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# Independent Bookshop of the Year

## What are the judges looking for?

We are keen to get a flavour of what makes your shop so special. We recognise that not every bookseller experiences the same set of challenges, and so we are particularly keen to learn what you do in your local community and how this impacts your bookselling and range. Equally, we want to hear how the shop is a destination for book lovers.

## Who can submit?

Any independent bookshop in the UK or Ireland. If you are an independent bookshop with five or more branches, please enter the Book Retailer of the Year award.

## What to submit?

The Independent Bookshop of the Year award entry is divided into two phases. All shops enter the first phase. We will announce the regional and country finalists on 22nd February 2024 - if you are a finalist we will be in touch to ask you for supplementary information so that you can proceed to the next round. The regional and country winners comprise the shortlist for Independent Bookshop of the Year.

Please include a high-res image of your company logo or storefront as a separate attachment.

Our submission site works best with files sizes lower than 50MB. If you encounter any difficulties, please email [awards@thebookseller.com](mailto:awards@thebookseller.com).

### Other guidance

- Judging period: January to December 2023
- If your shop has five or more branches, please enter Book Retailer of the Year
- Shops with strong children's book dimension are welcome to enter both Independent Bookshop of the Year and Children's Bookseller of the Year
- The winner of the overall Independent Bookshop of the Year will be included in the shortlist for Book Retailer of the Year
- Please note independent bookshop regional and country winners will receive two free places to attend The British Book Awards. Travel costs may also be reimbursed subject to application.

## Phase 1: Entries

At this point we are trying to gather enough information to allow our judges to make considered choices for the regional and country finalists without over-burdening you at this busy time. Please submit one PDF, maximum word count of 1,000 words, meeting the criteria below, including supporting graphics.

- **Background:** Independent bookshops are the lifeblood of the industry, and the ways in which you reach your customers are as varied as the readers you serve. What defined your trading in 2023? Community initiatives, flagship events, festivals or loyalty schemes? Great window displays, championing inclusivity, or clever partnerships? Tell us, with examples, what makes your bookshop unique.
- **Community:** We especially want to know how your bookshop has helped your local high street or community, how you reached and connected with readers. Community is internal, too - tell us about your team and how you work together.
- **Finances:** Please include basic 2023 sales information. Did sales go up, stay the same, or fall? We will take into account where you are based and how the wider economic situation affects you.

## Phase 2: Finalists

If you make it through to the regional finals, we'll then ask for a bit more detail. Please note at this point we'll want to gather additional information, which will enable our judges to refine their choices, and select winners. Please keep in mind that our judges will already have seen your first submission. So, we require no more than 1,000 words, supplied on PDF with additional graphics. The deadline for supplementary information is 1st March 2024. The regional and country winners will be announced on 7th March 2024.

- **Year-on-year performance** measures such as financial performance, number of books sold, increases in newsletter subscribers or social media reach.
- **Your growth story:** What did you do to sell more books, did you expand our store, or even open a new shop; did you expand your events programme, or trade online, or open up an online store front with Bookshop.org or Hive?
- **Tell us about your successful book buying:** Did you specialise or provide additional shelf space to certain lists, or types of books? How did you work with publishers, or authors, or your staff to do this?
- **Please tell us about your employees:** What did you do to encourage them, or grow your business by investing in your staff? If you do not employ anyone else, then tell us about yourself, how you work and what motivates you.