



**Appointment of  
Chair of PLS and  
Co-Chair of CLA**

January 2025

QBRGA

# Introduction

Publishers' Licensing Services (PLS) has provided rights and licensing services to the publishing industry since 1981. A non-profit, its primary role is to maximise the value of published content, enable its legitimate re-use, and protect copyright through effective secondary licensing, permissions and rights management services.

In 2023-2024 PLS collected and distributed more than £43 million to over 4,500 publishers. PLS are owned and directed by four leading UK publishing organisations:

- [Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers \(ALPSP\)](#).
- [Independent Publishers Guild \(IPG\)](#)
- [Professional Publishers Association \(PPA\)](#)
- [Publishers Association \(PA\)](#)

The supervision of these four bodies ensures we meet the needs and interests of the publishers we serve. Each nominates up to three people to form our Board of non-executive directors who meet regularly (four Board meetings and one strategy day p.a.) to monitor our performance and set our future direction.

PLS works with the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS), Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACs) and Picture Industry Collecting Society for Effective Licensing (PICSEL), who ensure that writers and visual artists are also rewarded when extracts of their content is copied. Together we own and direct the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA). We also work in close partnership with NLA media access. These two organisations provide UK customers with the licences they need to re-use content without infringing copyright.

PLS has operating costs of c.£2.7m and has 18 staff. It has hybrid working arrangements in place for staff and is based in London Bridge.





## Background – Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA)

The Copyright Licensing Agency's mission is to help customers legally access, copy, and share the published content they need while also making sure that copyright owners are paid fair royalties for the use of their work.

As a not-for-profit company, CLA distributes its revenues back into the creative industries helping to ensure rights holders are fairly remunerated when their works are used.

CLA is recognised by the UK government as the collective management organisation for published material. It exists to support knowledge sharing, protect companies, and champion the creative ecosystem.

Its revenue is distributed to its member organisations who pay royalties directly to copyright owners – authors (ALCS), publishers (PLS), and visual artists (DACS & PICSEL).

Over the past four decades, CLA has earned a reputation for excellence and innovation in rights and licensing, generating over £1.5bn in collective licensing revenues that have been distributed to over 200,000 authors, publishers, and visual artists. The work that CLA does is essential to the creative ecosystem.

CLA licences facilitate the efficient reuse of content by 12.7 million students and over 9.5 million employees in over 40,000 businesses, schools, and universities across the UK. With over 40 international agreements, CLA provides lawful and simple access to over 8 million print and online publications.

CLA has annual revenues in excess of £100 million, and annual operating expenses of around £13.5 million. It has 100 staff, most in London but with a telephone sales team based in Edinburgh and a team of royalty officers spread throughout the UK.

The Board of CLA has eleven members: four nominated by PLS (including the Chair); three by ALCS; one nominated by the visual artist collective management organisations; two independents, part of whose responsibility is to represent the interests of otherwise unrepresented rightsholders; and the CEO.



# The opportunity

## **Purpose of the role**

To chair the Board of the Publishers' Licensing Services (PLS) and, with a representative of the Authors Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS), to Co-Chair the Board of the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA).

Both roles are entirely typical of those of the chair of a Board; they include providing management support to the CEOs of PLS and CLA and representing the interests of both organisations in public as appropriate.

As Chair of PLS Board, this role reports to the PLS Board and is fully accountable to PLS Members.

As Co-Chair of CLA Board, this also reports to the CLA Board and is fully accountable to CLA Members (which include PLS).

## **Relationship between the two roles**

The appointment will be made by the Board of PLS.

The Co-Chair role at CLA is an ex officio role of the Chair of PLS and will be covered by a separate contract.

It is possible that, in the future, CLA may return to having a Chair independent of its members, in which case the Chair of PLS would continue to be a member of CLA Board. This is a matter for the Members of CLA.

## **Further notes**

PLS shares an office with CLA and has some shared services with CLA – HR and Finance. There may be opportunities for further service integration in the future.

Whoever is appointed as Chair of PLS and Co-Chair of CLA will have an opportunity to contribute fully to this process, providing strategic thought-leadership to both PLS and CLA Boards as they seek to identify the appropriate role for collective management of rights in a very different world from the one in which CLA and PLS were established. No one should underestimate the challenges of simultaneously meeting the requirements of licensees and those of a very diverse spectrum of rightsholders.

# The opportunity

## Co-Chairing CLA

The two Co-Chairs alternate the role of chairing the CLA Board on an annual basis, with the hand over time being normally for the June Board meeting. While taking the chair, the relevant Co-Chair effectively represents the Board as the CLA CEO's line manager. The PLS representative is currently Chairing the CLA Board until 31 May 2025.

