THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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11 May 2023

File ref: FOI2023/00259

Millie Sullivan

Sent by email: millie@ded1.co

Dear Millie Sullivan

Freedom of Information request: FOI2023/00259

Thank you for your email of 11 April 2023 requesting information about research projects related to arms trade companies.

The University of Edinburgh is a global university, rooted in Scotland. We are internationally recognised for our research, development and innovation and we have provided world-class teaching to our students for more than 430 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2021/22 our annual revenue was £1.3 billion, of which £331 million was research income. We have just under 50,000 students and over 15,000 staff. We are a founding member of the UK's Russell Group of leading research universities and a member of the League of European Research Universities.

Income due diligence

Major prospective sources of income for the University, such as donations and research funding, always undergo a rigorous due diligence process. Until the end of 2021, donations went before the Ethical Fundraising Advisory Group. The Income Due Diligence Group (IDDG) now considers and advises on whether the source and purposes of all income relating to philanthropic and contractual business, industrial and international government sources are ethically acceptable. More information on the IDDG can be found on the University's Legal Services website.

Research related to arms trade companies

You asked for information about research projects in the last five financial years relating to, but not limited to, the following arms trade companies: BAE systems, Babcock; QinetiQ, Rolls-Royce, Serco, Cobham, Raytheon, Airbus, General Dynamics, Leonardo MW, Lockheed Martin, Thales, MBDA, Elbit Systems, Caterpillar, MOD, DSTL, Atomic Weapons Establishment, GKN, and Boeing.

You specifically asked for: title and aim of research project; players (list of companies involved in the research project); name of University department(s) involved (if applicable); source of funding for the research project (to be included the source of funding does not have to be an arms trade company); the total amount, in pounds sterling, that the University has received in research funding for this project broken, down by financial year; and the start and end date of the research project.

Please note the University's financial year runs from 1 August to 31 July.

Unfortunately, we are not able to undertake a general search of arms trade companies as the University works with many companies and we cannot assess whether each one meets your definition of an 'arms trade' company. The University is only able to search on a list of organisations. Our response is therefore based on the companies listed in your request.

In order to answer this request, we have contacted the Edinburgh Research Office (ERO). Although it holds information on research projects, relating to at least some of the specified companies, we cannot provide this information in response to your request. To ensure the University meets its legally binding contractual obligations, we would have to check each of the 49 research agreements that fall within the specified time period to see if they contain clauses requiring the University to make third parties aware of requests for information about the contract. Some contracts may also include confidentiality clauses. In order to confirm the requested information is correct, obtain a copy of the research agreement or the relevant clauses within, and obtain the contact details of the third-parties involved, we would need to contact the 28 different principal investigators (PIs) involved in the research projects. If the PIs do not hold the research agreement, we would then need to contact Edinburgh Innovations for this information.

We would also need to contact each of the 27 research sponsors and project partners to ascertain what information could be provided to you. If the University provided you with the information you have requested without checking the contracts and contacting third parties, it would breach its obligations under contract law. I estimate that the cost of collating and quality assuring the information, scrutinising the contractual documentation for each research agreement and contacting third parties would be £881.25. The basis on which we calculated the cost of responding to this part of your request is set out in the freedom of information charging information on our website and the enclosed cost calculation. As your request will cost over £600 to fulfil, the University is not obliged to process it. Information about how we have calculated the fee is included in the cost calculation to assist you.

If you were to restrict your request to a more limited time frame and/or a shorter list of companies, the cost would be reduced. However, responding may still cost more than £100, the limit over which the University is able to charge a fee for responding to requests. The level of the fee is set by legislation, and is set at 10% of any cost over £100, to a maximum of £50. The basis on which we calculate the cost of responding to freedom of information requests is set out in the freedom of information charging information on our website.

Please note we would only be able to provide the award total for research grants and funding and not the research income the University received for each financial year. For instance, if an award was received for three years of research in financial year 2021/22,

the entire value of the award will be appear in that financial year (rather than the award value being distributed over the lifetime of the award).

Information about research projects, included the amount awarded, is held by ERO. However, information about the amount of research funding received in each financial year is held by the Finance department. As the two sets of information are held separately in different systems, to provide as requested the amount of funding received for a project broken down by financial year, we would have to manually match information from one system with information from the other system. As the systems are not linked, this would be a complex process requiring extensive checking and quality assurance processes to ensure that data from both systems was correctly joined. As the University is not required to create new information in order to respond to freedom of information requests we do not hold the information you request.

Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section in writing (e.g. by letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape). You should describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence. You have 40 working days from receipt of this letter to submit a review request. The contact details for the Records Management Section are at the top of this letter. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may use the Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance on making an appeal to make an appeal to the Commissioner. If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages.

Privacy notice for information request applicants

The University of Edinburgh's request privacy notice, which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is published on the University website.

Yours sincerely

Celia Jenkins
Records Management Section

Enc.: Enclosure_FOI2023/00259: Cost calculation for FOI2023/00259

If you require this letter in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact the Records Management Section on 0131 651 4099 or email recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk

Cost calculation for Millie Sullivan's freedom of information request of 11 April 2023 (FOI2023/00259)

Requested information:

Information on research projects involving specified arms trade companies for the last five years

Background:

The University holds information on research, but this needs to be collated and quality assured. This involves obtaining information from the Edinburgh Research Office and contacting the principal investigators of each research project. In addition, before any information is disclosed, we are required to manually check research funding agreements between companies and the University that relate to the disclosure of details about research projects. Many of these agreements contain clauses requiring the University to make the third party aware of requests for information about the contract and some will include confidentiality clauses. We would also need to contact each third party to ascertain what information could be provided in answer to the request.

									Total chargeable costs	**£881.25**
Tasks required to respond to the request:									**Cost**	
1	Request added to request management system and assigned to case worker in Records Management Section									
	1 x Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	0.25	hours	**£**	**3.75**
2	Case worker receives the request and contacts the Information Practitioner in Edinburgh Research Office to collate the information.									
	1 x Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	0.25	hours	**£**	**3.75**
3	Edinburgh Research Office collates the requested information.									
	1 x Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	2.	hours	**£**	**30.00**
4	Case worker organises and re-formats the requested information.									
	1 x Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	0.33	hours	**£**	**4.95**
5	Case worker contacts the principal investigators (PIs) of the research projects for confirmation of the data, research agreement/contract information and contact details of the third parties involved.									

	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	14.	hours	Based on 0.5 hours for each PI (28)	**£ 210.00**
6	PIs confirm data, provide research agreement/contract information and contact details for the third parties. (If they do not hold the research agreement/contract we would need to contact Edinburgh Innovations.)										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	24.5	hours	Based on 0.5 hours for each research project (49)	**£ 367.50**
7	Case worker contacts partnering organisations to consult with them about the disclosure.										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	13.5	hours	Based on 0.5 hours for each partnering organisation (27)	**£ 202.50**
8	Case worker collates the information from the consultations and makes any necessary changes to the information to be disclosed.										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	0.67	hours		**£ 10.05**
9	Case worker writes a response letter explaining what has been provided, any context essential to understanding the information, and detailing any exemptions used and the reasons for this.										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	2.	hours		**£ 30.00**
10	Records Management Section request manager checks draft response and enclosure.										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	1.	hours		**£ 15.00**
11	Response uploaded to request management system and issued to the requester										
	1 x	Grade 5+ member of staff	@	£	15.00	per hour	x	0.25	hours		**£ 3.75**