

Mr Daren Tang
Chairman
Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights
World Intellectual Property Organisation

30 October 2019

**Letter in support of the statement made by Sierra Leone to WIPO SCCR/39
concerning the Public Lending Right**

Dear Chair

On behalf of the British Copyright Council, I am writing to support the statement made by the delegate from Sierra Leone at SCCR/39 requesting a study into the operation and benefits of the public lending right (PLR).

PLR is the right of authors and other rightsholders to receive payment for the free public use of their works in libraries. Today, the right exists in 35 countries, operating under a wide range of models best suited to local needs. What all the PLR systems have in common, however, is the benefit they bring to authors — including writers, editors, visual artists and translators — supporting them in their livelihoods while helping to sustain creative economies and nurturing cultural diversity, for example by supporting publishing in minority languages. PLR also benefits libraries and recognises the vital role they play in education by helping to ensure they have a continued flow of books for borrowing.

PLR has been working successfully in the UK since 1979, where the system has evolved to encompass the lending of e-books and audio books, reflecting changes in the role of libraries in facilitating access to books of all kinds. PLR also takes into account the rightful interests of authors and publishers. These developments can be explained in any study commissioned.

The BCC is now encouraged by the interest from other countries in implementing this “simple and low-cost” right for the benefit of their authors and wider society. As an NGO Observer to WIPO, we therefore warmly welcome the proposed study.

Yours sincerely



Elisabeth Ribbans
Director of Policy & Public Affairs
British Copyright Council