the prompting of checkboxes or a list – the types of science that had achieved some level of attention, prominence or recognition

among the Australian public. Responses ranged from short paragraphs detailing a range of broad areas (e.g. 'Medical and health science, Environmental science, Climate science, Marine science, Space science and astronomy, Agricultural science, Mining and earth science, Technology and engineering'), to details on more specific areas of interest ('Ice sheets, climate history, wildlife such as penguins and seals, ocean circulation, atmospheric science', '4D lung imaging and cancer treatment studies') through to single terms ('marine biology', 'cancer research').

Many couldn't necessarily point to specific areas of science Australia was involved in ('I don't know'), though some were still quite positive despite this lack of specificity ('Australia is an active and globally significant contributor across a diverse range of scientific disciplines. Driven by its unique geography, advanced research institutions (such as the CSIRO and ANSTO), and universities, Australian science focuses heavily on both foundational discovery and practical applications.').

Figure 7. Types of science Australia is involved in



in Australia, with 45% of participants naming it as a field Australia is actively involved in. Other prominent fields include Environmental Sciences (15.4%), Agricultural, Veterinary and Food Sciences (9.8%), Biological Sciences (9.3%) and Physical Sciences (8.9%). Perhaps somewhat worrying is the other prominent category – some 35.4% of people answered some version of ‘don’t know’ when asked what science Australia is actively involved in. Figure 8 we offer a visualisation of responses as a word cloud, as this shows actual word use rather than categorisation.³

[illegible]

¹ Responses categorised using a combination of Microsoft Co-Pilot for an initial pass, and hand verification / reclassification. Here we also note that of course that unscripted text responses (eg 'marine research', 'aeronautics', 'renewables') may map only partially to simple two-digit FoR codes (many individual research projects would of course be categorised in multiple categories), and that of course the Australian population doesn't necessarily think or categorise things according to ABS definitions.

³ Removing unhelpful meta fields (eg 'science'), qualifiers ('unsure') and conjunctives ('involved'), up-regulating smaller words otherwise 'medical' would be too dominant.

Many Australians are interested in science

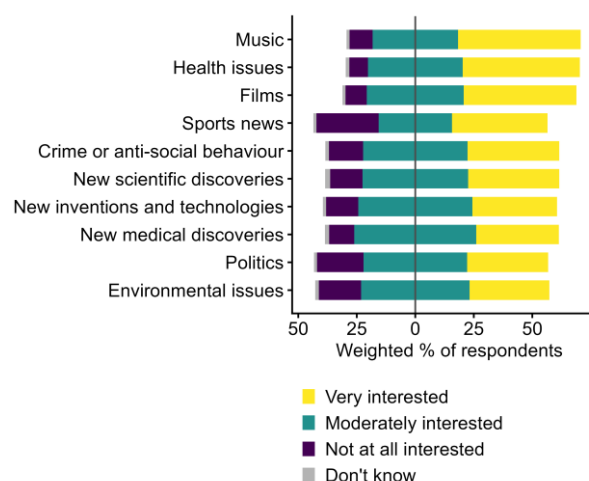
We asked participants how interested they were in a range of popular topics. Health issues drew the widest interest, with 90% saying they were very or moderately interested, and only 8% saying they were not interested at all. Music (89%) and films (89%) followed closely (see Figure 9).

Comparatively, science-related topics performed fairly strongly. New medical discoveries drew at least some interest from 87% of participants, new inventions and technologies from 85%, new scientific discoveries from 84%, and environmental issues from 80%. All four ranked ahead of both politics and sports news.

However, this interest tends to be broad rather than deep. On each of these topics, more participants indicated they were "moderately interested" than "very interested". For new medical discoveries, 52% were moderately interested compared with 35% who were very interested. This pattern separates science topics from entertainment topics like music and films, where "very interested" was the most common answer. On the other hand, few participants dismissed science outright: between 11% and 18% said they were not at all interested, depending on the topic.

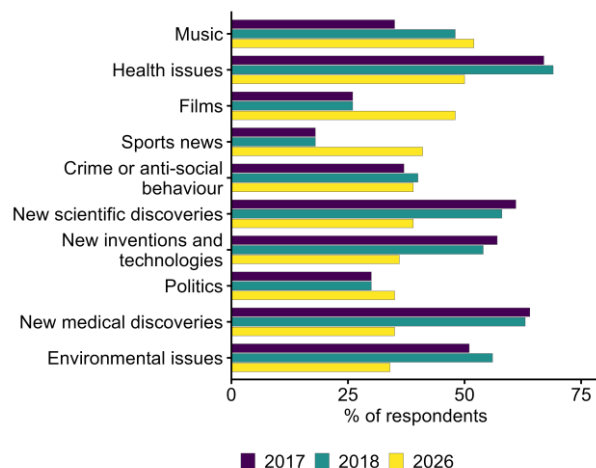
While Australians may be well-known for their interest in sports, sports news actually drew the least interest overall and was also the most divisive topic, as 41% said they were very interested, but 27% said they were not at all interested, the highest level of disinterest recorded for any topic. Politics attracted broad but shallow interest, with 79% expressing at least some interest but only 35% saying they were very interested.

Figure 9. Interest in popular topics



Earlier surveys in 2017 and 2018 asked similar questions, allowing some comparison over time (see Figure 10). Interest in entertainment has grown since then, with films rising from 26% to 41%, and music from 35% to 52%. Interest in science topics has moved the other way, with the proportion very interested in new medical discoveries falling from 64% to 35%, in new scientific discoveries from 61% to 39%, and in environmental issues from 51% to 34%.

Figure 10. Percentage of Australians "very interested" in popular topics over time

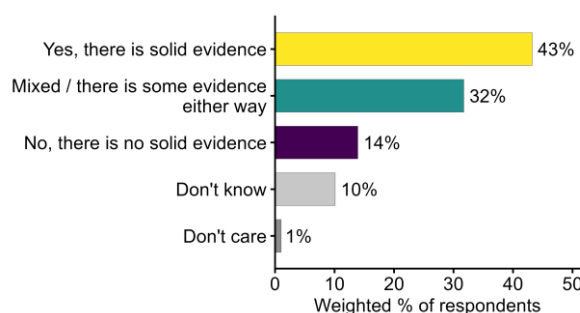


Australians hold diverse opinions about several topics of science and science-related policy

Climate change

Many participants accepted the established evidence that Earth is warming and that human activity plays some part in it (see Figure 11). Just over two in five (43%) said there was solid evidence that the average temperature on Earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades, while almost a third (32%) said the evidence was mixed, and 14% said there was no solid evidence. A further 11% gave no clear view.

Figure 11. Is there solid evidence that the average temperature on Earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades?

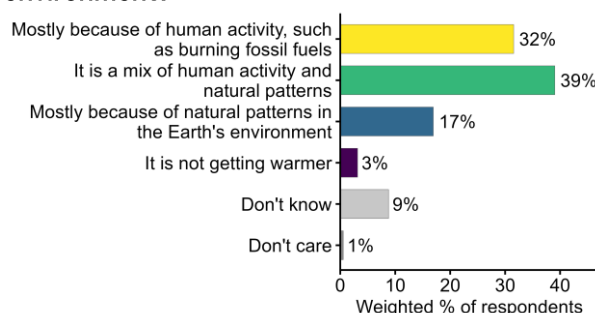


The proportion of participants who said that rising average temperatures were supported by solid evidence appears to have fallen from 80% in both 2017 and 2018 to 43% in 2026. This decline was not, however, matched by a corresponding rise in the number of people who said there was no solid evidence, which fell from 17% in 2018 to 14% in 2026. Instead, many people opted for uncertain answers. Participants who said there was mixed evidence rose from 1% in 2018 to 32%,

and those answering that they did not know rose from 2% to 10%.

Regarding the cause of the temperature changes, two in five (39%) participants in the 2026 survey said the warming came from a mix of human activity and natural patterns and around a third (32%) said it was mostly human activity (see Figure 12). Only 17% pointed mainly to natural patterns, and 3% said the Earth was not getting warmer at all.

Figure 12. Is the Earth getting warmer mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels or mostly because of natural patterns in the Earth's environment?



We then provided our participants with an opportunity to explain why they gave the answers they did. They could choose as many reasons as they liked, and on average picked more than three explanations. The most common reason was scientific evidence or research, chosen by half (51%) - a third of all participants (33%) cited their own observations of the environment and a quarter (26%) cited changes in weather patterns. Few cited what they read or saw in the media (12%) or their own research or study (8%).

