

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A COLLECTIVE PROCEEDINGS ORDER

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*Advertisers, who are UK-domiciled and who, from 1 January 2011 to 15 April 2025 used search advertising services provided by Google, could benefit from a collective claim against certain entities in the group of companies known as Google (the top holding company of which is Alphabet).*

*This is a legal notice that has been issued at the direction of the Competition Appeal Tribunal*

**This Notice**

This is a legal notice published on the direction of the Competition Appeal Tribunal (the “**Tribunal**”) because a collective proceedings order (“**CPO**”) is being sought from the Tribunal by Or Brook Class Representative Limited (the “**Proposed Class Representative**”) against the following companies: (1) Alphabet Inc; (2) Google LLC; (3) Google Ireland Limited; (4) Google UK Limited; (5) Google Asia Pacific Pte Limited; (6) Google Commerce Limited (collectively, the “**Proposed Defendants**”). The Proposed Defendants are all part of a single overall undertaking referred to in this Notice as “**Google**”.

Or Brook Class Representative Limited’s application for a CPO (“**CPO Application**”) can be viewed online at [www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/](http://www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/) along with other information about the claim.

This Notice has been issued to inform you of the CPO Application and your right to object to it. Exercising these rights could affect your ability to get a payment in the future (if compensation becomes available). This Notice and the enclosed Questions & Answers give important information about these proposed collective proceedings. The Tribunal’s website is: [www.catribunal.org.uk](http://www.catribunal.org.uk). **Please read this notice carefully as your decisions about these proposed collective proceedings will have legal consequences.**

**The Process**

The Competition Act 1998, as amended by the Consumer Rights Act 2015, allows for proceedings to be brought on behalf of a group of persons (known as a class) who are alleged to have suffered losses as a result of anti-competitive conduct. Claims brought in this way are called “*collective proceedings*”. For collective proceedings to go ahead, however, the Tribunal must make a CPO, i.e., it must decide that the Proposed Class Representative (here,

Or Brook Class Representative Limited) is suitable to act on behalf of the class members and that the claims may be brought on a collective basis. This process is known as “*certification*”.

No money is available now, and there is no guarantee that money will be available in the future. The collective claim will need to be won or settled by Or Brook Class Representative Limited before any money can become available.

You have important legal rights related to these proposed collective proceedings. Exercising these rights could affect your ability to get a payment in the future (if the case is won or a settlement is reached, and money becomes available). This notice explains the proposed collective proceedings, who is covered by the proceedings, and your rights in relation to the proceedings.

### **The Proposed Collective Proceedings**

The Proposed Class Representative seeks to recover damages to compensate UK-domiciled Advertisers (as defined below) for harm caused by Google’s abuse of its dominance in various of the markets for (i) licensable smart mobile OSs, (ii) Android app stores, (iii) general search services, and (iv) the market for the provision of search engine management services by preventing or dissuading others from competing (effectively or at all) in the general search and search advertising markets, which has driven up prices for, and driven down the value of, search advertising, causing losses to those paying for such advertising.

According to the Proposed Class Representative, Google has breached competition law by abusing its dominant position in (at least some of) the aforementioned markets to exclude actual and potential competitors from the general search and search advertising markets, allowing Google to charge supra-competitive prices for search advertisements, and to degrade the quality or value of the advertisements. The Proposed Class Representative seeks damages for losses resulting from Google’s abuses of dominance and will seek to combine the claims of all UK-domiciled advertisers who, during the Relevant Period (as defined below), used search advertising services provided by Google (the “**Proposed Class**”). The **Proposed Class Definition** (which determines whether or not a person falls within the Class) is set out below.

### **The Proposed Class**

**Should the proposed collective proceedings be certified by the Tribunal, you will have the following rights and options.**

- This case is an “opt-out” case, meaning that anyone who meets the definition of the Proposed Class and who is domiciled in the UK on the Domicile Date (as defined

below) will be included in these proposed collective proceedings automatically and be bound by the result unless they expressly opt out of the Proposed Class so as to formally remove themselves from these proposed collective proceedings. Therefore, if you are within the Proposed Class, you will not be required to do anything and you will be included in these proposed collective proceedings unless you choose to ‘opt out’, which you will be able to do by a date to be determined by the Tribunal.

