



# Libraries

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Resources for the library sector



Practical advice for book industry professionals on how BIC can help to create and maintain a consistent, efficient, yet adaptable and responsive supply chain.

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BIC.ORG.UK

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# DID YOU KNOW

During the period April 2024 to March 2025, a representative sample of adults in England was asked about their engagement with libraries. Results showed that 31% of adults engaged with libraries at least once in the last 12 months.

**SOURCE:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-survey-2024-25-annual-publication/headline-findings-for-the-participation-survey-april-2024-to-march-2025>



# Library Sector

The Library sector forms an integral part of the book industry. BIC's work in this area supports this vital resource, enabling access to books freely and equally to readers across the country.

Effective standards and best practices are critical to ensure that libraries have the tools required to create and maintain systems and communications that underpin the essential processes.

In this edition of BIC: In Practice, we'll explore a core range of projects, standards, best practices, training, accreditation and more in the sections listed below.





## Projects, Standards and Best Practices

This section captures a small selection of BIC's core projects, standards and best practices for libraries and the organisations and suppliers that work with them. Signposting to more in-depth information can be found below and also within Section 4: Access and Recognition.

### **LIBRARIES COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK (LCF)**

The LCF is a set of library interoperability standards which defines a framework for the communication of data between self-service and other library terminal applications to and from library management systems.

The LCF is intended to enable commercial suppliers to develop new functionality for circulation related applications and is governed by BIC via two groups: BIC's LCF Review Group and BIC's LCF Technical Panel, via which the development of the standard is maintained by BIC's team of technical editors.

A new (minor) release of the LCF (v1.3.0) was published in Dec 2023. Further information can be found on the [LCF webpage](#) and an overview of the LCF in the [LCF BIC Bite](#) document.

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The LCF Consortium is a group of library industry organisations that publicly and fully endorse, support and promote the adoption and use of the LCF. Further information and details of how organisations can join can be found in the [resources section](#) of the BIC website.

## **BIC REALTIME FOR LIBRARIES**

BIC Realtime for Libraries establishes a set of industry standard Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) for libraries, suppliers and data providers which are designed to facilitate and improve business communication in the library sector's physical and digital book supply chains.

Further information can be found in our [resources section](#), including a [comparison of BIC Realtime and the LCF](#).

## **RFID FOR LIBRARIES**

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in libraries involves the tagging of library books with RFID tags and the use of self – services kiosks and other technologies to enable library customers to self – issue and self – return library books.

BIC has produced a number of resources around this technology including:

- ★ [A guide to RFID](#)
- ★ [RFID best practice](#)
- ★ [RFID standards](#)
- ★ [RFID privacy information](#)
- ★ [Near Field Communication \(NFC\) and RFID information](#)
- ★ [Library RFID standards: complying with ISO 28560-2 and the UK data model](#)
- ★ [Migrating to ISO28560-2 : The Exeter University Experience](#)

The BIC RFID Privacy Code of Practice document is available to all (for free). If you would like to receive a copy and find out more about the 11 steps your organisation should carry out to mitigate the potential risks to your patrons that are imposed by RFID usage, [please sign up here](#).

## **UK STANDARD LIBRARY CATEGORIES (UKSLC)**

This scheme is designed for the public library sector to provide library oriented category headings applicable across the full range of adult non-fiction, fiction and children's/young adult stock. The UKSLC scheme is based on the International Thema subject categories, taking advantage of the new developments featured in Thema.

The latest review of the UKSLC scheme resulted in updates and a new version, v2.0, was launched in August 2025.

For more information, visit our [resource centre](#) and our [BIC Bites](#) document for a full overview.



# Benefits

Collectively, the outputs of these BIC projects and collaborative initiatives help libraries to:

- ★ Maintain efficient and effective communication within technologies to deliver an optimised user experience and business communication in the library physical and digital book supply chains
- ★ Improve stock management, information for patrons, and security
- ★ Automate crucial tasks to minimise the impact of processes on staff time and resources
- ★ Define and adhere to/implement a trusted, industry recognised set of operating procedures, standards and best practices
- ★ Facilitate the evidence-based assessment and benchmarking of stock supply, demand and performance
- ★ Provide a logical and user-friendly display of stock, scalable for different sizes and type of library
- ★ Improve access to library stock, facilitating on-line browsing by subject and genre