However, Table 1 shows that the three groups did not simply reach different conclusions; they referred to different information to form their views. Scientific evidence and research was the currency of one group in particular: four in five of those who said the warming is mostly human-caused named it, compared with half of the mixed-cause group and fewer than a quarter of those who said the warming is mostly natural. Questioning the quality of that evidence ran the other way, rising from one in ten to four in ten across the same three groups, although it was never the majority view in any of them. Instead most people who rejected a human cause did so without disputing the scientific basis for the statement. Personal observation and experience was the one thing all three groups drew on at broadly similar rates, and it was the mixed-cause group's most-used reason after the two causal accounts themselves.

Interestingly few people claimed their views had been influenced by the media, which ranged from 8% and 15% across the three groups, well below the rates for direct experience.

Taken together, the table suggests that appeals to scientific evidence carry weight mainly with people who already accept a human cause, while what people perceive happening round them is commonly used as evidence across the whole spectrum.

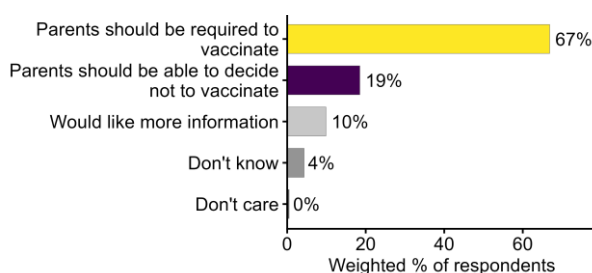
Table 1. Reasons given for forming different views about climate change

Reasons given	Mostly human activity	A mix of both	Mostly natural patterns
Personal observation and experience	52%	54%	38%
Scientific evidence or research	79%	50%	23%
Questioning the quality of the evidence	10%	21%	40%
What they read or saw in the media	15%	12%	8%

Mandatory vaccination policies

Figure 13 shows that a clear majority of Australians support mandatory childhood vaccination for preventable diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella, with 67% indicating that parents should be required to vaccinate their children. Nevertheless, close to one in five participants (19%) said that parents should be able to decide against vaccination, and a further 14% expressed no clear view, either seeking more information (10%) or answering that they did not know (4%), which suggests that together, opposition and uncertainty about mandatory vaccination accounts for approximately one third of the population.

Figure 13. Thinking about preventable childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, would you say that ...



However, this support seems to have fallen, as previous surveys found 85% support in 2017 and 84% support in 2018.

Support for mandatory vaccinations was not strongly associated with types of news sources used by our participants. The clearer pattern was not in which position people took, but in whether they took one at all. Participants could answer that they would like more information before answering, or that they did not know or did not care. These responses are grouped here as having no clear view.

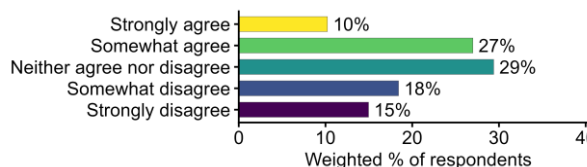
Table 2. Participants with no clear view on required childhood vaccination, by how often they use each source (weighted %)

Source	Monthly or less	Weekly	Daily or more
News websites/apps	16	21	8
Live TV	19	17	11
Radio	18	16	10
Newspaper (print)	15	16	9
AI chatbots	14	19	9
Facebook	12	19	14
Instagram	12	19	16
Private messaging apps	13	16	16
Reddit	13	21	15
X/Twitter	12	25	15
Video social media	12	19	14
Other websites	14	18	13
Podcasts	14	17	13
Interpersonal communication	17	15	10

Artificial intelligence

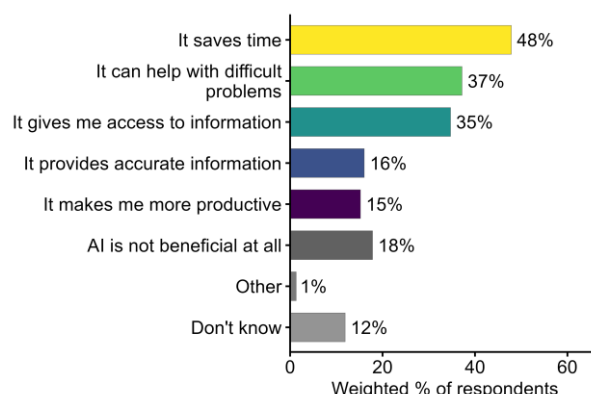
Australians were equivocal in their attitudes towards artificial intelligence in general, and modest in what they identified as its potential benefits. When asked how much they agreed that AI is overall a positive for society, 37% of participants agreed or somewhat agreed, 33% disagreed or somewhat disagreed, and 29% neither agreed nor disagreed. However, strong disagreement was more common than strong agreement, at 15% against 10%, meaning that the most firmly held attitudes were negative ones (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Overall, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a positive for society."



Asked to nominate the main benefits of AI, participants identified advantages that were mostly personal and practical (see Figure 15). For example, 48% of people responded that AI saves time, 37% that it can help with difficult problems, 35% that it gives them access to information, and 15% that it makes them more productive. Notably, only 16% selected that AI provides accurate information, making this the least frequently chosen of the possible benefits offered. A considerable 18% of people indicated that AI is not beneficial at all, and a further 12% reported that they did not know. On average, participants selected around 1.5 benefits each.

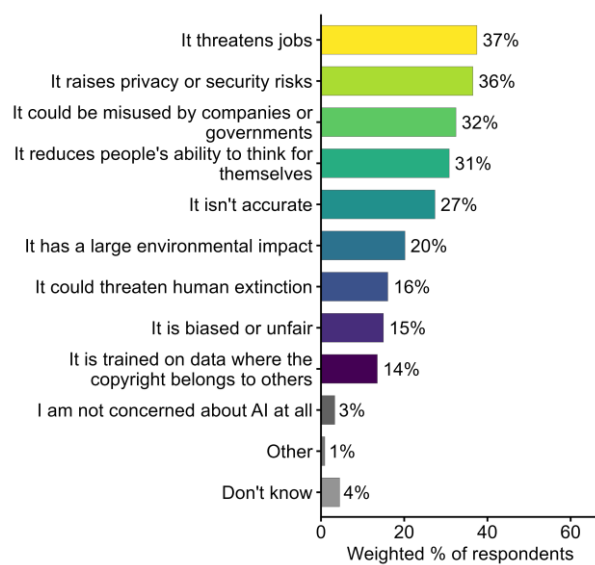
Figure 15. What do you see as the main benefits of AI? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice



Conversely, concerns about AI were both more widely held and more varied (See Figure 16). Only 3% of participants reported being unconcerned about AI at all, and a further 5% did not know, leaving a large majority of people nominating at least one concern and on average they nominated around 2.3 concerns. Where the benefits identified were largely personal, several strongly held concerns had a collective dimension. For example, 38% of participants were concerned that AI threatens jobs, 37% that it raises privacy or security risks, and 32% that it could be misused by companies or governments. Concerns about the technology itself were also prominent, with 31% selecting that AI reduces people's ability to think for themselves and 27% that its outputs were not accurate — the latter figure exceeding, the 16% who identified accuracy as a benefit.

Less frequently selected, though still endorsed by substantial minorities, were concerns about the environmental impact of AI (20%), the possibility that it could threaten human extinction (16%), bias or unfairness (15%) and the use of copyrighted material in its training data (14%). Taken together, these two questions suggest that Australians feel as if they may benefit personally from AI but also feel that there are risks that may fall upon others.

