Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

Mr M Jones
ltheanine29@protonmail.com

11 December 2020
Our Ref: FOI/2021/057

Dear Mr Jones

Your Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email, which was received by the University on 16 October 2020. The University's response is set out in the enclosed document.

Your right to seek a review

Should you be dissatisfied with the way in which the University has dealt with your request, you have the right to require us to review our actions and decisions. If you wish to request a review, please contact the General Counsel, Aston University, Birmingham, B4 7ET or e-mail: foi_requests@aston.ac.uk within 40 working days. Your request must be in a recordable format (letter, email, audio tape, etc). You will receive a full response to your request for review within 20 working days of its receipt.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we have handled your request for review you may ask the Information Commissioner to review our decision. You must submit your complaint in writing to the Commissioner within 6 months of receiving the response to review letter. The Commissioner may be contacted at:

Address: Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113 / 01625 545 745 (+44 1625 545 745 if calling from overseas)
Fax: 01625 524 510

E-mail: notification@ico.gsi.gov.uk
Website http://www.ico.gov.uk/

Yours sincerely

Alice Mineyko
Counsel

Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

Your request	Our response
Has the university received funding from any of the following companies since 2013: BAE Systems, Babcock International, Qinetiq, Rolls-Royce; Serco; Cobham and Raytheon UK, Airbus, DXC Technology, General Dynamics UK, Leonardo MW UK, Lockheed Martin UK? If so, please include the following details: a. Total funding supplied by the company b. The titles of the projects it is associated with c. Descriptions of the projects it is associated with	The University has one project meeting the criteria of your request. Funder – QinetiQ a) Total funding - £36,690 The information requested in questions b) and c), title and description of project, are exempt under section 43(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is because this information relates to the plans for development of new products by QinetiQ and therefore constitutes a trade secret. <u>Public interest test</u> We have considered whether it is in the public interest to release the withheld information despite the section 43(1) exemption being available. In our opinion, while there is a public interest in disclosing the amount and sources of funding used by universities, this does not extend to disclosing sensitive business information of our industrial partners. As the project in question relates to cutting edge research, our partners have a reasonable expectation that the University will maintain confidentiality and will not put details of this research in the public domain. We therefore consider that the balance of the public interest in this case lies in disclosing the identity and amount of funding and in withholding the details of the research project.