

Entity: Alliance Defending Freedom International (ADF International)

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Basic Information

- **Type:** US-based legal advocacy organisation (international subsidiary of ADF)
- **Status:** Active
- **HQ (US parent):** Scottsdale, Arizona
- **International HQ:** Vienna, Austria
- **UK presence:** ADF UK (adfinternational.org/en-gb)
- **Executive Director (ADF International):** Paul Coleman
- **US parent revenue:** \$120M (2025), \$109M expenses
- **Operates in:** 100+ countries
- **US parent EIN:** 54-1660459

Role in Ecosystem

ADF International is the global arm of Alliance Defending Freedom, a US 501(c)(3) conservative Christian legal advocacy group. It funds and supports legal cases across Europe and the UK that align with Christian right / social conservative agendas — particularly anti-abortion, anti-LGBT, anti-trans, and "religious freedom" cases.

ADF is significant because:

1. It's a **massive US funder** (\$120M revenue) operating in 100+ countries
2. It funds UK legal cases directly
3. The **UK government cited ADF International** in free speech proposals (openDemocracy, Feb 2021)
4. It represents the **US Christian right → UK legal system** pipeline
5. It overlaps with far-right narratives on "culture war" issues

Money IN (Funding Received)

Date	From	Amount	Type	Confidence	Source
2025	US donors / ADF parent	\$120M	Revenue	CONFIRMED	ProPublica 990
Ongoing	US conservative donors	Unknown	Donations	CONFIRMED	IRS 990

Narrative: ADF's parent organisation has \$120M annual revenue (2025). ADF International is funded primarily through the US parent. ProPublica shows Schedule F (foreign activities), Schedule I (grants to other orgs), and Schedule R (related organisations) — all relevant for UK funding tracing.

Money OUT (Funding Given)

Date	To	Amount	Type	Confidence	Source
Ongoing	UK legal cases	Unknown	Legal funding	CONFIRMED	ADF International website
2025	Livia Tossici-Bolt (anti-abortion buffer zone case)	Unknown	Legal defense funding	CONFIRMED	The Guardian Dec 2025
Ongoing	European legal cases (ECHR)	Unknown	Legal funding/amici briefs	CONFIRMED	Global Extremism Project report
2020-2021	UK free speech cases	Unknown	Legal support	CONFIRMED	openDemocracy
2025	Dark money anti-abortion group linked to Reform	Unknown	Funding surge	CONFIRMED	Good Law Project
Ongoing	Grants to partner organisations	Unknown	Grants (Schedule I)	CONFIRMED	IRS 990

Narrative: ADF International funds legal cases across Europe and the UK. Their grants programme explicitly offers case funding for cases dealing with "religious freedom, sanctity of life, and marriage and family."

Confirmed UK Cases Funded

Livia Tossici-Bolt case (The Guardian, Dec 2025): ADF's UK branch funded the case of an anti-abortion campaigner convicted in April 2025 for breaching a buffer zone outside an abortion clinic near Bournemouth. The council spent £90,000 prosecuting her for praying.

Dark money anti-abortion group linked to Reform (Good Law Project): A surge of funding for a dark money anti-abortion group that has "actively framed the zones, which prohibit handing out anti-abortion leaflets or obstructing anyone accessing or working at an abortion clinic, as an infringement on freedom of speech."

UK government free speech proposals (openDemocracy, Feb 2021): UK government cited ADF International in white paper on free speech proposals.

Companies / Entities Controlled

Company Name	Number	Role	Status	Notes
Alliance Defending Freedom (US)	54-1660459 (EIN)	Parent organisation	Active	501(c)(3)
ADF International (Vienna)	Unknown	International subsidiary	Active	HQ in Austria
ADF UK	Unknown	UK branch	Active	adfinternational.org/en-gb

Known Associations

Person/Org	Relationship	Evidence
Paul Coleman	Executive Director, ADF International	ProPublica 990
UK government	Cited in free speech proposals	openDemocracy Feb 2021
European Court of Human Rights	Files amici briefs	Global Extremism Project
Various UK Christian right groups	Case partners	ADF website