Figure 16. What do you see as the main concerns about AI? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice



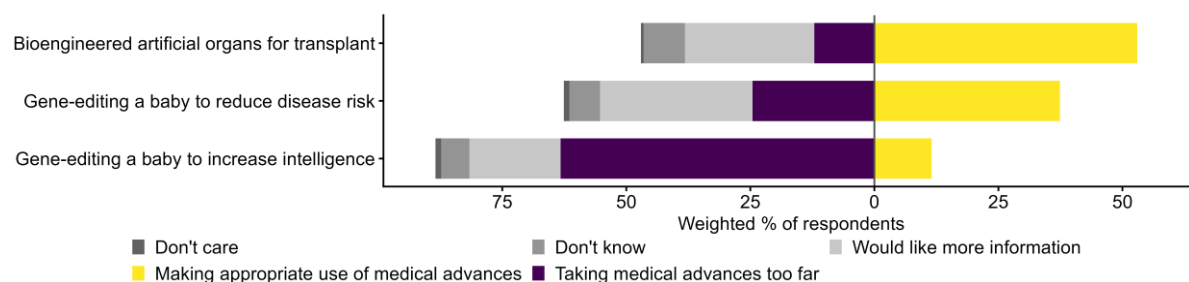
Biotechnology in biomedicine

Participants distinguished sharply between applications of biological engineering. Artificial organs for transplantation attracted majority endorsement, with 53% regarding this as an appropriate use of medical advances compared to only 12% who considered it a step too far (see Figure 17). Genetic modification of a baby to enhance intelligence produced almost the opposite response with 63% of people judging this as taking medical advances too far, and just 12% as appropriate.

Where the genetic intervention was framed as reducing the risk of serious disease, opposition fell from 63% to 25% and endorsement rose from 12 to 37%, indicating that resistance to modification may be contingent on whether the technique is used therapeutically or for enhancement.

Across all three items a substantial minority declined to take a position at all, ranging from 24% for the enhancement item to 34 and 37% for artificial organs and disease-risk reduction respectively. That the two applications attracting the least outright opposition also attracted the largest undecided groups, which suggests these are questions upon which many Australians have not yet formed settled views.

Figure 17. Attitudes towards biotechnology



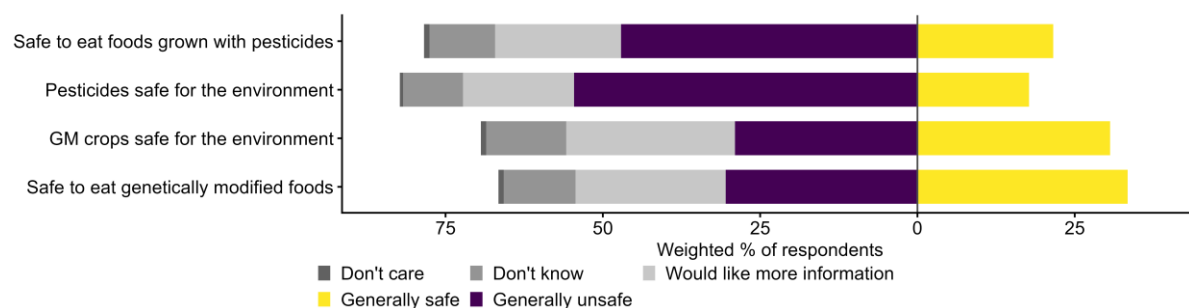
Biotechnology in agriculture and nutrition

Participants drew a clear distinction between the use of genetic modification in crops and pesticide use. Pesticides attracted many negative assessments both for the environment and for human health. 47% regarded foods grown with pesticides as generally unsafe to eat against 22% who regarded them as safe, and the margin widened for environmental impact, where 55% judged pesticide use as unsafe compared with 18% who judged it safe (see Figure 18).

Genetically modified crops and foods, by contrast, divided participants almost evenly. Thirty-three per cent considered genetically modified foods generally safe to eat and 30% unsafe, while 31% considered genetically modified crops safe for the environment against 29% who considered them unsafe.

Approximately 30% of participants declined to take a position on the pesticide items, 35% declined to take a position on genetically modified foods and 40% on genetically modified crops. Nevertheless, a consistent pattern holds across both technologies; environmental consequences were judged more uncertain, than the consequences of personal consumption, suggesting that participants may treat harm to the environment as harder to evaluate than harm to themselves.

Figure 18. Attitudes towards pesticides and GM crops

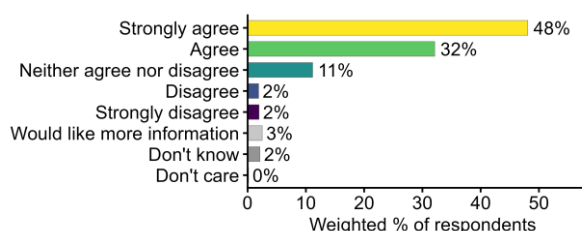


Note see the precise question wording in the data tables section.

Biosecurity

Australians overwhelmingly endorsed a shared responsibility for biosecurity (see Figure 19). Four in five participants (80%) agreed that we all have a responsibility to help protect Australia from biosecurity threats such as pests, diseases and invasive species, even when doing so causes inconvenience, with almost half (48%) agreeing strongly. Explicit disagreement was fairly rare: 2% disagreed and a further 2% disagreed strongly, so agreement outweighed disagreement by roughly twenty to one. Around one in nine (11%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and 5% gave no clear view: 3% wanted more information before answering and 2% did not know. This was a new item, so we are unable to say whether these attitudes have shifted in recent years.

Figure 19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "We all have a responsibility to help protect Australia from biosecurity threats such as pests, diseases and invasive species, even when doing so causes inconvenience."



This level of support is encouraging for biosecurity communication, particularly given that highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 was detected during the survey collection period. However, the practical challenge these results point to is not opposition, which is negligible, but the one in five participants who did not whole-

heartedly endorse this biosecurity principle by selecting "neither agree nor disagree".

The ambivalence to this question was strongly related to education ($p < .001$). Among participants who had not completed Year 12, 18% chose the middle option, compared with 6% of those with a bachelor's degree, a threefold difference (see Table 3). The share fell steadily across the education level groups: 12% of those who finished at Year 12 and 11% of those whose highest qualification was a trade certificate, TAFE qualification or diploma. There was no significant difference between those with a bachelor degree and a postgraduate degree ($p = .84$).

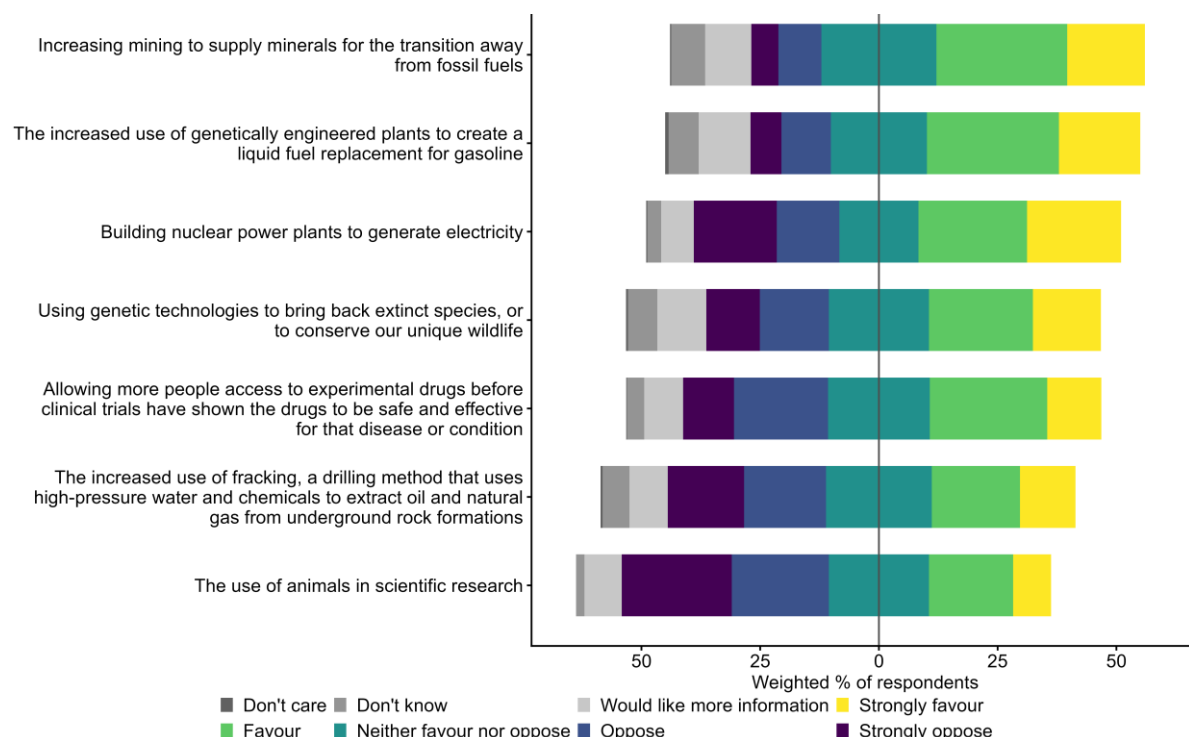
Table 3. Ambivalence to biosecurity is related to education level

Education level	Neither agree nor disagree (%)
Year 11 or below	18
Year 12	12
Trade / TAFE / Diploma	11
Bachelor degree	6
Postgraduate degree	6

Perhaps surprisingly for this topic, whether people lived in their state's capital city or in a regional area made no difference. Metropolitan and regional participants were equally likely to sit on the fence on this topic (12% and 9%, $p = .31$). and political affiliation also was not related to support for it ($p = .62$).