# Access and Recognition

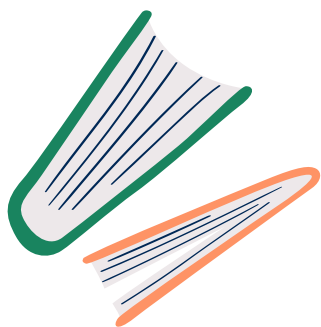
This section details how BIC members can seek technical advice in addition to accessing, participating in, and influencing the work BIC does in relation to the library sector. BIC member organisations are eligible to to apply to sit on any of the panels and groups listed below

**BIC Library Communication Framework (LCF) Review Group:** this review group is responsible for influencing and providing industry feedback with regards to the implementation, development, and promotion of the LCF standard within the library sector. The group collaborates on best practice recommendations and/or issues, industry training requirements and awareness for the scheme. The group also gives and receives regular updates and feedback to/from the BIC Libraries committee to ensure all member requirements are being heard and responded to.

BIC membership includes the right to sit on and influence the work of the BIC LCF Review Group.

**BIC Realtime for Libraries Review Group:** BIC Realtime for Libraries is a suite of library web services including a set of standard Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) for use in the library community, specifically addressing use cases between libraries and their suppliers of physical books, eBooks and metadata. The review group maintains the standard and keeps an eye on the number of implementations. Any BIC members wishing to join this group should email [info@bic.org.uk](mailto:info@bic.org.uk).





**ACCESS**

**BIC Libraries Committee:** this committee meets quarterly to discuss a range of topics including (but not limited to):

- ★ The British Library's "LibraryOn" Project
- ★ BIC Realtime for Libraries
- ★ Library Communications Framework (LCF)
- ★ Watching briefs on: NFC and RFID Privacy
- ★ EDI Training for Librarians
- ★ Technical Excellence in Libraries Accreditation
- ★ Green issues, activities, events and initiatives for the library sector
- ★ Updates from BIC's Green Supply Chain Committee and associated projects
- ★ EDItX digital inventory and sales reports
- ★ Updates from the BIC's Library Metadata Group

**BIC's Green Supply Chain Committee (GSCC)**

The Chair of BIC's Libraries Committee also sits on this all-sectors environmental committee in order to ensure library sector representation both at committee and project level, and that both groups are kept abreast of each other's activities. Meetings are held every 3 months and are reserved for BIC members.

- ★ Review the **GSCC's live projects here** and the comprehensive resources on the **Green Hub webpage**.

### **BIC Library Metadata Group:**

The BIC Library Metadata Group reviews and promotes bibliographic and related standards, with particular reference to libraries. It is the UK advisory committee to the British Library for the revision of the MARC 21 (Machine-Readable Cataloguing) formats.

### **BIC's Libraries Technical Implementation Clinic (LTIC):**

The core business of the LTIC is to maintain as fit for purpose, the Tradacoms and EDIFACT guidelines and codelists which set out how EDI works in the book industry. The LTIC also has involvement with BIC Realtime for Libraries APIs as these are adopted across the industry, and the Library Communication Framework (LCF). It is also a repository for requests for changes to these new standards. The LTIC maintains an interest in metadata as used in order acknowledgements. Representatives from all BIC member organisations are invited to discuss and share queries and issues they may be experiencing in these areas.



### **Technology Excellence in Libraries Award (TEiLA) Accreditation:**

TEiLA is an annual accreditation scheme designed by BIC for libraries and their suppliers. The scheme encourages and rewards libraries and their suppliers for their adoption of best practice and industry standards and their investment in beneficial technologies. The scheme is directly aligned to BIC's programme of work in the library sector over recent years. This includes the development of 'full-cycle' EDI, RFID, bibliographic information and book classification.

### **Training:**

BIC offers 'EDI for Libraries' training courses. Information can be found on the **EDI for Libraries** page.

For full information on our wider selection of training can be found in the **calendar**.



## Emails

Keep up to date with BIC projects, resources and training by [joining our mailing list](#).



Scan to sign up to  
the BIC Mailing List

## Social Media

We regularly post news, reminders, support and resources via our [LinkedIn](#), [Bluesky](#), [Facebook](#), or [YouTube](#) channels.



During the period April 2024 to March 2025, a representative sample of adults in England was asked about their engagement with libraries. Results showed an increase in physical engagement by 1 percentage point to 26% and an increase in digital engagement by 2 percentage points to 16% compared to the 2023/2024 results.

SOURCE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-survey-2024-25-annual-publication/headline-findings-for-the-participation-survey-april-2024-to-march-2025>

