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CATEGORY

# Independent Bookshop of the Year

[thebookseller.com/british-book-awards](https://thebookseller.com/british-book-awards)  
*#BritishBookAwards*

## What are the judges looking for?

We are looking for the best independent bookshops in all of the UK and Ireland. Our Regional and Country finalists can go on to be crowned winners in their own regions, before contesting the overall prize. We are keen to get a flavour of what makes your shop so special. We know that not every bookseller experiences the same set of challenges, so we want to hear what you do in your local community and how this impacts your bookselling. 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 three or more branches, please enter the Book Retailer of the Year award.

## What to submit?

The Independent Bookshop of the year award is now a one-stage process, so please submit as much information as you can at the first stage; should the judges require additional information once the Regional and Country finalists have been announced, this will be done separately (in most cases this won't be necessary). We will announce the Regional and Country finalists at the end of February 2025, and the winners in mid-March. The Regional and Country winners comprise the shortlist for Independent Bookshop of the Year. Please submit via the awards website, a zipped-file, including a PDF of up to 1,500 words covering the requirements listed on the right, alongside any supporting graphics, including a high-res image of the shop's exterior.

If you encounter any difficulties, please email [awards@thebookseller.com](mailto:awards@thebookseller.com).

## Please include

### Success measures

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- **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 2025? Community initiatives, flagship events, festivals or loyalty schemes? Great window displays, championing inclusivity, or clever partnerships? Tell us, with examples, what makes your bookshop and bookselling 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. Did you form any impactful partnerships? Community is internal, too – tell us about your team and how you work together.
- **Industry:** please include any initiatives you launched that had a wider impact on the sector, or closer to home.

### Finances

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- **Year-on-year performance measures** such as financial performance, number of books sold, increases in newsletter subscribers or social media reach.
- **Your story:** What did you do to reach more readers, did you expand or even open a new shop; did you develop 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 who works in the shop:** what did you do to encourage them, or invest in staff? If you do not employ anyone else, then tell us about yourself, how you work and what motivates you.

### Other guidance

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- **Judging period:** January to December 2025
- If your shop has three or more branches, please enter Book Retailer of the Year
- Please note Regional and Country winners will receive two free places to attend The British Book Awards in London on 11th May 2026
- 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
- Our submission site works best with file sizes lower than 50MB. If you encounter any difficulties, please email [awards@thebookseller.com](mailto:awards@thebookseller.com)