Other topics of science

Figure 20. Are you in favour or do you oppose the following?



Australians were divided in their views about seven other applications of science and technology put to them, and no single application commanded majority support (see Figure 20). The two attracting the greatest support concerned energy: 45% of participants favoured or strongly favoured the increased use of genetically engineered plants to produce a liquid replacement for fuel, against 17% who opposed it, and 44% favoured increasing mining to supply the minerals required for the transition away from fossil fuels, against 15% who opposed it. Building nuclear power plants to generate electricity was favoured by 43% and opposed by 31%. Support was weaker for the use of genetic technologies to bring back extinct species or conserve Australia's unique wildlife, favoured by 36% and opposed by 26%, and weaker still for widening access to experimental drugs before clinical trials have established their safety and efficacy, favoured by 36% and opposed by 30%.

Two applications of science attracted net opposition. The first of these was the increased use of fracking, favoured by 30% of participants and opposed by 33%, and the second was the use of animals in scientific research, favoured by 26% and opposed by a far greater 44% of participants.

Nuclear power attracted the highest proportion of strong support of any application at 20%, and the second highest proportion of strong opposition at 18%, while also drawing the smallest proportion of participants to the midpoint of the scale. This is the profile of a fairly settled but polarised issue, upon which most Australians have already formed a view and on which the views they have formed are held with conviction.

By contrast, the two applications attracting the greatest overall support drew comparatively little strong opposition, at 7% for genetically

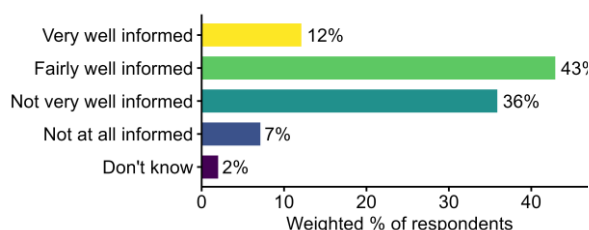
engineered plants and 6% for mining for energy transition.

Between 10% and 18% of participants declined to provide any substantive response, instead selecting that they either would like more information before answering, that they did not know, or that they did not care. These types of answers were most prevalent for genetically engineered plants, mining and genetic technologies in conservation, and least prevalent for animals in research and nuclear power.

Australians feel fairly well informed about science but this may be declining

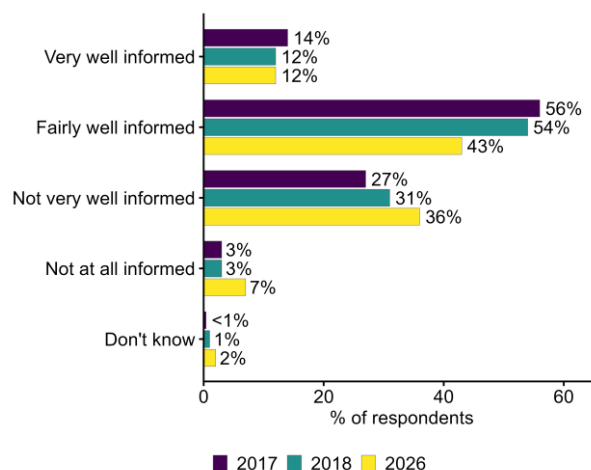
When asked about how well informed they feel about science, just over half of our participants (55%) said they feel very or fairly well informed, but only 12% chose the highest option (see Figure 21). A further 36% said they are not very well informed and 7% not at all informed, so 43% do not feel well informed about science. These answers tell us how people rate their own understanding, not how much they actually know. Someone who feels poorly informed may in fact know a good deal, and the reverse is also possible. What this question captures is confidence in a topic rather than the accuracy of personal knowledge.

Figure 21. How well-informed do Australians feel about science



However, that confidence appears to have declined over time (see Figure 22). In 2017, 70% of participants felt very or fairly well informed, but this fell to 66% in 2018 and to 55% in 2026. Most of this change has occurred in the middle of the scale: the share who feel fairly well informed dropped from 56% to 43%, while the share who feel not very well-informed rose from 27% to 36%. The proportion who feel not at all informed also more than doubled, from 3% to 7% (see Figure 19). This question, of course, speaks to participants' feelings of being informed about science, not actual understanding of science. Future work could explore trends on this issue as well.

Figure 22. How well informed do Australians feel over time



What might make people feel informed about science?

Curiosity about science seems to matter more than qualifications when it comes to how well informed they feel. Someone who is very interested in new scientific discoveries. However, these kinds of backgrounds are also correlated with their sense of being well-informed about science. Table 4 shows that using science at work, having a university degree and having a science qualification are all associated with feeling informed about science, but none of these are as powerful as taking an interest in science.

Table 4. What factors predict how well-informed people feel about science

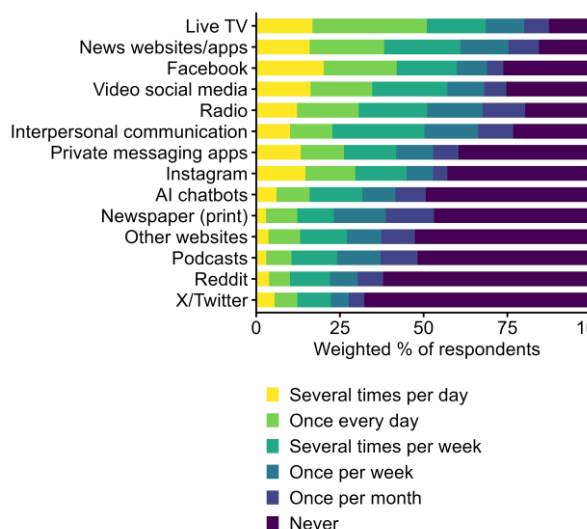
	Coefficient	p
Interest in new scientific discoveries	0.40	< .001
Uses science regularly at work	0.37	< .001
Has a university degree	0.28	< .001
Has a science qualification	0.24	< .001

Note. Scores run from 1 (not at all informed) to 4 (very well informed).

Access to information about current events

Australians' news exposure remains concentrated in channels owned and operated by news producers, though many social platforms now rival them on daily basis (see Figure 23). Live television was the most frequently used source in the sample with 51% reporting that they obtained news or information about current events from it at least once per day, and only 13% never did. Facebook ranked second on daily use (42% daily or more), narrowly ahead of news websites and apps (38%), video-oriented social media such as YouTube and TikTok (35%), radio (31%) and Instagram (30%).

Figure 23. How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it?



Print newspapers have all but disappeared as a routine source, with 47% of participants reporting that they never read a newspaper for news and only 12% did so daily. Radio, by contrast, retains broad if shallow reach, with 68% using it at least weekly.

Below this tier lies a long tail of sources used habitually by only a minority of people. X/Twitter and Reddit are, in news terms, niche: 68% and 62% respectively never encountered news on them, and only 12% and 10% did so daily. Podcasts and "other websites" sit in similar territory.

Against that baseline, generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude have already established a foothold. Among our participants, 16% obtained news through AI sources daily or more often and 42% at least weekly, placing them ahead of Reddit (30%), X/Twitter (28%) and podcasts (37%) on weekly use, though just under half (49%) never used them for this purpose. Given how recently large language models have been publicly adopted, their strong use relative to more established social platforms is noteworthy.

Method

This report provides the results of the third in series of national surveys of Australian beliefs and attitudes towards science, with the two previous reports having been completed in 2017 (Lamberts, 2017) and 2018 (Lamberts, 2018).

Data was collected from 24 July to 6 August 2026 via an online panel. It was quota-matched by age, state and gender.