UK Government Connection

openDemocracy (Feb 2021): "UK government cites US anti-LGBT 'hate group' in free speech proposals"

A UK government white paper on free speech proposals cited ADF International. This is significant because:

- ADF is designated as a "hate group" by the Southern Poverty Law Center
- The UK government was using their work to shape policy
- Shows how US Christian right organisations influence UK policy

Ideological Alignment with UK Far-Right

ADF's agenda overlaps significantly with UK far-right narratives:

- **Anti-Muslim:** "Religious freedom" cases that challenge Islamic practices
- **Anti-LGBT:** Opposes same-sex marriage, trans rights
- **Anti-abortion:** Funds pro-life legal challenges
- **Anti-"woke":** "Free speech" defences that align with culture war narratives

This ideological overlap means ADF-funded cases often advance narratives that the UK far-right also promotes.

Legal / Regulatory Questions

US tax-exempt status:

- 501(c)(3) organisations are supposed to be non-political
- ADF's international legal advocacy is arguably political activity
- Has IRS investigated?

UK Electoral Commission:

- Does ADF's case funding count as political activity?
- Are there Electoral Commission implications for ADF-funded UK cases?

Foreign influence:

- US organisation funding UK legal cases
- UK government citing their work in policy proposals
- Regulatory gaps for foreign legal advocacy funding

Media Coverage

Date	Outlet	Headline	Key Claims	URL
2021-02-19	openDemocracy	"UK government cites US anti-LGBT 'hate group' in free speech proposals"	UK government white paper cited ADF International	https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/uk-government-cites-us-anti-lgbt-hate-group-in-free-speech-proposals/
2024-06-14	CBS News	"How the group behind the Supreme Court abortion drug case is..."	ADF International funded UK anti-abortion case	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/alliance-defending-freedom-adf-supreme-court-abortion-drug-case-global/
2021-11	Global Extremism Project	"THE ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM'S ROLE IN..." (PDF)	ADF files ECHR briefs	https://globalextremism.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ADFI_Report_2021-1.pdf
2020-11-26	Hansard (UK Parliament)	"Covid-19: Freedom of Religion or Belief"	ADF International reports cited in Parliament	https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-11-26/debates/33E19414-B2EA-4958-AC19-DBF68FFD1F91/Covid-19FreedomOfReligionOrBelief

Research Notes

Key questions:

- **Total UK case funding:** How much has ADF spent on UK legal cases? Need 990 Schedule F analysis.
- **Specific UK cases:** Full list of UK cases ADF has funded or supported?
- **UK government relationship:** How did ADF get cited in UK government free speech proposals?
- **Paul Coleman:** Full profile — UK connections, background?
- **Grant recipients:** Who receives ADF grants in the UK? (990 Schedule I)
- **Overlap with other US funders:** MEF, TPUSA, Heritage Foundation — shared UK recipients?

Leads to follow:

- IRS 990 Schedule F (foreign activities) — search for "United Kingdom" entries
- IRS 990 Schedule I (grants) — UK grant recipients
- ADF International case database (website)

- UK court records for ADF-supported cases
- openDemocracy investigation into UK government/ADF relationship
- Cross-reference with other US Christian right funders (MEF, FRC, Heritage)

Red flags:

- \$120M US organisation funding UK legal cases
- UK government citing "hate group" in policy proposals
- Ideological overlap with UK far-right narratives
- 501(c)(3) funding arguably political legal activity internationally
- Part of broader US Christian right → UK influence pipeline

Significance: ADF International represents:

1. **US Christian right → UK legal system** pipeline
2. Massive financial resources (\$120M) deployed internationally
3. UK government legitimising a US "hate group"
4. Legal cases that advance far-right-aligned narratives
5. Regulatory gaps for foreign legal advocacy funding

Last Updated

- **Date:** 2026-06-14
- **Researcher:** Initial data collection session
- **Next actions:**
 - IRS 990 Schedule F analysis (UK foreign activities)
 - IRS 990 Schedule I analysis (UK grants)
 - Full list of ADF-funded UK cases
 - Paul Coleman profile
 - UK government/ADF relationship investigation

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