- If you wish to object to the CPO Application, details as to how you can do this are set out below (see Q12 below).

### **The Proposed Class Definition**

The Proposed Class Definition is: “*All UK-domiciled Advertisers who, during the Relevant Period, paid for search advertising services provided by Google (whether they purchased directly or via a media agency)*”

For the purposes of this definition:

(1) “**Advertiser**”:

- a. includes all (legal or natural) persons living or existing as at the Domicile Date. It does not include persons that, as at the Domicile Date:
  - i. in the case of natural persons, are deceased; or
  - ii. in the case of legal persons, have been dissolved and/or struck off the register and/or otherwise ceased to exist; but
- b. does not include media agencies; and
- c. does not include the PCR itself (or anyone acting for or instructed by the PCR).

(2) “**Domicile Date**” will be the date to be determined by the Tribunal at which all persons who fall within the definition of the Proposed Class are domiciled in the UK.

(3) “**Relevant Period**” means the period starting on 1 January 2011 and ending on 15 April 2025.

### **What happens next**

#### **Hearing of Application**

A hearing will take place commencing on **8 July 2026** to decide whether these proposed

collective proceedings can proceed. It is expected to last for **one day, with one day in reserve**. The location of the hearing will be: Competition Appeal Tribunal, Salisbury Square House, 8 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AP.

### Rights to Object and Make Submissions

Any person with an interest (including any member of the Proposed Class) may object to the CPO Application or the authorisation of the Proposed Class Representative by stating their reasons for objecting in writing to be received by the Tribunal by **30 April 2026**.

Any member of the Proposed Class may apply to the Tribunal to make written and/or oral submissions at the hearing of the CPO Application on **8 July 2026**. Any such application must be made in writing and received by the Tribunal by **30 April 2026**.

Please see the answer to Q12 below for further details of the process for objecting.

### The Issues

These proposed collective proceedings will determine certain issues that are common to all class members, including:

- (1) The definition of the relevant markets;
- (2) Whether Google held, and continues to hold, a dominant position on those markets;
- (3) Whether Google abused, and continues to abuse, its dominant position, including by the alleged exclusionary conduct;
- (4) Whether any such abuse of dominance caused members of the Proposed Class to suffer loss and damage;
- (5) The quantification of any aggregate award of damages; and
- (6) The basis, rate and duration of interest to which members of the Proposed Class are entitled.

Any judgment on the common issues will be binding on all members of the Proposed Class. If any judgment is given on issues which only concern a sub-class, any judgment on those common issues will be binding on the members of the sub-class.

Any member of the Proposed Class who opts out of the proceedings will not be bound by any subsequent judgment in the proceedings.

### Questions & Answers

**Q1: Why has this Notice been issued?**

The Tribunal has directed that this Notice be issued following the application by the Proposed Class Representative for a CPO.

The CPO Application asks the Tribunal to approve the Proposed Class Representative to act on behalf of the Proposed Class in bringing these proposed collective proceedings. A summary of the proposed collective proceedings can be found on the website: [www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/](http://www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/)

This Notice explains: (i) the application to commence collective proceedings being brought by Or Brook Class Representative Limited; (ii) your right to object to that application; (iii) how to exercise those rights; and (iv) any related deadlines. **Please read this Notice carefully as your decisions about these proposed collective proceedings will have legal consequences.**

**Q2: What is the Competition Appeal Tribunal?**

The Tribunal is a specialist judicial body that covers the whole of the UK and hears certain competition law and regulatory disputes. It has cross-disciplinary expertise in law, economics, business and accountancy. The Tribunal publishes its Rules and Guidance, together with information about what it does, on its website: [www.catribunal.org.uk](http://www.catribunal.org.uk)

**Q3: What are collective proceedings?**

Collective proceedings are sometimes described as a class action, a class claim, a group claim or a group action. Simply put, it is a single court action that seeks compensation for lots of similar claims in one go, rather than requiring everyone who may have been wronged by the same legal infringement to bring a separate claim individually. In this type of collective proceedings, a specified person or body (the Proposed Class Representative) conducts the proceedings on behalf of multiple claimants (the Proposed Class Members). The proceedings are the subject of a CPO, which identifies the Proposed Class Members whose claims are being pursued, and the Proposed Class Representative representing them. It also identifies the issues being tried, and whether the proceedings are on an “opt-in” and/or “opt-out” basis. In this case, Or Brook Class Representative Limited has applied to be the class representative to bring these collective proceedings on behalf of the Proposed Class defined above (see also Q8).