Each respondent was required to complete an attention-check question which each participant passed. A total of 1255 participants was included in this report, providing an approximate margin of error of $\pm 2.77\%$. The time to complete this survey was 20.5 minutes, similar to previous reports in this series.

Some questions differ from those used in previous surveys. Accordingly, comparisons with earlier reports should be made only after checking the wording of the relevant questions from previous reports.

This report is primarily a descriptive summary of survey findings. Some

inferential testing was conducted to provide further insight into Australians' beliefs and attitudes towards science. These tests were not adjusted for multiple comparisons and should be interpreted with appropriate caution. Descriptive results were weighted to ABS 2021 Census benchmarks for age and education. Accordingly, inferential tests that included age and education as covariates were conducted on unweighted data, since the weighting adjustment is already accounted for by those covariates. All other analyses were conducted on weighted data. Note also that correlations were not corrected for potentially confounding factors. For example, associations between media use and mandatory vaccine science attitudes may be confounded by age. Contact the authors should you wish to conduct analyses with these types of controls. Analyses were performed in R, version 4.6.1.

If you have ideas for the next edition of this survey please contact the authors.

Data tables

Data tables include weighting and may not sum to 1255 due to rounding.

What is your gender?	Counts	% of total
Woman or female	637	51%
Man or male	614	49%
Non-binary	3	0%
Prefer not to answer	1	0%

What is your age group?	Counts	% of total
25-34 years	229	18%
35-44 years	220	18%
45-54 years	205	16%
55-64 years	190	15%
65-74 years	155	12%
18-24 years	136	11%
75 + years	121	10%

In which country were you born? - selected choice	Counts	% of total
Australia	1,046	83%
United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)	60	5%
New Zealand	23	2%
India	15	1%
Philippines	10	1%
Malaysia	7	1%
Hong Kong	6	<1%
Italy	6	<1%
China (excluding Taiwan)	5	<1%
Fiji	5	<1%
Germany	5	<1%
Vietnam	5	<1%
Netherlands (Holland)	4	<1%
South Africa	3	<1%
Greece	2	<1%
Usa	2	<1%
Canada	1	<1%
Croatia	1	<1%
Egypt	1	<1%
Lebanon	1	<1%
Poland	1	<1%
Singapore	1	<1%
Sri Lanka	1	<1%
Other	43	3%

How interested are you in... sports news	Counts	% of total
Very interested	512	41%
Moderately interested	394	31%
Not at all interested	334	27%
Don't know	15	1%

How interested are you in... politics	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	556	44%
Very interested	434	35%
Not at all interested	248	20%
Don't know	17	1%

How interested are you in... new medical discoveries	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	654	52%
Very interested	443	35%
Not at all interested	135	11%
Don't know	23	2%

How interested are you in... environmental issues	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	581	46%
Very interested	428	34%
Not at all interested	227	18%
Don't know	19	2%

How interested are you in... new inventions and technologies	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	612	49%
Very interested	454	36%
Not at all interested	172	14%
Don't know	17	1%

How interested are you in... - new scientific discoveries	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	566	45%
Very interested	489	39%
Not at all interested	173	14%
Don't know	27	2%

How interested are you in... health issues	Counts	% of total
Very interested	628	50%
Moderately interested	507	40%
Not at all interested	100	8%
Don't know	19	2%

How interested are you in... crime or anti-social behaviour	Counts	% of total
Moderately interested	560	45%
Very interested	493	39%
Not at all interested	183	15%
Don't know	20	2%

How interested are you in... music	Counts	% of total
Very interested	657	52%
Moderately interested	459	37%
Not at all interested	123	10%
Don't know	16	1%

How interested are you in... Films	Counts	% of total
Very interested	605	48%
Moderately interested	520	41%
Not at all interested	115	9%
Don't know	16	1%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? radio	Counts	% of total
Several times per week	257	20%
Never	247	20%
Once every day	231	18%
Once per week	207	17%
Once per month	160	13%
Several times per day	154	12%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - news websites or apps	Counts	% of total
Several times per week	285	23%
Once every day	280	22%
Several times per day	200	16%
Never	196	16%
Once per week	181	14%
Once per month	113	9%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - newspaper (print edition)	Counts	% of total
Never	588	47%
Once per week	195	16%
Once per month	181	14%
Several times per week	137	11%
Once every day	118	9%
Several times per day	36	3%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - live tv	Counts	% of total
Once every day	428	34%
Several times per week	220	18%
Several times per day	211	17%
Never	158	13%
Once per week	145	12%
Once per month	93	7%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - video oriented social media (YouTube, TikTok or other video streaming sites)	Counts	% of total
Never	317	25%
Several times per week	282	22%
Once every day	232	18%
Several times per day	203	16%
Once per week	137	11%
Once per month	83	7%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - Facebook	Counts	% of total
Never	329	26%
Once every day	273	22%
Several times per day	253	20%
Several times per week	226	18%
Once per week	113	9%
Once per month	61	5%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - Instagram	Counts	% of total
Never	538	43%
Several times per week	192	15%
Once every day	187	15%
Several times per day	185	15%
Once per week	100	8%
Once per month	54	4%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - Reddit

	Counts	% of total
Never	779	62%
Several times per week	149	12%
Once per week	104	8%
Once per month	96	8%
Once every day	79	6%
Several times per day	48	4%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - X/Twitter

	Counts	% of total
Never	851	68%
Several times per week	125	10%
Once every day	86	7%
Several times per day	69	5%
Once per week	67	5%
Once per month	58	5%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - private messaging apps (WhatsApp, Facebook messenger etc)

	Counts	% of total
Never	497	40%
Several times per week	196	16%
Several times per day	167	13%
Once every day	162	13%
Once per week	139	11%
Once per month	94	8%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - podcasts

	Counts	% of total
Never	650	52%
Several times per week	171	14%
Once per week	163	13%
Once per month	139	11%
Once every day	95	8%
Several times per day	37	3%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - AI (such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini or Claude etc.)

	Counts	% of total
Never	619	49%
Several times per week	198	16%
Once per week	124	10%
Once every day	124	10%
Once per month	114	9%
Several times per day	76	6%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - other websites not mentioned here

	Counts	% of total
Never	661	53%
Several times per week	175	14%
Once per week	130	10%
Once per month	125	10%
Once every day	119	9%
Several times per day	46	4%

How often do you obtain news or information about current events from the following sources, whether you seek it out or just happen to come across it? - interpersonal communication (face-to-face conversations, phone calls)

	Counts	% of total
Several times per week	345	27%
Never	292	23%
Once per week	201	16%
Once every day	158	13%
Once per month	132	11%
Several times per day	127	10%

How well informed do you feel about science?

	Counts	% of total
Fairly well informed	539	43%
Not very well informed	450	36%
Very well informed	152	12%
Not at all informed	89	7%
Don't know	25	2%

Why do you say that? - selected choice	Counts	% of total
I read about / take an interest in science	421	34%
Don't pay attention to everything science-related	217	17%
I don't know much about / not interested in science	209	17%
I have not studied science	135	11%
I search online	93	7%
I am / have formally studied science	83	7%
I work in a field related to science	69	5%
Don't know	17	1%
Other	11	1%

Why do you say that? - Other - Text

I am interested but don't know where to find information about it
I like to hear things about science but i don't always understand the workings of it
Do not know how much i miss
Dont hear a lot about it
I am more interested in what is happening in the country and around the world.
I don't search much for it but if appears in news items i pay attention
I dont feel its all released to public
I listen to abc radio
I listen when i hear something new about science
In school i enjoyed science classes and remember a large amount of the information, but beside the basics that's all
Retired scientist
Watching new medical procedures

Could you tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: "science will be able to sort out any problem."

