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# CALIFORNIA COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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## FACTS

**Date Started:** 1988

### Legislation

CCST is a nonpartisan, impartial, not-for-profit corporation established via Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR 162) in 1988 to provide objective advice from California's best scientists and research institutions on policy issues involving science.

### Product/Deliverables

- Peer -reviewed, published reports

## MISSION

The purpose of the California Council on Science and Technology (CCST) is to provide independent and objective findings on public policy issues involving science and technology that affect the State of California. The CCST brings together those who create knowledge with those who create wealth, in cooperation with those who make policy, to utilize science and technology for the economic and social well being of the citizens of the State of California. The CCST engages leading experts in science and technology to provide expert advice to state policymakers, ensuring California policy is informed by sound scientific knowledge in science, technology, innovation, and STEM education.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF A STUDY?

Typically, studies move through four phases:

- Defining the study and statement of task;
- Committee selection, approval, and formation;
- Meetings, information gathering, analysis and report preparation; and
- Report review, approval, and publication.

Each of the phases is designed to ensure that the analyses and evaluations of information provided to sponsors are of the highest quality. The CCST provides independent advice. External sponsors have no control over the conduct of a study once the statement of task and budget are finalized. Study committees gather information from many sources in public and private meetings but they carry out their deliberations in private in order to avoid political, special interest, and sponsor influence.

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## SUBJECT AREAS

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Currently there are four main focus areas:

- Digitally Enhanced Education,
- California's water system,
- Hydraulic fracturing, and
- California's Energy Future

However, focus areas change over time. Publications from CCST have a vast range from the 1992 Waste management report to the most recent 2015 Assessment of Well stimulation. Three broad categories are education, energy, and innovation.

## THE COUNCIL AND A STUDY COMMITTEE

The CCST is an independent 23 member assembly of corporate CEOs, academics, scientists, and scholars of the highest distinction. The council identifies issues needing study and oversees production of reports. The council helps the state proactively frame science and technology policy questions and help select the study committees.

All committee members serve as individual experts, not as representatives of organizations or interest groups. Each member is expected to contribute to the project on the basis of his or her own expertise and good judgment. A committee is designed to have:

- An appropriate range of expertise for the task,
- A balance of perspectives, and
- All members cleared of possible conflicts of interest.

## OVERSIGHT AND REPORT REVIEW

All work that bears the CCST's name is reviewed by Board Members, Council Members and selected Senior Fellows. In addition, outside reviewers and experts in the report's field are asked to edit and review final reports. This rigorous peer review ensures the specific issue being addressed is done so in a targeted way with results that are clear and sound. As a final check on the quality and objectivity of the study, all CCST reports, whether products of studies, summaries of workshop proceedings, or other documents, must undergo a rigorous, independent external review by experts whose comments are provided anonymously to the committee members. The CCST recruits independent experts with a range of views and perspectives to review and comment on the draft report prepared by the committee.

The review process is structured to ensure that each report addresses its approved study charge and does not go beyond it, that the findings are supported by the scientific evidence and arguments presented, that the exposition and organization are effective, and that the report is impartial and objective.

Each committee must respond to, but need not agree with, reviewer comments in a detailed "response to review" that is examined by one or two independent report review "monitors" responsible for ensuring that the report review criteria have been satisfied. After all committee members and appropriate CCST officials have signed off on the final report, it is transmitted to the sponsor of the study and is released to the public. Sponsors are not given an opportunity to suggest changes in reports. All reviewer comments remain confidential. The names and affiliations of the report reviewers are made public when the report is released.

## FUNDING SOURCES

CCST's core support comes from California's major post-secondary institutions, which are represented on the Board and which provide important backing, support, and resources to CCST. The active cooperation of these institutions enables CCST to leverage the collective expertise of some of the best research universities in the world, as well as the largest public higher education systems in the nation.

CCST also receives support from six affiliate members, which include the major Department of Energy (DOE) and NASA research centers in California. Through this collaboration, laboratories are provided a forum through which they can inform policymakers on issues that are both laboratory and non-laboratory specific and that affect the health and vitality of the science and technology enterprise in California.

CCST also receives funding for certain projects from various foundations and/or contracts with state or federal agencies

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