

What DuPont's deep R&D cuts mean for science

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During the last century, private companies, as well as illustrious universities, were known for great exploratory research. But those days may soon be a memory if DuPont's recent layoffs are any indication, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News* (C&EN), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society. The chemical giant, which announced its merger with Dow in December, has dramatically reduced its basic research unit in response to business demands.

Alexander Tullo, a senior correspondent at C&EN, notes that private research and development (R&D) flourished in the 1950s through the '80s. At one point during that time, DuPont's Central Research & Development arm was publishing more scientific papers in the top-tier *Journal of the American Chemical Society* than the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the California Institute of Technology. Five other private companies also contributed significantly to scientific literature.

But basic research doesn't always translate directly into near-term profits, and over time, [private companies](#) have seen diminishing returns on their R&D investments. Meanwhile, the business climate has shifted to a greater focus on research that could more quickly result in marketable products. To accommodate this change, DuPont has drastically trimmed its once-sacred R&D program and rolled its remaining employees into a new group called Science & Innovation.

More information: The Shrinking DuPont Central R&D -
[cen.acs.org/articles/94/i4/DuP ... 1-Research-Unit.html](https://cen.acs.org/articles/94/i4/DuP...1-Research-Unit.html)

Provided by American Chemical Society

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