



Gowers Review of Intellectual Property issues call for evidence

The Gowers Review of Intellectual Property today issued a call for evidence as part of its commitment to consult widely.

The call for evidence consists of a letter from Andrew Gowers, with an accompanying paper that provides details of the scope of the Review and sets out a number of general and specific issues on which the Review would particularly like to gather evidence. It also invites respondents to highlight other issues for consideration.

Responses to the call for evidence have been requested by Friday 21 April 2006.

For more information and to download the issues paper and covering letter in PDF format please visit the Review's website at: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/gowers

Andrew Gowers said, "I am committed to ensuring that the Review is an open process that takes full account of the views of its stakeholders. The Review will be evidence led and responses to the call for evidence will form a key part of our analysis."

Notes for editors

1. On 2 December 2005, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he was asking Andrew Gowers, former Editor of the Financial Times, to lead an independent review into intellectual property rights in the UK. The Review will report to the Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in Autumn 2006.
2. Intellectual Property is a critical component of our present and future success in the global economy. Our economic competitiveness is increasingly driven by knowledge-based industries, especially in manufacturing, science-based sectors and the creative industries. The IP framework must balance the need to encourage firms and individuals to innovate and invest in new ideas and creative works with the need to ensure that markets remain competitive and that future innovation is not impeded.
3. While it has been suggested that the present UK system strikes broadly the right balance between consumers and rights-holders, it also appears that there are a variety of practical issues with the existing framework. The Review will look at both the instruments (patents, copyright, designs etc.) that are provided by government to protect creative endeavour, and also at the operations: how IP is awarded, how it is licensed in the market, and how it is enforced. The Review will examine whether improvements could be made and, as appropriate, make targeted and practical policy recommendations.
4. The Gowers Review website <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/gowers> provides further information about the Review, including the call for evidence documents.
5. Media enquiries should be addressed to Tom Youldon at the Treasury press office on 020 7270 4420.