**Q4: Who are these proposed collective proceedings against?**

These proposed collective proceedings are against Google. Google is a multinational technology group. It operates the general search engine also known as Google. Google Search allows users to search for information across the internet on their mobile or desktop devices. It works by returning a set of ranked, curated search results in response to user queries. The Proposed Defendants are all members of the Google corporate group:

- (A) Alphabet Inc;
- (B) Google LLC;
- (C) Google Ireland Limited;
- (D) Google UK Limited;
- (E) Google Asia Pacific Pte Limited; and
- (F) Google Commerce Limited.

**Q5: What did the Proposed Defendants do wrong?**

These collective proceedings are against six companies that form part of the Google group of companies. Those companies play various roles in respect of the operation of Google’s general search and search advertising businesses. Google is accused of abusing its dominance in certain of the markets identified above by preventing or dissuading others from competing (effectively or at all) in the general search and search advertising markets, which has driven up prices for, and driven down the value of, search advertising, causing losses to those paying for such advertising.

Google’s allegedly anti-competitive conduct includes (among other things): (i) Google entering into contracts with mobile phone manufacturers and network operators which required them to pre-install the Google Search and Chrome browser apps on Android devices; (ii) Google paying billions to Apple to ensure that Google is the default search engine on the ‘Safari’ browser that is pre-installed on all Apple devices, including iPhones; and (iii) Google ensuring that its search engine management tool (SA360) offers better functionality, and more features, when used with Google’s own advertising offering than when used with Microsoft’s advertising offering. The Tribunal is also hearing other proceedings concerning Google’s practices. In *Stopford v Alphabet Inc.*, CAT case 1606/7/7/23, Nikki Stopford is bringing – as a class representative – a collective action on behalf of consumers also alleging that Google has breached competition law by restricting Google’s rivals’ ability to compete with Google, which has enabled Google to increase the costs faced by users of Google’s search advertising services. Ms Stopford says that those increased costs are then passed on to consumers. An important difference between the *Stopford* proceedings and these proceedings is that Ms Stopford is claiming on behalf of consumers, whereas in this case, Or Brook Class Representative Limited is claiming on behalf of advertisers.

**Q6: What is the role of the Proposed Class Representative?**

If authorised by the Tribunal, Or Brook Class Representative Limited will conduct these proposed collective proceedings against Google on behalf of the Proposed Class (excluding, of course, anyone who may opt out).

During the case, Or Brook Class Representative Limited will be responsible for, amongst other things, communicating with the Proposed Class and issuing formal notices to its members (such as this one). Or Brook Class Representative Limited will make decisions on the conduct of these proposed collective proceedings, including instructing the lawyers and experts; and, in particular, will evaluate any offer of settlement that Google may make and decide whether to present it for the Tribunal's approval.

Updates about the Proposed Claim will be available on the website [www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/](http://www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/) and through various other media.

**Q7: Who is the Proposed Class Representative?**

Or Brook Class Representative Limited is the Proposed Class Representative. Its sole director is Dr Or Brook, who is an Associate Professor of Competition Law at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow and Tutor at Pembroke College. Or has authored and contributed to a significant number of world-leading competition law books and articles, and regularly takes part in policy and impact projects with competition authorities and other international organisations.

She is currently the director of the UK's branch of the International Academic Society for Competition Law. Or is championing the cause for UK advertisers who should have paid less for search advertising services.

**Q8: Who is in the Proposed Class?**

The Proposed Class Definition is given above. All persons who fall within the definition of the Proposed Class and who are domiciled in the UK on the Domicile Date are proposed to be included in the Proposed Class. Broadly, the class is made up of all UK-domiciled app advertisers who used search advertising services provided by Google from 1 January 2011 onwards.

