

Almost 50 years ago, conservatives were the backbone of societal support for science. Now just 45% of Republicans have confidence in the institution

A new Gallup [poll](#) reveals that, in 2021, just 45 percent of Republicans report having a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in science, compared to 72 percent of Republicans in 1975. Democrats and independents have remained largely confident in science as an institution over the years, shifting from 67 percent to 79 percent, and 73 percent to 65 percent, respectively, between 1975 and 2021, per Gallup.

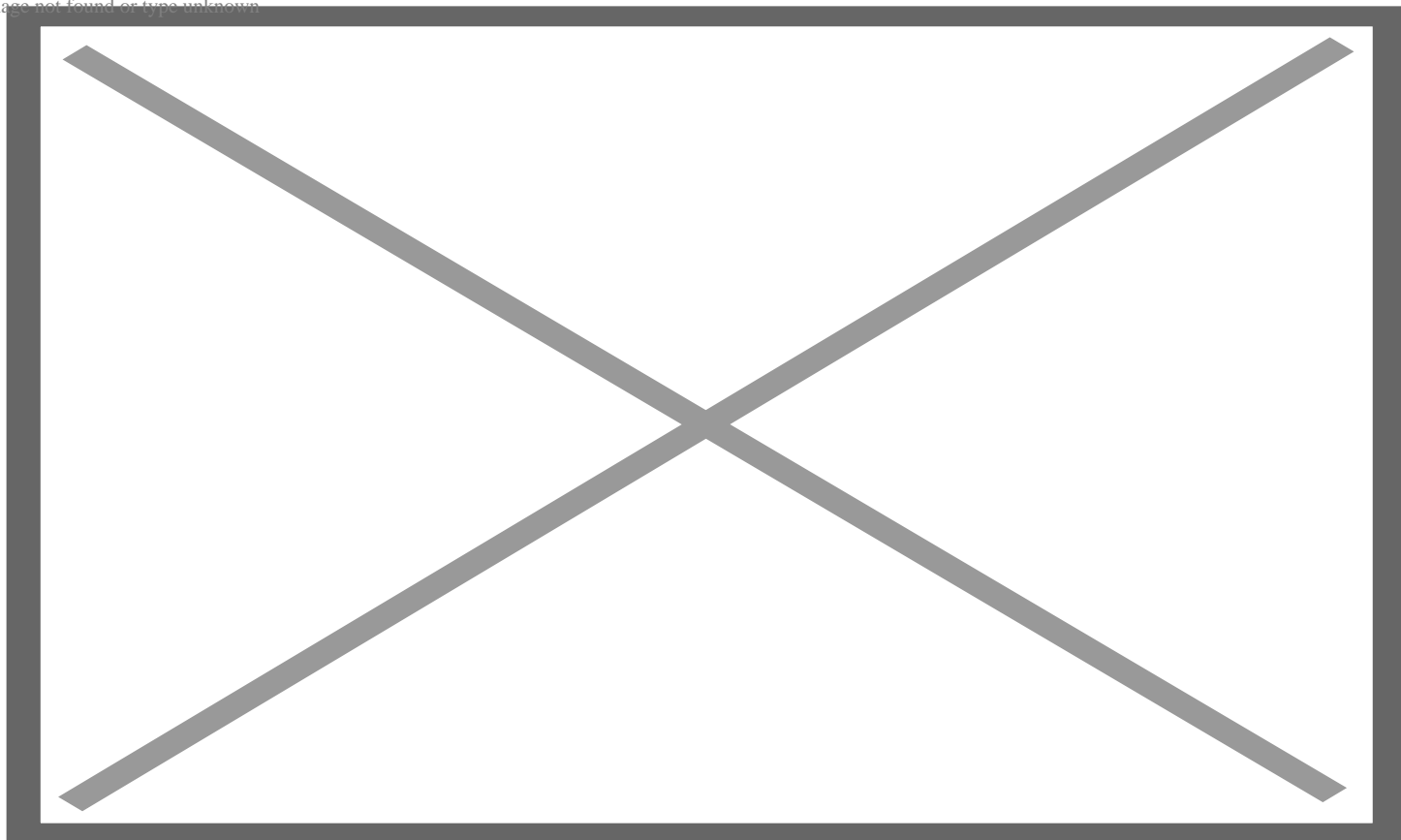
The current partisan gap regarding confidence in science (79 percent to 45 percent) is “among the largest Gallup measured” for any of the institutions in its annual [Confidence in Institutions](#) survey. It is “exceeded only by a 49-point party divide in ratings of the presidency and 45 points in ratings of the police,” Gallup writes.

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Such distrust toward the scientific community can be felt in recent Republican attitudes toward mask mandates, the COVID-19 vaccine, and the seriousness of the pandemic as a whole, Gallup notes. Ironically, just 46 years ago, Republicans were actually more likely than Democrats to report a great deal of trust in science — but now, conservative thought and political leaders are seemingly pushing their caucus in the opposite direction.

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