

Request Reference: 3586

FOI Request dated 26/01/2026 –

BACKGROUND

I am seeking information on income your university has received from defence firms and oil and gas companies.

Please interpret "defence firms" as those companies listed on the SIPRI 100 Top Arms producing companies list:

[https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sipri.org%2Fvisualizations%2F2025%2Fsispri-top-100-arms-producing-and-military-services-companies-world-2024&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40hull.ac.uk%7C047519190a844ea5ec1108de5cf95b8b%7C490a81977b834f1089b983189be3835e%7C0%7C0%7C639050423191531231%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoIjTWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=s4FhT%2BZHkFyU0FSYJPeeYwwaCOWz%2B4RsBEbZrEAcc8%3D&reserved=0\)](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sipri.org%2Fvisualizations%2F2025%2Fsispri-top-100-arms-producing-and-military-services-companies-world-2024&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40hull.ac.uk%7C047519190a844ea5ec1108de5cf95b8b%7C490a81977b834f1089b983189be3835e%7C0%7C0%7C639050423191531231%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoIjTWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=s4FhT%2BZHkFyU0FSYJPeeYwwaCOWz%2B4RsBEbZrEAcc8%3D&reserved=0)

Please interpret "oil and gas companies" as those companies listed on Oil and Gas Companies Market Cap:

[https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcompaniesmarketcap.com%2Fgbp%2Foil-gas%2Flargest-oil-and-gas-companies-by-market-cap%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40hull.ac.uk%7C047519190a844ea5ec1108de5cf95b8b%7C490a81977b834f1089b983189be3835e%7C0%7C0%7C639050423191554684%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoIjTWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=E65jbSfXweL%2F1P3B9jmkQ%2FPZcn6vwMqAeu%2FiBx%2F4apl%3D&reserved=0\)](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcompaniesmarketcap.com%2Fgbp%2Foil-gas%2Flargest-oil-and-gas-companies-by-market-cap%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40hull.ac.uk%7C047519190a844ea5ec1108de5cf95b8b%7C490a81977b834f1089b983189be3835e%7C0%7C0%7C639050423191554684%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoIjTWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=E65jbSfXweL%2F1P3B9jmkQ%2FPZcn6vwMqAeu%2FiBx%2F4apl%3D&reserved=0)

If it would exceed the cost limit to provide information pertaining to all companies contained in the above lists, please restrict your searches to the following 20 companies:

- (i) Airbus
- (ii) BAE Systems
- (iii) Boeing
- (iv) General Dynamics
- (v) Leonardo
- (vi) Lockheed Martin
- (vii) Northrop Grumman
- (viii) Raytheon (Raytheon UK/RTX)
- (ix) Rolls Royce
- (x) Thales

- (xi) BP
- (xii) Shell
- (xiii) Total
- (xiv) Equinor
- (xv) Eni
- (xvi) Chevron
- (xvii) Exxon/ExxonMobil
- (xviii) ConocoPhillips
- (xix) Saudi Aramco
- (xx) Valero

In your response, please specify whether or not you have narrowed your searches to only the companies listed above.

QUESTIONS

Please provide:

1. *The total amount of money your university has received in research funding from defence firms over the five financial years to 31 July 2025. Please break this down by:*
 - A. *The name of the company that provided the money and the amount(s) it paid each financial year*
 - B. *A brief description of the purpose of the funding (e.g. the title and aims of the research project, funded PhDs, studentships, apprenticeships)*
2. *The total amount of money your university has received from government research bodies (such as the EPSRC and DSTL) for research partnerships which included defence firms over the five financial years to 31 July 2025. (Note: Do not include funding which also falls under the scope of Q1 and so has already been disclosed in response to that question.) Please break this down by:*
 - A. *The name of the research body that provided the money (e.g. EPSRC), the amount(s) it paid each financial year and the names of all research partners/defence firms involved (e.g. BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin)*
 - B. *A brief description of the purpose of the funding (e.g. the title and aims of the research project, funded PhDs, studentships, apprenticeships)*
3. *The total amount of money your university has received from defence firms for services related to student careers and employability (e.g. job adverts, graduate schemes, attendance of online or in-person careers fairs) over the past five financial years to 31 July 2025. Please break this down by:*
 - A. *The name of the company that provided the money and the amount(s) it paid each financial year*
 - B. *A brief description of the purpose of the funding (e.g. job adverts, graduate schemes, attendance of online or in-person careers fairs)*
4. *Total amount your university has received in gifts and donations, not included under the scope of Qs 1-3 above, from defence firms over the past five financial years to 31 July 2025. Please break this down by:*
 - A. *The name of the company that provided the money and the amount(s) it paid each financial year*
 - B. *A brief description of the purpose of the money and what good and services were provided if it was an in-kind donation*