	Counts	% of total
Neither agree nor disagree	464	37%
Agree	377	30%
Disagree	216	17%
Strongly agree	116	9%
Strongly disagree	54	4%
Don't know	28	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Scientists

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	806	64%
Some contribution	294	23%
Not very much contribution	81	6%
No contribution	35	3%
Don't know	30	2%
Negative contribution	8	1%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Doctors

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	868	69%
Some contribution	252	20%
Not very much contribution	80	6%
No contribution	24	2%
Don't know	22	2%
Negative contribution	9	1%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Engineers

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	722	58%
Some contribution	375	30%
Not very much contribution	82	7%
No contribution	34	3%
Don't know	24	2%
Negative contribution	19	1%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the well being of our society? - Teachers

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	706	56%
Some contribution	370	30%
Not very much contribution	104	8%
No contribution	32	3%
Don't know	24	2%
Negative contribution	19	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Priests or ministers of religion

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	414	33%
Not very much contribution	300	24%
Contribute a lot	199	16%
No contribution	153	12%
Negative contribution	140	11%
Don't know	50	4%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Police

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	634	51%
Some contribution	394	31%
Not very much contribution	112	9%
No contribution	48	4%
Negative contribution	44	3%
Don't know	24	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Politicians

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	435	35%
Not very much contribution	298	24%
Contribute a lot	209	17%
Negative contribution	148	12%
No contribution	130	10%
Don't know	35	3%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Journalists

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	506	40%
Not very much contribution	279	22%
Contribute a lot	250	20%
Negative contribution	95	8%
No contribution	92	7%
Don't know	33	3%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Artists

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	531	42%
Not very much contribution	313	25%
Contribute a lot	216	17%
No contribution	118	9%
Negative contribution	43	3%
Don't know	35	3%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Lawyers

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	502	40%
Contribute a lot	310	25%
Not very much contribution	247	20%
No contribution	109	9%
Negative contribution	59	5%
Don't know	27	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Entertainers

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	571	45%
Not very much contribution	282	22%
Contribute a lot	231	18%
No contribution	100	8%
Negative contribution	43	3%
Don't know	28	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Entertainers

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	547	44%
Some contribution	407	32%
Not very much contribution	163	13%
No contribution	67	5%
Don't know	38	3%
Negative contribution	34	3%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Tradespeople

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	595	47%
Some contribution	431	34%
Not very much contribution	129	10%
No contribution	56	4%
Don't know	33	3%
Negative contribution	11	1%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Business workers

	Counts	% of total
Some contribution	581	46%
Contribute a lot	317	25%
Not very much contribution	236	19%
No contribution	63	5%
Don't know	33	3%
Negative contribution	25	2%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Factory workers

	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	519	41%
Some contribution	434	35%
Not very much contribution	181	14%
No contribution	75	6%
Don't know	35	3%
Negative contribution	10	1%

Would you say the occupations listed below contribute a lot, some, not very much or nothing at all, or make a negative contribution to the wellbeing of our society? - Farmers		
	Counts	% of total
Contribute a lot	819	65%
Some contribution	291	23%
Not very much contribution	81	6%
No contribution	37	3%
Don't know	17	1%
Negative contribution	9	1%
How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Scientists		
	Counts	% of total
Very prestigious	662	53%
Reasonably prestigious	442	35%
Not very prestigious	100	8%
Don't know	27	2%
Not prestigious at all	24	2%
How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Doctors		
	Counts	% of total
Very prestigious	840	67%
Reasonably prestigious	309	25%
Not very prestigious	56	4%
Don't know	32	3%
Not prestigious at all	17	1%
How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Engineers		
	Counts	% of total
Very prestigious	578	46%
Reasonably prestigious	497	40%
Not very prestigious	123	10%
Don't know	33	3%
Not prestigious at all	24	2%
How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Teachers		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	504	40%
Very prestigious	390	31%
Not very prestigious	260	21%
Not prestigious at all	63	5%
Don't know	38	3%
How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Priests or ministers of religion		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	436	35%
Not very prestigious	312	25%
Very prestigious	234	19%
Not prestigious at all	225	18%

Don't know 49 4%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Police		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	493	39%
Very prestigious	417	33%
Not very prestigious	228	18%
Not prestigious at all	80	6%
Don't know	37	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Politicians		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	450	36%
Not very prestigious	300	24%
Very prestigious	278	22%
Not prestigious at all	191	15%
Don't know	36	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Journalists		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	479	38%
Not very prestigious	411	33%
Very prestigious	181	14%
Not prestigious at all	146	12%
Don't know	37	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Artists		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	507	40%
Not very prestigious	385	31%
Very prestigious	221	18%
Not prestigious at all	100	8%
Don't know	42	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Lawyers		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	495	39%
Very prestigious	486	39%
Not very prestigious	153	12%
Not prestigious at all	73	6%
Don't know	48	4%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Entertainers		
	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	520	41%
Not very prestigious	336	27%
Very prestigious	258	21%
Not prestigious at all	102	8%
Don't know	40	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Members of the military	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	491	39%
Very prestigious	440	35%
Not very prestigious	219	17%
Not prestigious at all	63	5%
Don't know	42	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Tradespeople	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	511	41%
Not very prestigious	362	29%
Very prestigious	252	20%
Not prestigious at all	90	7%
Don't know	40	3%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Business workers	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	596	48%
Not very prestigious	333	27%
Very prestigious	213	17%
Not prestigious at all	65	5%
Don't know	48	4%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Factory workers	Counts	% of total
Not very prestigious	453	36%
Reasonably prestigious	414	33%
Very prestigious	188	15%
Not prestigious at all	156	12%
Don't know	45	4%

How prestigious do you think the occupations below are? - Farmers	Counts	% of total
Reasonably prestigious	451	36%
Very prestigious	371	30%
Not very prestigious	305	24%
Not prestigious at all	93	7%
Don't know	35	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Scientists	Counts	% of total
Very willing to listen	540	43%
Reasonably willing to listen	518	41%
Not very willing to listen	119	9%
Don't know	45	4%
Not willing to listen at all	34	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Doctors	Counts	% of total
Very willing to listen	672	54%
Reasonably willing to listen	429	34%
Not very willing to listen	110	9%
Don't know	25	2%
Not willing to listen at all	19	2%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Engineers	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	617	49%
Very willing to listen	427	34%
Not very willing to listen	133	11%
Don't know	59	5%
Not willing to listen at all	18	1%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Teachers	Counts	% of total
Very willing to listen	567	45%
Reasonably willing to listen	530	42%
Not very willing to listen	107	8%
Not willing to listen at all	28	2%
Don't know	24	2%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Priests or ministers of religion

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	469	37%
Very willing to listen	377	30%
Not very willing to listen	188	15%
Not willing to listen at all	178	14%
Don't know	44	4%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Police

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	510	41%
Very willing to listen	447	36%
Not very willing to listen	182	14%
Not willing to listen at all	86	7%
Don't know	30	2%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Politicians

	Counts	% of total
Not very willing to listen	386	31%
Reasonably willing to listen	372	30%
Not willing to listen at all	279	22%
Very willing to listen	185	15%
Don't know	32	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Journalists

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	533	42%
Very willing to listen	311	25%
Not very willing to listen	257	20%
Not willing to listen at all	112	9%
Don't know	43	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Artists

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	577	46%
Not very willing to listen	307	24%
Very willing to listen	221	18%
Not willing to listen at all	90	7%
Don't know	60	5%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Lawyers

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	546	43%
Very willing to listen	390	31%
Not very willing to listen	200	16%
Not willing to listen at all	84	7%
Don't know	35	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Entertainers

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	540	43%
Not very willing to listen	329	26%
Very willing to listen	230	18%
Not willing to listen at all	94	7%
Don't know	62	5%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Members of the military

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	561	45%
Very willing to listen	346	28%
Not very willing to listen	215	17%
Not willing to listen at all	73	6%
Don't know	58	5%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Tradespeople

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	674	54%
Very willing to listen	308	25%
Not very willing to listen	187	15%
Don't know	53	4%
Not willing to listen at all	33	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Business workers

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	659	52%
Not very willing to listen	284	23%
Very willing to listen	219	17%
Don't know	54	4%
Not willing to listen at all	39	3%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Factory workers

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	643	51%
Not very willing to listen	248	20%
Very willing to listen	235	19%
Don't know	76	6%
Not willing to listen at all	52	4%

How do you rate each of these professions for their willingness to listen to other people's thoughts, ideas and concerns? - Farmers

	Counts	% of total
Reasonably willing to listen	632	50%
Very willing to listen	392	31%
Not very willing to listen	144	11%
Don't know	51	4%
Not willing to listen at all	36	3%

Overall, would you say science has made life easier or more difficult for most people?

	Counts	% of total
Easier	907	72%
Not much of an effect	174	14%
More difficult	91	7%
Don't know	83	7%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Scientific progress has helped manage or cure illnesses such as AIDS, cancer, etc.

