

# Letters

## AMS Corporate Funding

The goal of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) Policy Program is “to help the nation, and the world, avoid risks and realize opportunities associated with the Earth system.” Yet the AMS has Lockheed Martin Corporation as a corporate sponsor and their logo appears at the bottom of many AMS web pages, including the home page. The greatest risk the Earth system faces is nuclear war, and Lockheed Martin is one of the major U.S. defense contractors working on nuclear weapons. In 2020, Lockheed Martin received \$2,050,000,000 in contracts to work on the Trident III ICBM land-based nuclear missiles and the Trident nuclear submarines (ICAN 2021). The approximately \$100,000 per year AMS receives from Lockheed Martin is less than 0.005% of the money they receive to enhance and support weapons, that, if ever used, would produce catastrophic global climate change and impacts on the world food supply (e.g., Robock and Toon 2010; Coupe et al. 2019; and see all our publications and work on this topic at <http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/nuclear/>). And in 2019, Lockheed Martin gave between \$100,000 and \$249,999 to the Atlantic Council, an American think tank that advocates for more nuclear weapons (ICAN 2021).

In 2015 I received the AMS Jule G. Charney Medal, “For fundamental contributions toward understanding the climatic effects of stratospheric aerosols from volcanoes and other potential sources, and the role of soil moisture in climate.” Those other “potential sources” included smoke from fires that would be ignited by nuclear weapons, and I spend much of my research and public advocacy to continue to warn the world about nuclear winter, the same work that AMS endorsed with the Charney Medal. Having the AMS being complicit in this Lockheed Martin greenwashing, which makes them look good by banking on our good name, is, in my opinion, a disgrace. I hereby recommend that AMS cease to accept funds from Lockheed, so as to not unwittingly be part of the military-industrial complex that President Eisenhower warned us about in his farewell address. This would emulate the American Geophysical Union, which ceased to accept funds from Exxon several years ago because of their disinformation campaign about global warming. Yes, Lockheed Martin builds satellites that provide Earth observations, and yes, the money Lockheed Martin gives to AMS supports valuable AMS programs, but what is the message we send by accepting money from them? AMS should be better than that, and live up to our pledge “to help the nation, and the world, avoid risks.”

## For further reading

Coupe, J., C. G. Bardeen, A. Robock, and O. B. Toon, 2019: Nuclear winter responses to global nuclear war in the Whole Atmosphere Community Climate Model Version 4 and the Goddard Institute for Space Studies ModelE. *J. Geophys. Res. Atmos.*, **124**, 8522–8543, doi:10.1029/2019JD030509.

ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), 2020: *Complicit: 2020 Global Nuclear Weapons Spending*, June, 2021, (ICAN, Geneva, Switzerland), available at [https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/ican/pages/2161/attachments/original/1622825593/Spending\\_Report\\_Web.pdf](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/ican/pages/2161/attachments/original/1622825593/Spending_Report_Web.pdf)

Robock, A., and O. B. Toon, 2010: Local nuclear war, global suffering. *Sci. Amer.*, **302**, 74–81.

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*In consideration of Dr. Alan Robock's inquiry into the subject of corporate sponsorship, the AMS Council has reviewed our current practice with respect to corporate funding and provides the following rationale for maintaining this practice as it stands.*

*The mission of the AMS is enabling the advancement of the atmospheric and related sciences, technologies, applications, and services for the benefit of humanity. We translate this mission into action through AMS programs, which benefit greatly from both internally generated funds such as publications and meetings support and external funds.*

*The AMS only accepts external funding, whether it be corporate support, federal grants, foundation support, or any other source, that is aligned with our mission and with the Society's integrity and reputation. AMS corporate partners recognize that Society programs enrich and strengthen the entire weather, water, and climate enterprise of which they are a part, so that the success of AMS activities and initiatives is synergistically linked to their own success.*

*A major area of corporate support is in the AMS scholarship and fellowship program, and over the years, more than 1300 students have benefitted from scholarships or fellowships provided by corporate funding, including travel grants that bring students to the annual meetings. Corporate sponsorships allow the AMS to provide invaluable career and networking opportunities for students and generally help expand activities in ways that ensure a more successful and engaging meeting for all those participating. Both the AMS Policy Program and Education Program have also benefitted from corporate support over the years. The Policy Program depends on corporate support to help underwrite policy study activities and having this support augment federal agency funding for these studies is a great example of a public-private partnership made possible through Society programs. The corporate patrons providing support do not have control over how those funds are used, so there is no conflict or bias introduced through their sponsorship. In the AMS Education Program, corporate support has been instrumental in several aspects of the training and professional development activities the Society provides for K-12 teachers nationwide, including the creation of curriculum materials and travel support for K-12 teachers.*

*The AMS values all the sectors of the U.S. weather, water, climate enterprise, including those associated with national defense. These corporate patrons provide critical support to the atmospheric and related sciences, primarily through space-based, ground-based, and airborne observation platforms, and it is those divisions of these corporations that provide the funding for important Society programs. Employees of these corporate sponsors are themselves valued members of the AMS, who like members across all sectors, volunteer their time and expertise to advance the mission of the Society. These members take back to their respective organizations the values and imperatives of the Society. AMS is proud of the support provided by its long-standing Corporate Patrons, and respectfully disagree with the premise that there is anything wrong with associating with Lockheed Martin or any other similar company.*

### **AMS Executive Committee**