

Research on the activities of third-party funding institutions in the arms industry or arms research

Handout in the context of the third-party funding notification of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) – as of November 2025

Preliminary remarks

The [Guidelines for Ethical Principles of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology \(KIT\)](#) oblige all members, relatives, and bodies of KIT to take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of their actions. The maxims of action set out in it include:

- "to cultivate a conscious and responsible approach to arms research, (worrying) security-relevant research and dual-use goods," [...]
- "To create transparency about armaments research, (worrying) security-relevant research and research concerning dual-use goods at KIT:
 - Researchers create transparency in connection with their research projects (e.g. in the context of the third-party funding notification or as project-specific answers to parliamentary questions, etc.) – with regard to armaments research they conduct, cooperation with third parties active in armaments research, the conduct of (worrying) security-relevant research and the possible dual-use use of their research products and methods (e.g. keeping open military use of research results or methods by clients and/or cooperation partners).
 - KIT establishes comprehensive transparency on the above points (e.g. for inquiries from the BMBF, MWK or the parliamentary space, etc.)"

In the case of third-party funded institutions, it is not always immediately clear whether they are active in armaments research. In order to be able to create the required transparency, it is therefore necessary to carry out at least a short Internet research regarding their background when working with each third-party funding institution. The present handout is intended to provide practical information in this regard.

Internet research does not replace direct, open discussions with third-party funders or cooperation partners in order to obtain information and create transparency. This remains an important element in identifying ethical risks at an early stage.

Handout for Internet research regarding activities in the arms industry or arms research

NOTE: The terms armaments, defense and security are often used interchangeably in the publicly available sources on institutions active in the defense industry and defense research. It is therefore advisable to carry out a search for all terms.

1. What is the **exact name/ designation** of the third-party funding institution? If possible, use these for Internet searches to avoid confusion.
2. Is the third-party funding institution **part of a larger network** (e.g. research company, multi-disciplinary group, etc.)? A look at the imprint or research, e.g. in Wikipedia, can

help here. As a rule, the website of the larger association lists the subordinate divisions at the latest.

- a. Does the association in which the third-party funding institution is integrated have an armaments division?
 - b. If YES: Is there cooperation between the entire institution or a part of the institution that is active in the arms industry or involved in arms research activities?
3. **Truthfully state the result of your research in the third-party funding notification form.** Their disclosure has no effect on the approval of the research project, but primarily serves to identify problematic topics at an early stage and to offer appropriate advice. In addition, KIT needs the information for statistical purposes.