	Counts	% of total
Strongly agree	555	44%
Agree	471	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	151	12%
Disagree	41	3%
Strongly disagree	22	2%
Don't know	15	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science has made our lives healthier, easier and more comfortable

	Counts	% of total
Strongly agree	530	42%
Agree	493	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	169	13%
Disagree	33	3%
Don't know	23	2%
Strongly disagree	7	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Thanks to science, there are now more opportunities today than there were for previous generations

	Counts	% of total
Strongly agree	518	41%
Agree	490	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	191	15%
Disagree	31	2%
Don't know	20	2%
Strongly disagree	4	0%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - The benefits of science have been greater than any harmful effects it may have had

	Counts	% of total
Agree	498	40%
Strongly agree	422	34%
Neither agree nor disagree	254	20%
Disagree	46	4%
Don't know	24	2%
Strongly disagree	11	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science has helped eliminate much of the poverty and hunger around the world

	Counts	% of total
Agree	385	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	360	29%
Strongly agree	236	19%
Disagree	188	15%
Strongly disagree	56	4%
Don't know	29	2%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science has made our way of life change too fast

	Counts	% of total
Agree	413	33%
Neither agree nor disagree	330	26%
Strongly agree	235	19%
Disagree	209	17%
Strongly disagree	39	3%
Don't know	29	2%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - In the past we have depended too much on science and not enough on faith

	Counts	% of total
Neither agree nor disagree	317	25%
Disagree	289	23%
Agree	270	21%
Strongly disagree	198	16%
Strongly agree	150	12%
Don't know	32	3%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Scientific progress will help manage or cure illnesses such as AIDS, cancer, etc.

	Counts	% of total
Agree	520	41%
Strongly agree	480	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	176	14%
Disagree	34	3%
Don't know	28	2%
Strongly disagree	16	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science will make our lives healthier, easier and more comfortable

	Counts	% of total
Agree	511	41%
Strongly agree	470	37%
Neither agree nor disagree	195	16%
Disagree	36	3%
Don't know	28	2%
Strongly disagree	15	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Thanks to science, there will be more opportunities for future generations

	Counts	% of total
Agree	510	41%
Strongly agree	438	35%
Neither agree nor disagree	217	17%
Disagree	35	3%
Strongly disagree	30	2%
Don't know	25	2%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - The benefits of science will be greater than any harmful effects it may have

	Counts	% of total
Agree	487	39%
Strongly agree	384	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	260	21%
Disagree	66	5%
Don't know	42	3%
Strongly disagree	16	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science will help eliminate poverty and hunger around the world

	Counts	% of total
Agree	395	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	369	29%
Strongly agree	216	17%
Disagree	160	13%
Don't know	58	5%
Strongly disagree	57	5%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Science will make our way of life change too fast

	Counts	% of total
Agree	391	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	329	26%
Disagree	238	19%
Strongly agree	218	17%
Strongly disagree	48	4%
Don't know	29	2%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Scientists are trustworthy

	Counts	% of total
Agree	519	41%
Strongly agree	354	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	265	21%
Disagree	60	5%
Don't know	40	3%
Strongly disagree	17	1%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - We will increasingly depend too much on science and not enough on faith

	Counts	% of total
Agree	323	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	299	24%
Disagree	235	19%
Strongly agree	188	15%
Strongly disagree	175	14%
Don't know	35	3%

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? - Scientists often hide evidence that would challenge established views

	Counts	% of total
Agree	366	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	349	28%
Disagree	202	16%
Strongly agree	183	15%
Strongly disagree	81	6%
Don't know	74	6%

Is there solid evidence that the average temperature on Earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades?

	Counts	% of total
Yes, there is solid evidence	543	43%
Mixed / there is some evidence either way	398	32%
No, there is no solid evidence	175	14%
Don't know	127	10%
Don't care	13	1%

Is the Earth getting warmer mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels or mostly because of natural patterns in the Earth's environment?	Counts	% of total
It is a mix of human activity and natural patterns	490	39%
Mostly because of human activity, such as burning fossil fuels	396	32%
Mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment	212	17%
Don't know	110	9%
It is not getting warmer	40	3%
Don't care	7	1%
And why would you say that? Select all that may apply	Counts *	% of total
Because of scientific evidence or research	634	50.8%
Because of the negative effect of human activity on the environment	420	33.7%
Because of the negative effect of greenhouse gasses on the environment	378	30.3%
Because natural changes alone do not account for the change in climate	176	14.1%
Because of my own observations about the environment	407	32.6%
Because of changes in weather patterns	323	25.9%
Because of my own research or study	95	7.6%
Because of what I read or see in the media	153	12.2%
It makes sense / common sense	227	18.2%
Both human activity and natural occurrences have an impact	470	37.6%
Historically there have been naturally occurring fluctuations in global temperature	397	31.8%
Current changes in temperature are not significant compared to those that have occurred historically	114	9.1%
Because the scientific evidence is incomplete or inconclusive	127	10.2%

Because the scientific evidence is contradictory	88	7.1%
Because the scientific evidence is biased	81	6.5%
Because the scientific evidence is flawed	62	5.0%
Because the scientific evidence is faked	61	4.9%
Other	28	2.2%

*Note multiple answers were permitted

Why would you say that? - Selected Choice among those who chose "it is not getting warmer" above	Counts	% of total
There's no evidence it's getting warmer	23	59%
There's evidence the temperature hasn't changed / is the same	10	26%
There's evidence it's getting cooler	4	10%
Another reason	2	5%

And why would you say that? Select all that may apply – Text response among those who chose "it is not getting warmer" above

Data sets have been adjusted/manipulated so much it is difficult to tell

The 'climate' constantly changes over time. Heard of the ice age?

The figures are distorted

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - The use of animals in scientific research	Counts	% of total
Strongly oppose	291	23%
Neither favour nor oppose	265	21%
Oppose	256	20%
Favour	222	18%
Strongly favour	100	8%
Would like more information before answering	99	8%
Don't know	21	2%
Don't care	1	0%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - Building nuclear power plants to generate electricity	Counts	% of total
Favour	287	23%
Strongly favour	248	20%
Strongly oppose	220	17%
Neither favour nor oppose	209	17%
Oppose	165	13%
Would like more information before answering	86	7%
Don't know	36	3%
Don't care	4	0%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - The increased use of fracking, a drilling method that uses high-pressure water and chemicals to extract oil and natural gas from underground rock formations	Counts	% of total
Neither favour nor oppose	279	22%
Favour	233	19%
Oppose	216	17%
Strongly oppose	202	16%
Strongly favour	147	12%
Would like more information before answering	102	8%
Don't know	71	6%
Don't care	6	0%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - The increased use of genetically engineered plants to create a liquid fuel replacement for gasoline	Counts	% of total
Favour	349	28%
Neither favour nor oppose	253	20%
Strongly favour	215	17%
Would like more information before answering	137	11%
Oppose	131	10%
Strongly oppose	82	7%
Don't know	79	6%
Don't care	9	1%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - Allowing more people access to experimental drugs before clinical trials have shown the drugs to be safe and effective for that disease or condition	Counts	% of total
Favour	311	25%
Neither favour nor oppose	269	21%
Oppose	249	20%
Strongly favour	142	11%
Strongly oppose	134	11%
Would like more information before answering	103	8%
Don't know	45	4%
Don't care	2	0%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - Increasing mining to supply minerals for the transition away from fossil fuels	Counts	% of total
Favour	345	28%
Neither favour nor oppose	304	24%
Strongly favour	205	16%
Would like more information before answering	122	10%
Oppose	113	9%
Don't know	89	7%
Strongly oppose	72	6%
Don't care	3	0%

Are you in favour or do you oppose the following? - Using genetic technologies to bring back extinct species, or to conserve our unique wildlife	Counts	% of total
Favour	274	22%
Neither favour nor oppose	265	21%
Oppose	182	15%
Strongly favour	180	14%
Strongly oppose	142	11%
Would like more information before answering	130	10%
Don't know	77	6%
Don't care	6	0%

