

Terms of Reference

BIC's Regulation & Policy Focus Group

29th September 2025

DRAFT 0.9.0

1. Background

The book industry supply chain is increasingly shaped by external factors such as environmental regulation, technology legislation, and global trade policy. To anticipate and respond effectively, BIC is convening a cross-industry Focus Group dedicated to horizon-scanning for policy and regulatory changes that may impact the book industry's supply chain.

2. Purpose and remit

The Focus Group's purpose is to:

- Identify, monitor, and interpret relevant policy and regulatory developments both in the UK and where appropriate, internationally, and to share insights with BIC members.
- Assess the potential impacts and implications for the UK & Ireland book industry supply chains and determine what (if any) action may be appropriate for BIC to take. Such action might simply be sharing links to information and updates, or it could be more extensive and require the creation of a BIC project to establish Best Practice, Guidance Reports, training, events or any combination of these, or something different. For clarity, the Focus Group itself will not be a Project Group, but it may request that BIC initiates a project separately.
- Share information with BIC members through agreed outputs to strengthen preparedness and resilience.
- Provide recommendations to the BIC Board where/if appropriate, with particular reference to BIC's current and/or future strategic direction.

3. Scope

The group will horizon-scan the following domains:

- Environment & Sustainability
- Technology, information & Data
- Trade & Logistics
- Other areas pertaining to the book industry supply chain as deemed appropriate by the Focus Group.

The "horizon" will include short, medium and long-term timelines. A 1–5-year window is suggested – although this is to be confirmed by the Focus Group.

4. Membership

- Focus Group:

8–12 members from:

- The BIC membership, representing publishers, booksellers, printers, distributors, logistics providers, sustainability experts, technology providers etc. (i.e. the breadth of the book supply chain).
- Legal/regulatory advisors (who may or may not be from BIC member organisations).

The success of the Focus Group depends on its expertise, and active, knowledgeable input from its members, who should ideally have access to sources of information with regards to upcoming regulations/policies.

- Extended Network:

- Wider BIC members stakeholders on a mailing list and/or forum who may be consulted on specific issues periodically
- Guest experts: invited on an ad-hoc basis to provide specialist input.

Membership commitments:

-Members of the Focus Group should be able to commit to attending quarterly meetings (minimum 4 per year). Most meetings will be held online –with potentially one in person meeting annually. Where 2 consecutive meetings are missed the Focus Group may consider it appropriate for someone else to attend, either from the same organisation or from a different one.

-To train a replacement and bring them fully up to speed all Focus Group activity, should a committee member leave their own organisation. This will be on the understanding that the Focus Group still wants representation from that same organisation (which may not always be the case).

-Members of the Focus Group should have an understanding and awareness of upcoming regulations/policies that may impact the book industry supply chain.

-To attend all online meetings with cameras on for the duration of the meeting, unless there are mitigating circumstances that prevent this.

-Be willing & able to devote time to the BIC Focus Group work.

-To actively participate in, and contribute to, all the BIC Focus Group meetings.

-To report the BIC Focus Group activities back to their own organisation and return feedback.

-To maintain appropriate confidentiality.

-Contribute expertise and intelligence from their sector.

-Ensure actions are assigned appropriately at each meeting and carried out to schedule.

-Respect confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interest.

-To read, understand and agree work in line with [BIC's Competition Law Policy](#)

Membership Representation:

The Focus Group will look for representation from at least the following areas of the industry:

- Bookseller
- Distributor
- Printer
- Publisher
- Shipper/Freight forwarder
- Service and/or System provider
- Library sector

5. Governance & Chairing

- The Focus Group chair will agree to serve a minimum term of 2 years and will be appointed by BIC's Executive Director.
- Secretariat support will be provided by BIC staff (agenda, meeting scheduling, minutes).
- The Focus Group reports to the BIC Board through regular (frequency and format to be determined) updates by BIC's Executive Director.

6. Ways of Working

- Focus Group meetings will be held quarterly (online by default, with one annual in-person meeting if wanted).
- Decisions will be reached by consensus; where not possible, differing views will be noted in the meeting minutes/notes.
- Information will be shared via Teams and email.
- Outputs will be shared with the BIC membership and beyond where appropriate. Depending on what the output is, some may be shared on BIC's website.

7. Suggested Outputs (yet to be agreed with the Focus Group)

- Quarterly Digest: short/concise regulatory update for BIC members.
- Annual Horizon Report: trends, insights.
- Ad-Hoc Advisory Notes: rapid alerts for urgent or high-impact developments.
- BIC Recommendations: output from BIC projects, guidance etc., to the wider industry.

8. Review

- Terms of Reference will be reviewed every 2 years by the Focus Group and the BIC Board once version 1.0 has been agreed, this draft version being 0.9.0.
- Membership composition will be refreshed as needed to maintain cross-sector representation.

[BIC's Privacy Policy](#)

[BIC's Competition Law Policy](#)

END