Or Brook Class Representative Limited will ask the Tribunal to authorise the proceedings to proceed on an "opt-out" basis on behalf of all members of the Proposed Class. This means that if you fall within the Proposed Class Definition and were domiciled in the UK on the Domicile Date, you are automatically included in the Proposed Class unless you take positive

steps to opt out.

**Q9: Who is excluded from the Proposed Class?**

As described in the definition of the Proposed Class at the top of this notice, if you fall into one of the following categories, you will be excluded from the Proposed Class:

- (1) natural persons who were deceased by the Domicile Date; or
- (2) legal persons (companies, LLPs, etc.) that had ceased to exist by the Domicile Date.

Or Book Class Representative has itself been expressly excluded from the Proposed Class.

**Q10: Do I need to do anything in order to be part of these proceedings?**

If you fall within the definition of the Proposed Class and are domiciled in the UK on the Domicile Date, you do not have to take any action at this stage. You will be included in the proceedings automatically and be bound by the result, unless you opt out.

All class members who remain in the Proposed Class will be bound by any judgment on the common issues (which are summarised above). As a class member, you will not be able to bring an individual claim against Google raising the same issues that are included in these proposed collective proceedings.

**Q11: How much money do these proposed collective proceedings ask for?**

It is too early to quantify the total value of Or Brook Class Representative Limited's action, as it is anticipated that this will only be possible following disclosure of additional data from Google. However, at this stage, the experts retained by the Class Representative estimate that the value is likely to be up to £5bn. The precise value will become known once the experts are able to analyse data which Google will be obliged to provide at a later stage.

If Or Brook Class Representative Limited is successful (i.e., the proceedings result in Google paying a settlement sum or compensation), all Class Members who have not opted out will be able to seek their share. However, it is important to note that recovery of any money by way of the claims is not guaranteed. The Class Representative will need to prove the case at trial, or secure a collective settlement with Google, in due course.

**Q12: Who can object and to what?**

Any person with an interest (including anyone who would be a member of the Proposed Class) may object to the CPO Application or the authorisation of the Proposed Class

Representative. You should review the information above and visit both [www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/](http://www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/) and [www.catribunal.org.uk](http://www.catribunal.org.uk) for information.

If you wish to file an objection, you must write to the Tribunal stating your reasons for objecting and send it by post, or fax, so it is received no later than **30 April 2026**, using the following contact details:

The Registrar  
Competition Appeal Tribunal  
Salisbury Square House  
8 Salisbury Square  
London EC4Y 8AP

Email: [registry@catribunal.org.uk](mailto:registry@catribunal.org.uk)  
Telephone: 020 7979 7979

When writing to the Tribunal you must include the reference of the Competition Appeal Tribunal Case No. 1720/7/7/25.

Any member of the Proposed Class may also apply to the Tribunal for permission to make written and/or oral observations at the hearing of the CPO Application on **8 July 2026**. Any such application must be made in writing and received by the Tribunal by **30 April 2026**.

**Q13: Who is funding these proposed collective proceedings?**

Or Brook Class Representative Limited would not be able to fund a claim of this size and public importance without third-party funding.

The Class Representative has therefore obtained funding for the claim from a third-party litigation funder, Burford Capital (“**Burford**”). Burford is an international, multi-award-winning firm in the litigation financing and law firm lending market.

Burford has committed up to £40 million to fund all elements of the proceedings, with such amounts to be paid in tranches. In addition, the Proposed Class Representative has obtained an indemnity against being ordered to pay the Proposed Defendants’ costs in the event that the proceedings are ultimately unsuccessful.

**Q14: Will I have to pay the legal costs in order to benefit from these proposed collective proceedings?**

No. The funding arrangements in place, described at Q13 above, mean that members of the

Proposed Class will not need to pay anything to be part of the proceedings. These funding arrangements also mean that members of the Proposed Class will not be liable for any financial risk should Or Brook Class Representative Limited be unsuccessful.

**Q15: How can I stay updated on the progress of these proposed collective proceedings?**

You can visit [www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/](http://www.searchadvertisersclaim.co.uk/) and register to receive updates and any future notices via email as these proposed collective proceedings progress.