

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Drone Wars UK

#2G5JCTXJMC submitted on 11 November 2024

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

We seek funding to undertake research and education work on the environmental impact of the UK's militarisation of space. The UK now argues that space is a 'war fighting domain' and joins the US and others states in launching military satellites and equipment into orbit. We will publish a detailed report examining the environmental and peace and security impact of these developments and undertake education work with the public and Quaker/peace groups.

Tell us more about your project and the impact it will have on those it aims to help, and how it will bring about significant change

Increasingly, space-based operations now affect many aspects of modern life and commerce. The global economy relies on satellites to provide communications for a variety of services including mobile phones, the internet, television, and financial trading systems. Global positioning system (GPS) satellites play a key role in transport networks, while earth observation satellites provide information for weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and crop observation.

Space is also rapidly becoming crowded with military systems used for communications; command and control; surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance; missile warning and other systems used in support of warfare. Although the UK's military space programme dates back to the 1950s, until relatively recently it was small and extremely limited. However, as the commercial space sector has expanded and the cost of launches has decreased, the UK has begun to treat space as a vital area of national security interest. The MoD and its close allies have openly declared that they see space as "a war fighting domain". We have seen the setting up of UK Space Command, the publication of a Defence Space Strategy outlining how the MoD will "protect the UK's national interests in space" and the announcement of a portfolio of new military programmes to develop space assets and infrastructure. Alongside this, the UK wants to develop the infrastructure and capability to undertake regular launches into space from UK soil.

Quietly and without virtually no public discussion, we have entered the era of space warfare. Unless curtailed, the increasing militarisation of space will inevitably lead to serious environmental harm, instability and conflict.

In 2022, Drone Wars UK set up a programme to examine the militarisation of space: Space Watch UK (www.spacewatch.uk). We published a report, 'For Heaven's Sake: Examining the UK's Militarisation of Space', in conjunction with CND and in 2023 we were awarded funding from The Network for Social Change to develop this work, focusing in particular on supporting campaigners and local groups around potential launch and other space sites to challenge these developments.

In 2025 we want to undertake detailed research in order to publish a new report examining the environmental impact of the UK's military space programme. While some work has been undertaken in this area, much of it is extremely technical and not easily understood by the layperson. We want to ensure that the public understands the environmental and security impact of the UK's military space plans and publicise what is happening at the various sites proposed for UK space launches.

Outer space is a region of wonder and inspiration. It continues to challenge and inspire many people who wish to explore and discover. However, a growing number of space activities are now focussing on

commercial exploitation and warfighting. We're calling for much more public discussion and debate about this push to exploit space for military and commercial purposes. Currently, decisions with huge implications are being made by a small elite of policymakers and wealthy entrepreneurs for their own purposes and not for the benefit of humanity. We believe this must change. Through producing a detailed but accessible report examining the environmental impact of these developments and undertaking a programme of public education, the public and local campaigners will be better informed and able to criticise and challenge these developments.

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

- A - Quaker work and witness, particularly work relating to peace
- B - Peace-building and conflict resolution
- D - Peace work connected with climate breakdown

1.3a Quaker work and witness, particularly work relating to peace

Although not specifically a Quaker organisation, we share Quaker values and are supported by Quaker meetings and Quaker charitable trusts. Our goal is to create a more peaceful, just and equitable world by increasing the understanding that military security is counter-productive to such aims. We believe that military security legitimises and underpins unjust structures which enshrine global divisions and injustice.

1.3b Peace-building and conflict resolution

As part of our work, we argue that the UK should be upholding the Outer Space Treaty, signed by the UK in 1967, which recognises space as a 'global commons' to be used for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all. The treaty was aimed at preventing national and commercial exploitation of space and the damage that would cause.

1.3d Peace work connected with climate breakdown

Considerable amounts of carbon are released from the development and manufacture of rockets and also from producing, storing and burning the rocket fuels. New spaceports are being established and these are often in remote places where the environment is severely disrupted and there is significant ecological damage.

1.4 Which country is the project based in?

United Kingdom (GB)

1.5 Will the project continue after initial funding has ended?

Yes

1.5b Please give details of how you plan to continue after initial funding has ended

The environmental impact of the UK's militarisation of space will continue to be a key theme of the Space Watch UK project.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

Drone Wars UK has an experienced and active Steering Committee who manage and oversee the organisation's work. The Steering Committee will monitor and evaluate this project.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Research time - 150 hours	£3,750	Undertaken by our researcher, Dr Peter Burt
Research - access to research material	£280	Access to specific reports and journals
Report - design, layout and printing	£650	

costs		
Speaking tour travel costs	£450	
Office and management costs	£250	
TOTALS	£5,380	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
Edith M Ellis Trust	£4,500	£0	
Drone Wars UK reserves	£880	£0	
Total	£0	£0	
TOTALS	£5,380	£0	

2.3 What is the total amount (in £ sterling) your organisation is requesting from The Edith M Ellis Trust?

£4,500

2.4 Has your organisation made an application to The Edith M Ellis Trust before?

Yes

2.4b Please provide the date of the previous application

December 2021

2.4c Was this previous application successful?

Yes

2.4d How much did you receive?

£2,400

2.4e When did you receive the grant?

March 20225

2.5 Please state your organisation's annual turnover (in £ sterling)

£92,990

2.6 Do you wish to upload your audited accounts or financial statement?

Yes

2.6b Upload File

<https://theedithmellischaritabletrust.org/assets/uploads/2024/11/DWUK-Accounts-2023-signed.pdf>

2.7 Please tell us where payment should be made if your application is successful

Drone Wars UK

65496361

08-92-99

3.1 Your name

Chris Cole

3.2 Your contact telephone number

07960811437

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Director

3.4 Your email address

chris@dronewars.net

3.5 Organisation name

Drone Wars UK

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

NGO - company limited by guarantee

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

Drone Wars UK investigates and challenges the legitimacy and effectiveness of military technology including drones, AI and space warfare to create peace and security. Fundamentally opposed to the harm done in the name of military security, our work is rooted in, and contributes to, a growing understanding of sustainable human security. Our vision is of a peaceful and just world where governments prioritise investment in human and environmental security rather than military technology.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

Drone Wars UK
Unit 34
The Wincombe Centre,
Shaftesbury
SP7 9QJ

3.9 UK telephone number

07960811437

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

–

3.11 Year established

2010

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<http://www.dronewars.net>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

Twitter: @Drone_Wars_UK and @SpaceWatchUK1

4.1 How did you hear about The Edith M Ellis Trust?

Previous application to The Edith M Ellis Trust