



The UK Campaign to Stop Killer Robots is recruiting a Coalition Coordinator

Part-time consultancy opportunity commencing April 2024

Posted: 26 February 2024. Deadline: 17 March 2024.

The [UK-based Stop Killer Robots coalition](#) is a group of NGOs, academics and campaigners united in their concerns around the ethical, moral and technical challenges posed by increasing autonomy in weapons systems. The coalition is looking for a part-time consultant to coordinate the group's work raising awareness of the issue and advocating for the UK to support an international treaty for the prohibition and regulation of autonomous weapons systems.

The Coordinator will be building on the strong institutional and strategic groundwork laid by previous coordinators and coalition members over the past four years to drive our political advocacy work ahead of the next General Election, ensuring that the perspectives of a diverse range of stakeholders are included in our work - from tech-leaders to groups that suffer the impacts of discrimination facilitated by AI. The work is anchored in human rights, with a general theme of resistance to digital dehumanisation - people should not be reduced to 1s and 0s and such information should certainly not be used as a basis for targeting decisions on the battlefield or anywhere else.

Interviews will be held over zoom during the week commencing 25 March 2024 (please state your availability on 25 and 27 March 2024 in your cover letter). The interview team will comprise a representative from three UK members of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots steering committee: the United Nations Association – UK (UNA-UK), the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom UK and Drone Wars.

The total fee available is £16,800. From this we expect at least 48 days work spread throughout 2024, averaging roughly 2 days per week. This will include required coordination and attendance of monthly (currently virtual) meetings of the UK coalition and its working groups - otherwise the post will be results-based and hours flexible. There is a limited budget available for expenses. The contract will be extendable, subject to performance and funding availability.

The consultant will be hired by UNA-UK, a UK-registered charity based in central London. We would prefer a consultant based in or able to travel to London for in-person meetings. Otherwise, the role is fairly flexible and would involve a mixture of homeworking, external meetings and the option of desk-based work at UNA-UK's offices.

Please email Rianna Nayee on jobs@una.org.uk attaching a CV and short cover letter explaining how you meet the attributes laid out below by 11.59pm on 17 March 2024 if you would like to be considered for the consultancy.

Background

Rapid advances in technology are raising concerns about the emergence of new weapons systems with ever increasing autonomy, giving rise to the imminent prospect of the development and deployment of weapons systems which can identify targets and apply force to kill without meaningful human oversight.

As a country with advanced military capabilities and one of the first to develop and deploy armed drones, the UK is at the forefront of the drive towards increasing autonomy in military systems. There is growing concern among NGOs, students, academics, international lawyers, roboticists, tech workers and parliamentarians that the UK is not supporting the negotiation of an international legal treaty on autonomous weapons systems (also known as “killer robots”) at the United Nations, leaving the door open to the development of unaccountable and inhumane weapons systems.

The UK campaign is at an exciting - and critical - point. International support for the campaign’s objective of a new international treaty is growing. The UN Secretary-General, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and more than 100 countries have now called for a legal instrument on autonomous weapons systems and regional summits in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the Indo-Pacific demonstrate increasing regional momentum for action on the issue. There is also growing agreement of what this treaty should look like when it is negotiated.

While the UK Government does not yet support the negotiation of a new treaty, it is coming under increasing pressure on the issue and has recently [voted in favour of a General Assembly resolution](#) which could pave the way for a new treaty. Domestically, a Lords Committee inquiry has put the issue on the political landscape with a response to [a report critical of the Government’s current position](#) due by 1 February, followed by a debate.

The spectre of autonomous weapons systems has loomed large on the devastating wars in Ukraine and Gaza, propelling the issue of AI weapons and the role of AI in targeting systems into the mainstream.

The moment is ripe for the campaign to make progress on its campaign priorities with the coalition coordinator expected to be the focal point in driving our mission forwards.

Responsibilities

Coordination: Schedule, oversee and keep track of work on the overall UK Campaign to Stop Killer Robots’ coalition as well as the main thematic workstreams (political & tech) as well as other priorities for work as identified with the coalition, working with and to support coalition members and liaising closely with those leading different workstreams. Convene and keep records of the UK coalition’s regular meetings.

Coalition building: Strengthen the UK coalition through outreach to new organisations with shared concerns around the misuse of AI, providing learning opportunities for the UK coalition (and vice versa) and to diversity and broaden the coalition’s membership. Areas currently underrepresented in our coalition include tech workers, academics and groups subject to discrimination facilitated by AI.

Advocacy: As part of the political workstream, develop relationships with major UK political parties, build on our network of engaged parliamentary champions and coordinate lobbying actions within different sectors to increase pressure on the UK Government to act.

Education and communication: Act as a knowledge hub for coalition members, sharing updates on relevant international developments at the UN and elsewhere as well as proactive work at key campaign moments to raise awareness of this issue in the press and via public events. Coordinate and develop the UK campaign's social media presence at moments of focus for public communication.

Grant reporting/fundraising: Regular reporting on activities and impact and feeding into funding applications where appropriate.

The consultant

We are looking for a consultant with the following attributes:

- Demonstrable experience in coalition or cross-organisation campaign coordination, working collaboratively and effectively with a diversity of stakeholders to achieve common goals (ESSENTIAL)
- Experience in initiating /developing / undertaking national campaigns including specific campaigning opportunities with both parliamentary and public focus
- Experience organising events and meetings, charing discussions. Comfortable working/communicating with representatives across different sectors (ESSENTIAL)
- Highly organised and motivated and able to work independently and effectively with minimal supervision (ESSENTIAL)
- Detailed knowledge of and strong interest in the policy around autonomous weapons systems. The role would suit an individual that would feel comfortable in discussions on the laws of armed conflict, human rights, international law, disarmament and emerging/digital technologies and understand where autonomous weapons fits into these dynamics (ESSENTIAL)
- Nuanced understanding of the power dynamics at play in UK foreign policy and UN decision-making (DESIRABLE)
- Educated to degree level in a relevant field or comparable work experience (DESIRABLE)
- Experience working with parliamentarians, UK officials and lobbying the UK Government (DESIRABLE)
- Experience in writing and reporting on NGO grant applications (ESSENTIAL)

About UNA-UK

Founded in 1945, the [United Nations Association – UK](#) (UNA-UK) is the country's foremost advocate for principled UK action at the UN. We are the only charity in the UK devoted to building support for the UN amongst policymakers and have a long legacy advocating UK support for disarmament over many decades. UNA-UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee (no.1146016). We are completely independent of the UN and receive no funding from it.

UNA-UK welcomes applications from underrepresented and marginalised constituencies. Due to the high volume of applications we are only able to respond to shortlisted applicants. For questions about this opportunity please email Rianna Nayee (jobs@una.org.uk). While we will attempt to respond promptly to all enquiries, capacity is limited at present and so please bear with us.

We are very grateful to the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#) for making this opportunity possible.