

British Library Advisory Committee for Public Lending Right

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

General

The Public Lending Right (PLR) Scheme provides authors with a legal right to receive payment from the government for the free lending out of their books by public libraries. The Scheme is administered in accordance with the provisions of the PLR legislation (the PLR Act (1979) and the PLR Scheme (1982, and subsequent amendments).

The government has taken the decision to abolish the position of Registrar of PLR and to transfer legal responsibility for administration of the PLR Scheme to the British Library Board with effect from 1 October 2013. Existing PLR staff have transferred across to British Library employment and the Scheme will continue to be run from the former PLR offices in Stockton-on-Tees. A new position of Head of PLR has been created within the British Library with responsibility for managing the day-to-day running of the PLR Scheme, and reporting to the Library's Chief Financial Officer. The former Registrar has been appointed to this role for the period 1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014 to assist with the transition to PLR's new governance arrangements under the British Library and to ensure continuity.

Creation of an Advisory Committee

To support its administration of PLR, the British Library has set up an advisory committee – the British Library Advisory Committee for Public Lending Right ('the Advisory Committee') - to provide expert advice to it on the operation of the PLR Scheme and to represent the views of PLR stakeholders. The Committee replaces the former Management Board which advised the former Registrar on the management of the Scheme.

Responsibility for administration of PLR rests with the British Library Board to which the Head of PLR is ultimately responsible for management of the PLR Scheme. The Committee's role is entirely advisory and it has no executive responsibility for the operation of the Scheme. The Committee's contacts will be with the Head of PLR and its advice will be directed through him or her to the Board.

The Committee will comprise a Chair and six members: two members representing registered authors, two representing the public library community and two from the wider PLR constituency (publishing, intellectual property etc). The Head of PLR and other British Library staff will attend Committee meetings as required.

The Head of PLR will be responsible for arrangements for Committee meetings and will liaise with the Chair of the Committee in the preparation of agendas and undertaking any work requested by the Committee.

The Committee's costs will be found by the Head of PLR from his or her budget and the Head of PLR's agreement is required before the Committee can incur expenditure.

Terms of Reference

The Committee will be expected to:

- Monitor the operation of the PLR Scheme, including its impact on authors and libraries, and advise the British Library on administration of the Scheme. It may request reports and other information from the Head of PLR to facilitate its advice.
- Advise the British Library on communications and marketing with a view to promoting the Scheme's existence and ensuring that authors from every walk of life are aware of PLR and have an opportunity to register for it.
- Provide feedback from PLR stakeholders on how the Scheme is operating.
- Monitor international PLR developments and provide advice to the British Library on any implications for the UK PLR Scheme.
- Establish sub-committees or working parties of the Committee to look in more detail at specific aspects of the Scheme's operation or developmental issues as required.
- Make recommendations to the British Library to improve the operation of the Scheme, recognising that Government and parliamentary approval would be required should the recommendations involve changes to the provisions of the PLR legislation.
- Advise the British Library on the scope and future direction of the PLR Scheme taking account of developments in intellectual property law, the public library sector, authorship, publishing and other relevant sectors. As stated above, Government and parliamentary approval would be required should implementation of the Committee's advice involve changes to PLR legislation.
- Report annually to the British Library Board in line with the Board's annual reporting timetable.

Membership

The Committee will comprise a Chair and six members: two members representing registered authors, two representing the public library community and two from the wider PLR constituency (publishing, intellectual property etc). The Head of PLR and other British Library staff will attend Committee meetings as required.

The Chair will be appointed by the British Library.

Four of the members will be nominated by stakeholder organisations. The other two will be appointed by the British Library.

Of the four nominated members, two will be authors nominated by the Society of Authors and The Writers' Guild of Great Britain respectively and two will be public librarians nominated by the Society of Chief Librarians and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals respectively.

To inform its discussions and advice, the Committee may invite the attendance at meetings of representatives of stakeholder organisations, specialists in areas of relevant expertise and other individuals as required.

The Committee will meet twice a year, but other meetings may be arranged if required. Meetings will normally be held in London, but on occasion meetings will be held at the British Library's PLR office in Stockton-on-Tees.

The British Library will undertake a three-yearly review of the continuing need for the Committee's existence.

Appointments

Members will be appointed for an initial period of three years with the possibility of renewal.

Members may resign their appointment at any time and should provide a notice period of three months. Members' appointments may be terminated if they are unable to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee.

Members are not remunerated, but travel and other legitimate expenses will be reimbursed by the British Library.

Members will be expected to adhere to the Committee's Code of Practice and to conduct themselves in accordance with its principles. They will be expected to enter any potential conflicts of interest in a Committee Members' Register of Interests.