Thinking about preventable childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, would you say that ...			Would you say that changing a baby's genetic characteristics to reduce the risk of serious diseases is ...		
	Counts	% of total		Counts	% of total
All parents should be required to vaccinate their children if they're able	839	67%	Making appropriate use of medical advances	470	37%
All parents should be able to decide not to vaccinate their children	232	19%	Would like more information before answering	386	31%
Would like more information before answering	124	10%	Taking medical advances too far	308	25%
Don't know	54	4%	Don't know	78	6%
Don't care	6	0%	Don't care	14	1%
Thinking about the use of biological engineering to create artificial organs for humans needing a transplant operation, would you say this is ...			Would you say it is generally safe or unsafe to eat foods grown with pesticides?		
	Counts	% of total		Counts	% of total
Making appropriate use of medical advances	665	53%	Generally unsafe	591	47%
Would like more information before answering	327	26%	Generally safe	271	22%
Taking medical advances too far	152	12%	Would like more information before answering	251	20%
Don't know	105	8%	Don't know	131	10%
Don't care	7	1%	Don't care	11	1%
Would you say that changing a baby's genetic characteristics to make the baby more intelligent is ...			Would you say genetically modified crops are generally safe or unsafe for the environment?		
	Counts	% of total		Counts	% of total
Taking medical advances too far	794	63%	Generally safe	384	31%
Would like more information before answering	231	18%	Generally unsafe	364	29%
Making appropriate use of medical advances	145	12%	Would like more information before answering	337	27%
Don't know	72	6%	Don't know	160	13%
Don't care	15	1%	Don't care	10	1%
			Would you say using pesticides is generally safe or unsafe for the environment?		
				Counts	% of total
			Generally unsafe	685	55%
			Generally safe	223	18%
			Would like more information before answering	222	18%
			Don't know	119	10%
			Don't care	6	1%

Would you say it is generally safe or unsafe to eat genetically modified foods?	Counts	% of total
Generally safe	419	33%
Generally unsafe	382	30%
Would like more information before answering	300	24%
Don't know	143	11%
Don't care	10	1%

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "We all have a responsibility to help protect Australia from biosecurity threats such as pests, diseases and invasive species, even when doing so causes inconvenience."	Counts	% of total
Strongly agree	604	48%
Agree	403	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	140	11%
Would like more information before answering	31	3%
Don't know	27	2%
Strongly disagree	25	2%
Disagree	24	2%
Don't care	2	0%

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Overall, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a positive for society."	Counts	% of total
Neither agree nor disagree	369	29%
Somewhat agree	339	27%
Somewhat disagree	231	18%
Strongly disagree	188	15%
Strongly agree	128	10%

What do you see as the main benefits of AI? (select all that apply)	Counts*	% of total
It saves time	601	48%
It can help with difficult problems	467	37%
It gives me access to information	436	35%
AI is not beneficial at all	224	18%
It provides accurate information	201	16%
It makes me more productive	191	15%
Don't know	149	12%
Other	16	1%
*Note multiple answers were permitted		

What do you see as the main concerns about AI? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice	Counts*	% of total
It threatens jobs	470	38%
It raises privacy or security risks	458	37%
It could be misused by companies or governments	407	32%
It reduces people's ability to think for themselves	387	32%
It isn't accurate	344	27%
It has a large environmental impact	253	20%
It could threaten human extinction	202	16%
It is biased or unfair	188	15%
It is trained on data where the copyright belongs to others	170	14%
Don't know	56	5%
I am not concerned about AI at all	41	3%
Other	11	1%
*Note multiple answers were permitted		

**What do you see as the main concerns about AI?
(select all that apply) - Other - Text**

All of the above
Kick ai to the ditch
Skynet
As computers become more powerful, ai could override human action
Deepfakes
It actually achieves the polar opposite of all "benefits" listed in the previous survey question.
No emotional intelligence.
The data centres use too much water and electricity, and devalue the land around them.
The sector is unregulated

Comparing Australia to other industrialised countries in terms of its scientific achievements, do you think Australia is

...	Counts	% of total
Average	572	46%
Above average	373	30%
Among the best in the world	137	11%
Below average	130	10%
Among the worst in the world	43	3%

If there was a federal election held today, who would you most likely vote for?

	Counts	% of total
Labor party	373	30%
Pauline Hanson's One Nation party	260	21%
Liberal party	197	16%
Undecided	122	10%
Greens party	117	9%
An independent candidate	53	4%
National party	39	3%
I would not vote but I am eligible to vote	34	3%
I would not vote as I am ineligible to vote	28	2%
Another political party	19	2%
A Teals / "Community Strong Australia" candidate	13	1%

If there was a federal election held today, who would you most likely vote for? - Another political party - Text

Animal justice
Animal justice party
Australian Christians
Australian democrats
Civic nationalists
Definitely not labour or one nation
Family first
Legalise cannabis
None of them
One nation
Pon
The lnp

If you will be voting, how certain are you that you would vote for the party or candidate selected above?

	Counts	% of total
Very certain	508	40%
Fairly certain	401	32%
Undecided	140	11%
Not very certain	82	7%
Don't know	48	4%
Not at all certain	42	3%
I would not vote	34	3%

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

	Counts	% of total
Bachelor degree	255	20%
Year 12	217	17%
Other TAFE / technical certificate	194	15%
Year 10	170	14%
Diploma	137	11%
Post-graduate degree	131	10%
Year 11	65	5%
Trade / apprenticeship	42	3%
Year 7 to year 9	37	3%
Primary school	5	0%
Never attended school	2	0%

Was this qualification a science or science-related qualification?

	Counts	% of total
No	908	72%
Yes	311	25%
Don't know	37	3%

Have you completed any other qualifications that were a science or science-related qualification?	Counts	% of total
No	1,014	81%
Yes	207	16%
Don't know	34	3%

Was this qualification in any of these science-related areas? (Select all that may apply)	Counts	% of total
Other	624	49.8%
Medical and Health sciences	135	10.7%
Technology	107	8.5%
Chemical sciences	106	8.4%
Biological sciences	102	8.1%
Mathematical sciences	97	7.7%
Engineering	92	7.3%
Information and computing sciences	89	7.1%
Environmental sciences	85	6.8%
Physical sciences	82	6.5%
Psychology and cognitive sciences	80	6.4%
Earth sciences	73	5.8%
Agricultural and veterinary sciences	55	4.4%
Built environment and design	24	1.9%

What was the level of education for this science or science-related qualification?	Counts	% of total
Other	477	38%
Bachelor degree	252	20%
Other TAFE / technical certificate	185	15%
Diploma	150	12%
Post-graduate degree	107	9%
Trade / apprenticeship	84	7%

Which of these best describes your current employment situation?	Counts	% of total
Working full-time	511	41%
Working part-time	197	16%
Retired - on pension	160	13%
Retired - self funded	80	6%
Home duties	66	5%
Receiving government income support (e.g., disability support pension, jobseeker, carer payment)	62	5%
Working on a casual basis	50	4%
Unemployed and looking for work	46	4%
A full-time school or university student	34	3%
Retired - a combination of pension and self funded income	24	2%
An unpaid volunteer	10	1%
Other	9	1%
Don't know	6	0%

How often does your day-to-day job require you to use the following skills? - Science	Counts	% of total
Never	646	51%
Regularly (a number of times a week)	215	17%
Rarely (maybe 2 or 3 times a month)	204	16%
All the time (everyday)	129	10%
Don't know	61	5%

How often does your day-to-day job require you to use the following skills? - Technology	Counts	% of total
All the time (everyday)	461	37%
Never	338	27%
Regularly (a number of times a week)	282	22%
Rarely (maybe 2 or 3 times a month)	135	11%
Don't know	39	3%

How often does your day-to-day job require you to use the following skills? - Engineering

	Counts	% of total
Never	683	54%
Rarely (maybe 2 or 3 times a month)	216	17%
Regularly (a number of times a week)	172	14%
All the time (everyday)	117	9%
Don't know	66	5%

How often does your day-to-day job require you to use the following skills? - Maths

	Counts	% of total
Never	364	29%
Regularly (a number of times a week)	347	28%
All the time (everyday)	312	25%
Rarely (maybe 2 or 3 times a month)	187	15%
Don't know	45	4%

City/region (compiled from post code)

	Counts	% of total
Greater Sydney	288	23%
Greater Melbourne	277	22%
Greater Brisbane	149	12%
Rest of New South Wales	111	9%
Rest of Queensland	110	9%
Greater Perth	94	7%
Rest of Victoria	79	6%
Greater Adelaide	75	6%
Australian Capital Territory	20	2%
Rest of Western Australia	14	1%
Rest of Tasmania	13	1%
Greater Hobart	12	1%
Rest of South Australia	9	1%
Darwin	4	0%