

five IP offices

European Patent Office /// Japan Patent Office ///
Korean Intellectual Property Office /// State Intellectual
Property Office of the People's Republic of China ///
United States Patent and Trademark Office

Joint Statement of the IP5 Offices: Better Services for Users and the Public

At the 8th IP5 Heads meeting held in Suzhou, China, on 22 May 2015, the Heads of IP5 Offices discussed next steps of IP5 cooperation, and reaffirmed the mission of providing better services for users and the public.

Common Recognition

Having recognized that:

- Intellectual property is of vital importance to technological innovation and economic development in the context of economic globalization.
- The IP5 Offices seek to continue to provide quality services to users and the public as a whole, so that innovation can flourish with the help of intellectual property.
- The outcomes of IP5 cooperation have benefited IP5 users and the public, while the current user involvement in the IP5 cooperation has been very beneficial.
- Strengthened IP5 cooperation is a significant way of providing users and the public better services.

The Heads of the IP5 Offices reach the following joint recognition:

The IP5 Offices will strive to further optimize their services to users and the public, so as to enhance the role of intellectual property in stimulating innovation and promoting socio-economic development.

Benefits Delivered

Since the beginning of IP5 cooperation in 2007, especially after the involvement of IP5 industry in 2012, the IP5 Offices have delivered a series of benefits to users and the public, which mainly include:

- Common Application Format, allowing applicants to file patent applications in a standardized common application format acceptable at all IP5 Offices.
- Mutual Machine Translation, helping users to eliminate language barriers in understanding patent information by providing mutual translation between English and, among others, Chinese, Japanese and Korean.
- Common Citation Documentation, providing the public with a single point access to up-to-date citation data relating to the patent applications of the IP5 Offices.
- IP5 Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH), enabling an applicant to request expedited examination at the IP5 Offices for an application when it has been determined to be patentable at any one of the IP5 Offices.
- Patent Information Policy, making available patent information exchanged among the IP5 Offices to the public or any third parties free of charge or at a marginal cost.
- Priority Document Exchange, eliminating the burden of applicants in terms of providing priority document to the offices of second filing.
- One Portal Dossier, the backbone for exchanging data for the Global Dossier, allowing users to conduct safe and one-stop access to IP5 file wrapper data of an application and its IP5 patent family.
- Improvements to existing classification systems increasing accessibility to prior art and patent information by examiners, applicants and other stakeholders.
- IP5 website (www.fiveoffices.org), providing general information of IP5 cooperation and its progress.

Target Areas at current stage

To further improve services, the IP5 Heads share the view that at the current stage the IP5 Offices should focus efforts on the following areas:

- Improving patent information services in a network environment

Work together to make progress on the Global Dossier based on user needs, and to promote barrier-free access and in-depth utilization of patent information for users and the public.

- Making further progress on the Patent Harmonization Experts Panel(PHEP) topics
Continue to study and cooperate on the PHEP topics of unity of invention, citation of prior art and written description and sufficiency of disclosure, thereby increasing efficiency in the patent application procedure and reducing costs.

- Improving user-friendliness of IP5 PPH

Further optimize the IP5 PPH by taking appropriate measures such as implementing the common PPH request form, so as to provide the users with an efficient and easy-to-use PPH program.

- Enhancing applicant assistance

Utilize available resources of each IP5 Office to provide assistance to different user groups, including Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), universities and individuals, so as to promote an effective use of the IP system.

- Increase transparency of the IP5 cooperation

Work towards better accessibility of IP5 information via IP5 website and continued provision of statistical data, allowing users to have a more comprehensive and clearer recognition of the progress that the IP5 Offices have made.

Future IP5 Activities

The Heads of the IP5 Offices wish to take full advantage of the resources available at each Office to jointly attain substantive outcomes that are beneficial for users and the public.

The IP5 Offices intend to:

- Strengthen work sharing among the Offices

Continue to develop the infrastructure and tools required for improving work sharing, and facilitate the attainment of substantive outcomes from relevant initiatives on work sharing, so as to promote efficiency.

- Collaborate to improve the quality in the patent examination procedure

Continue to hold IP5 quality management meetings, and enhance cooperation relating to practices on classification, search, examination, etc., so as to promote patent examination quality and, ultimately, the stability of patent rights.

- Strengthen IP5 cooperation in the PCT

Strengthen the communication and cooperation among the IP5 Offices in the PCT system, with focus on enhancing quality of search and examination of the PCT applications, and thereby increasing legal certainty for both users and the public.

- Enhance experience sharing among the IP5 Offices

Enhance the sharing of experiences among the IP5 Offices with regard to user services, including applicant assistance and awareness building efforts, and promote such services or best practices as appropriate to the users.