

The UK coalition for the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots is recruiting Junior Fellows to help its campaign work on university campuses.

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.

In response to such concerns, in 2012 the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots was formed by a coalition of NGOs to call on governments to agree a pre-emptive ban on lethal autonomous weapons systems. Since 2014, this issue has been discussed at the United Nations under the auspices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which aims to ban or restrict the use of inhumane weapons

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, roboticists, tech workers and parliamentarians that the UK is not supporting a pre-emptive ban on lethal 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.

About the UK Campaign to Stop Killer Robots

The UK-based NGO members of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, and allied organisations and individuals concerned with the ethical, moral and technical challenges posed by increasing autonomy in weapons systems, is working to encourage the UK government to support a ban on LAWS.

To achieve its goal, the UK campaign’s work is split across three reinforcing workstreams:

Universities

The UK campaign collaborates with students and university workers for transparency, democracy and accountability regarding research and development of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems on campus. We ask institutions to: Establish a clear policy and commit publicly to not contributing to the development of LAWS; Ensure university staff and researchers are fully aware of what their technology is being used for and understand the possible implications of their work, and allow open discussions about any related concerns.

National Advocacy

The UK campaign works with UK political parties and parliamentarians to build cross-party awareness of the challenges associated with growing autonomy in weapons systems. We work

with MPs and Peers to stimulate parliamentary debate on LAWS and make the case for the UK Government to support the creation of a legally binding treaty prohibiting these weapons.

Tech

This workstream is modelled on the global campaign's tried and tested 'tech won't build it' campaign, which educates tech workers and firms and provides practical opportunities for them to participate in the campaign's advocacy activities. We also build relationships with the tech and finance industries to develop evidence-based research highlighting how self-replicating flaws within algorithm-/machine learning-based weapons systems without meaningful human control violate international law.

About the Fellowship

We are looking to recruit **UK university students or recent graduates** for our new Junior Fellowship Programme, which seeks to raise awareness of LAWS and encourage university departments to commit not participate in nor support the development, manufacture, trade, or use of lethal autonomous weapons. We are currently recruiting current students or recent graduates from the following universities:

- UCL
- Newcastle University
- Imperial College
- University of Edinburgh
- Cranfield University
- University of Birmingham
- University of Manchester
- Southampton University
- Strathclyde University
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- University of Warwick
- Oxford University

The Fellows will contribute to the UK campaign's work with universities and help build understanding of the relationship between university research and LAWS. Junior Fellows will commit to 30 hours of work per month from the 1st of July to the 1st of October (90 hours total) and will have the following **responsibilities**:

- Produce a written investigation into LAWS-relevant research occurring at two UK universities (approximately five pages per university);
- Produce a short-form publication about their research e.g. a blogpost;
- Organise an event to showcase the findings of their research, targeted towards university communities;

- Produce a letter to their universities/relevant departments outlining research key findings and highlighting the importance of universities' support for a ban on LAWS

We will assess applicants against the following criteria:

- Ability to identify and evaluate different sources of information
- Ability to work independently and conduct a self-directed research project
- Experience of writing for multiple audiences
- Experience of event organising
- Knowledge and strong interest in the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS)

In return for their work, Junior Fellows will receive training, mentorship and a stipend of £980. To apply for this position, please submit a short explanation (maximum of one page) of how you meet the criteria for the Fellowship, alongside a CV to robotsuk@una.org.uk.

Deadline: Applications must be submitted until the **30th of April 2021**.