

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)

#RKVQHF79SK submitted on 11 April 2025

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

AOAV are seeking a £5,000 grant to capture and document the testimonies of refugees arriving in the UK via small boats from Calais who have fled conflict zones where UK arms exports have contributed to violence. These testimonies will be used to advocate for policy change, raise awareness of the human cost of UK arms sales, and empower affected refugee communities by amplifying their voices in debates on arms trade and refugee protection.

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

Project Overview: Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) is seeking £5,000 in funding to document the personal testimonies of refugees arriving in the UK via Calais, who have fled countries where UK arms exports have contributed to ongoing violence. The project aims to amplify the voices of those directly impacted by UK arms sales, offering them a platform to share their stories. By capturing these testimonies, AOAV seeks to provide compelling, human evidence advocating for policy changes addressing the impact of the UK's arms trade on civilians, particularly refugees. This initiative aligns with AOAV's mission to reduce armed violence and calls for changes to international arms trade policies.

Impact on Beneficiaries: The primary beneficiaries of this project will be the refugees whose stories are captured. By offering them a platform to share their experiences, the project empowers them to control their narratives and ensure their voices are heard globally. Refugees from conflict zones such as Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya—countries where UK arms have fuelled violence—will contribute to the global conversation about the human costs of arms sales. Their stories will advocate for changes in UK arms export policies and refugee handling strategies.

Significant Change and Outcomes: This initiative will bring about significant change in key areas:

- 1. Raising Awareness:** The personal stories captured will be shared with policymakers, media, and national organisations, raising awareness about the role of UK arms exports in prolonging conflict and displacement. These testimonies will humanise the impact of arms trade policies and make it harder to ignore their consequences.
- 2. Policy Advocacy:** The testimonies will serve as advocacy tools to push for changes in UK arms export and refugee handling policies. Presenting real-life experiences of refugees fleeing conflict zones where UK arms were used, AOAV will advocate for greater accountability and ethical considerations in arms trade decisions.
- 3. Empowering Refugees:** This project empowers refugees by giving them agency in a process that often marginalises them. By sharing their stories, refugees will hold accountable those responsible for their suffering, reclaiming their visibility in the ongoing discussion of arms trade policies.

Publication: Testimonies will be published in various formats, including written reports, video documentaries, and audio recordings where permitted. These materials will be shared with key policymakers, international organisations, and media outlets to highlight the direct impact of UK arms exports on refugees. Additionally, the testimonies will be available to the public via AOAV's website, social media platforms, and partner organisations such as Care4Calais. This multi-format approach ensures that the voices of refugees are heard in policy discussions on arms trade and refugee protection.

Long-Term Impact: In the long run, the project aims to create a ripple effect, fostering a more informed public and encouraging policy shifts toward a more ethical approach to arms exports and refugee rights. The testimonies published by AOA V will contribute to ongoing advocacy campaigns, influencing discussions on arms trade and refugee protection. By focusing on the link between UK arms exports and refugee displacement, this project fills a crucial gap in understanding, driving systemic change in the UK's engagement with both the global arms trade and the refugee crisis.

Conclusion: This project will ensure that the UK government and international policymakers recognise the consequences of their actions. It provides a lasting contribution to the conversation on the human cost of armed violence and the urgent need for policies that prioritise peace, justice, and the protection of civilian lives. It also aligns very much with challenging a shift in national rhetoric about refugees in public discourse - trying to give faces to a mass that is increasingly demonised.

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

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

This project aligns with Quaker work and witness by amplifying the voices of refugees displaced by conflicts fuelled by UK arms exports. It advocates for peace by highlighting the human cost of such policies, promoting accountability, and fostering a shift towards more ethical arms trade and refugee policies that prioritise the protection and dignity of civilians.

1.3b Peace-building and conflict resolution

This project contributes to peace-building by documenting the voices of refugees fleeing conflict zones exacerbated by UK arms exports. By raising awareness and advocating for policy change, it fosters a dialogue that promotes conflict resolution, addressing the root causes of displacement and encouraging a shift towards peaceful, ethical approaches to arms trade and refugee protection.

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

After initial funding ends, we plan to continue this work through additional grants and ongoing support from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT). We aim to secure funding from Lush for an event at SOAS, where Iain Overton, AOA V's Executive Director, runs a Human Rights Reporting Master's programme, to amplify the voices of refugees and highlight the trends surrounding arms exports and displacement.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

The project will be monitored through regular progress reports to AOA V's board, including noting the number of testimonies collected and their publication. Evaluation will focus on the impact of these testimonies on policy discussions, media coverage, and public awareness (clicks). We will also assess the long-term effectiveness of our advocacy efforts by measuring shifts in arms export policies and refugee handling. Feedback from refugees, partners, and stakeholders will help refine and improve future initiatives.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Researcher salary (£2800 per month) for 1 1/2 months	£4,200	Includes NI and pension costs
Travel costs (train and tube)	£300	
Website and social media costs	£300	
Communications and internet	£50	
Coffees and teas (during interviews)	£150	
Executive director's oversight (500 a week for 6 weeks)	£3,000	
TOTALS	£8,000	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
JRCT core funding	£3,000	£3,000	As part of an ongoing funded project over 3 years
Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust	£5,000	£0	
TOTALS	£8,000	£3,000	

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

£5,000

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

November 2023

2.4c Was this previous application successful?

No

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

£170,242

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

Yes

2.6b Upload File

<https://theedithmellischaritabletrust.org/assets/uploads/2025/04/AOAV-Accounts-2023.pdf>

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

Action on Armed Violence

65555516

08-02-28

3.1 Your name

Dr Iain Overton

3.2 Your contact telephone number

07984 645 145

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Executive Director

3.4 Your email address

ioverton@aoav.org.uk

3.5 Organisation name

Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

UK charity

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) is a London-based charity focused on reducing the impact of armed violence against civilians worldwide. AOAV documents, investigates, and disseminates evidence of civilian harm in conflict (immediate and reverberating) and advocates for disarmament and policy change. Through research, reports, and global advocacy, AOAV aims to curb militarism, influence disarmament agreements, and highlight the consequences of arms exports on civilian populations.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

AOAV
405 Mile End Road,
London,
E3 4PB

3.9 UK telephone number

07984645145

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

1122057

3.11 Year established

2007

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<http://www.aoav.org.uk>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

<https://x.com/AOAV>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/action-on-armed-violence>

<http://facebook.com/ActionOnArmedViolence/>

<https://www.youtube.com/actonarmedviolence>

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

Word of mouth

Previous application to The Edith M Ellis Trust

Other

4.1b Other

In 2024, after a failed application, I was approached with the comment: "We consider the work carried out by AOAV to be important and in line with the innovative work that the Trust seeks to support." The

original rejection cited that "much of the work planned regarding civilian deaths caused by UK military had already been achieved."