The two Chairs meet regularly to ensure proper co-ordination and commonality of purpose. The CEO of CLA consults with both Co-Chairs on a regular basis. The CEO's annual objectives and appraisal are set by the Co-Chairs working together

## Regulatory framework

Both organisations are subject to statutory regulation under the terms of [The Collective Management of Copyright \(EU Directive\) Regulations 2016](#). These lay down strict standards for behaviour, governance and transparency.

## Board Committees - PLS

PLS has a Supervisory Committee, established under the terms of these regulations, to oversee the work of the management of the organisation. This is essentially the non-Executive Directors meeting together. It normally meets briefly at the end of each Board meeting, but with a separate agenda, established by the Chair.

PLS has a Remuneration Committee (RemCom), comprising four members of its Board, and chaired by one of them. Among its responsibilities are the appraisal of the Chair and leading the process of recruiting a new Chair. The Chair of PLS attends meetings of PLS RemCom at the invitation of the Chair of RemCom.

## Board Committees - CLA

CLA also has a Supervisory Committee, established on the same lines. It too normally meets prior to each Board meeting, but with a separate agenda, established by the Chair. The Chair of the Supervisory Committee is whichever of the Co-Chairs is not currently chairing Board meetings.

CLA has a People and Remuneration Committee (PRC), comprising of four members of its Board, and chaired by one of the Independent Board members. The Co-Chairs attend by invitation.

CLA has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARAC) comprising of four members of the Board and chaired by one of the Independent Board members. The Co-Chairs are currently both members of the ARAC.

# Key responsibilities

## Chairing PLS meetings:

- Board meetings (typically four half-day meetings each year, including AGM, EGMs and Supervisory Committee).
- Strategy days (normally one full day per year).
- PLS Conference (one day per year).
- Ad hoc board conference calls.
- Regular catch-up calls/meetings with CEO (normally weekly).
- Review agendas, minutes and decisions.

## Co-Chairing CLA meetings: (subject to rotation – see above)

- Board meetings (typically four half-day meetings each year, including AGM, EGMs and Supervisory Committee).
- Strategy days (normally two or three half/full days per year).
- Ad hoc board conference calls.
- Participation in all meetings when not in chair.
- Review agendas, minutes and decisions.

### Other meetings

- Attendance/participation in CLA Board Committees (Supervisory, PRC and ARAC).
- Regular meetings with Co-Chair.
- Regular meetings with the CEO (normally monthly).
- Review agendas, minutes and decisions.

## Supporting the CEOs:

- Support busy CEOs in strategic and high level issues and provide support as appropriate in industry negotiations.
- Agree agendas with CEOs.
- To be a sounding board for CEOs.
- Supporting the CEOs in working with their management teams.

### Attendance at annual Industry Events:

- IFFRO conference (four day international conference of RROs).
- London Book Fair.
- Frankfurt Book Fair.

### Ad hoc meetings with third parties:

- Individual publishers, NLA Media Access, major suppliers, other RROs.

### Line Management responsibilities:

- Agreeing objectives and appraising performance of CEOs (with Co-Chair in the case of the CLA CEO).
- Ultimate point of appeal on any HR matters.





# Person Specification

## Essential:

### Experience:

- An interest in, and understanding of, the publishing industry.
- Proven senior management experience, including supporting/guiding senior management.
- Change management and digital transformation.
- Working in a complex multi-stakeholder environment and managing stakeholder conflict.
- Board experience.

### Knowledge:

- Sound understanding and experience of corporate governance.
- Understanding of the differences between the different sectors of publishing.
- Understanding of the boundary between executive and non-executive roles.

### Skills/capabilities:

- Strength in strategic planning.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (written and verbal).
- Ability to engender collaborative and open dialogue amongst board members.
- Ability to influence.
- Negotiating skills.
- Proactive.
- Calm and measured approach.
- Strategic thinker.

### Other:

- Independent of any of PLS' Members.

## **Desirable:**

### **Experience:**

- Chairing experience

### **Knowledge:**

- Collective licensing.
- An understanding of copyright and interest in the challenges posed by AI.
- An understanding of data management of affiliated technologies.

# **Terms of appointment**

## **Term**

- Three years; open to renewal for a second three-year term.

## **Time commitment**

- Normal time commitment is broadly equivalent to one day per week (approximately 50 days per year).
- This is unevenly spread – some weeks the commitment is likely to be three or even four days; in other weeks none.
- There have been times for the current chair when the commitment has been much more substantial than this, during periods (for example) of intense negotiations or legal challenges.
- As a result, the post would not be suitable for someone with other commitments if these are not flexible.

## **Remuneration**

- The role is remunerated separately by both PLS and CLA and subject to contracts with both organisations.
- Total remuneration is £64,570 per annum.
- All expenses of office are paid.

# How to Apply

**Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Publishers' Licensing Services on this appointment.**

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **QBRGA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025**.

\*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

## **GDPR personal data notice**

*According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.*