5. *A list of defence firm employees or executives who have held positions on, or joined as guests, any academic or governance boards at your university over the past three calendar years. Please provide the name and role of the employee and the name of the board they were appointed/invited to.*
6. *Please answer questions 1 to 5 again but replace the words “defence firms” / “defence firm” with “oil and gas companies” / “oil and gas company”.*

Response

Defence Firms

1. Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at Section 1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at Section 1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held. Where exemptions are relied upon Section 17 of FOIA requires that we provide the applicant with a notice which: a) states that fact b) specifies the exemption(s) in question and c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

This part of your request we have exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 41 (Breach of Confidence) and 43(2) – Commercial Interests

Section 41 sets out information is exempt from disclosure if it was obtained by the public authority from any other person (including another public authority), and, the disclosure of the information to the public (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person. In this case, the information within these research agreements was provided to the University by the third parties, thus meeting the first requirement. The terms of the agreements mean that disclosure of the information would constitute an actionable breach of confidence. We are therefore satisfied that the exemption is engaged.

Section 41 is an absolute exemption and therefore not subject to the public interest test.

Section 43(2) sets out that information is exempt from disclosure if its release would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any party. Whether or not an organisation is currently working (or has previously worked) with a University can itself represent sensitive information. In some cases, to disclose the names of organisations with whom the University partners would provide competitor organisations with information which they would not ordinarily have access to. This, in turn, would be likely to have a reputational impact (either positive or negative) on the organisations, which may impact on their position in the marketplace. We consider it likely that this would risk dissuading organisations from working with the University in future, reducing the University’s ability to secure funding, participate in cutting-edge research and serve the needs of our students.

Section 43(2) of the FOI Act is a qualified exemption, which means that the University is required to conduct a public interest test.

There is a general public interest inherent in the FOI Act which supports the disclosure of information on an open and transparent basis. You will note that, in cases where confidentiality agreements do not apply, we have supplied all the information requested. However, we also consider there to be a strong and specific public interest in the University being able to work with corporate partners without undue interference or scrutiny. The University of Hull is a world-leader in innovation and research and there is a strong public interest in ensuring this work can continue. As such, we are satisfied that the public interest in favour of disclosing the information is outweighed by the public interest in maintaining the exemption.

2. It has been determined that this information is exempt on the basis that s21 of the Act applies – Information Reasonably Accessible by Other Means. As this exemption is absolute there is no

requirement for me to conduct a public interest test, however in order to provide assistance I provide the following links -

- [iCASE PhD studentship with QinetiQ \(via Newcastle University\)](#)
- [iCASE PhD Studentship with QinetiQ](#)
- [Office for Students PG Conversion Course Funding](#)
- [PUMA: Paediatric early warning system \(PEWS\): Utilisation and Mortality Avoidance. A prospective, mixed methods, before and after study identifying the evidence base for the core components of an effective PEWS and the development of an implementation package for implementation and use in the UK](#)

3.

BAE systems

Attended Autumn Careers Fair 2023 costing £420

Attended Autumn Careers Fair 2024 costing £420

Attended Autumn Careers Fair 2024 costing £420

Leonardo M/W

Attended STEM Careers Fair 2023 at a cost of £100

MOD

Army attended STEM Careers Fair 2023 at a cost of £100

Army attended Autumn Careers Fair 2023 at a cost of £100

RAF attended Autumn Careers Fair 2023 at a cost of £100

4. Zero

5. No information held

Oil & Gas

1. It has been determined that this information is exempt on the basis that s21 of the Act applies – Information Reasonably Accessible by Other Means. As this exemption is absolute there is no requirement for me to conduct a public interest test, however in order to provide assistance I provide the following links -

- [Donations from oil and gas companies - a Freedom of Information request to University of Hull - WhatDoTheyKnow](#) covers 2017-21/22
- [2828-oil-gas-and-coal-companies](#) covers 2022/23

No further information held for 2023 to present date.

2.

a. ESPRC, £ 479,687, BP

b. Supergen Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Impact Hub 2023

3. As per part 1

4. Zero

5. No information held