IPO launches call for views on designs system

The designs system enables rights holders to protect designs and enforce their rights. We are seeking views and evidence from users of the system so that we can ensure the UK's designs framework works for the businesses, consumers and professionals that use it. This will help us better understand how we can make the most of new opportunities and flexibilities now that we have left the EU, and how new and emerging technologies may impact the design system.

The call for views seeks a wide range of evidence on three main areas — new opportunities, future frameworks and better regulation.

In particular, it will gather views and evidence on the following:

- the complexity of the current system, and whether it should be simplified
- novelty searching
- what impacts post-EU exit changes to disclosure requirements for unregistered designs have had on business, and views on ways to address them.
- if the system is flexible enough to protect designs based on new technologies, created for digital environments or using artificial intelligence
- the introduction of a deferment provision in UK law and what that should look like
- designers' experience of enforcing their rights and changes they would like to see

The evidence and views we receive will help inform future policy in these areas and help us to consider if any changes are needed to the UK designs system.

The IPO's Chief Executive Tim Moss said:

> An effective IP system is at the core of the government's ambition for the UK to be the most innovative and creative country in the world. The designs framework is a crucial element, and we want to ensure it remains a powerful enabler in an increasingly digital environment.

> To help ensure the designs system remains fit for the future, we are eager to hear a broad range of views to help us understand how it can best meet the needs of those using it, and help unleash innovation's potential.

Design Council's Chief Design Officer, Cat Drew, said:

> Intellectual Property rights are fundamental to the business of design. We want a design IP system that keeps pace with and reflects new technologies and global markets. It's really important that people from across the design industry give their views on the current IP framework and how it can be improved for designers. As part of our Design Economy work, we are looking at ways to enable designers to provide more value for people and planet, and we will be looking carefully at the suggestions emerging within this important review by the IPO.

The call for views will run for 8 weeks, closing on 25 March 2022. After it closes, the government will assess the responses it receives and publish a summary of responses. These responses will inform the government's decision on any next steps and action that may be required.

You can respond to the call for views here.

Note to editors:

In addition to the call for views, we published a survey aimed at people with an interest in designs and how they are protected, but who do not consider themselves experts on IP. The closing date for the survey is 7 February.