ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Sanofi v. 乔建彬 (qiao jian bin)
Case No. D2026-4290

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sanofi, France, represented by Selarl Marchais & Associés, France.

The Respondent is 乔建彬 (qiao jian bin), China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sanofi.work> is registered with Alibaba Cloud Computing Ltd. d/b/a HiChina (www.net.cn) (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed in English with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on September 23, 2026. On September 24, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On September 28, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 28, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint in English on October 5, 2026.

On September 28, 2026, the Center informed the Parties in Chinese and English, that the language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Chinese. On October 5, 2026, the Complainant requested English to be the language of the proceeding. The Respondent did not submit any comment on the Complainant's submission.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendment to the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Policy" or "UDRP"), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Rules"), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Supplemental Rules").

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent in Chinese and English of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on October 6, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 26, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on October 28, 2026.

The Center appointed Xu Lin as the sole panelist in this matter on October 30, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is a French multinational pharmaceutical company headquartered in Paris, France. It operates in more than 100 countries on all five continents and employs 100,000 employees worldwide. It engages in research and development, manufacturing, and marketing of pharmaceutical products, principally in the prescription market, but the firm also develops over-the-counter medication. Its consolidated net sales in 2025 were 43.63 billion Euros.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous SANOFI trademarks worldwide, including:

- French trademark registration No. 1482708, registered on August 11, 1988, in classes 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 16, 25, 28, and 31;
- European Union Trade Mark registration No. 000596023, registered on February 1, 1999, in classes 3 and 5; and
- International trademark registration No. 591490, registered on September 25, 1992, in class 5, designating China and Algeria.

The Complainant is also the owner of a portfolio of domain names incorporating its SANOFI trademark, including the domain name <sanofi.com> registered on October 13, 1995.

The disputed domain name was registered on September 2, 2026, and resolves to an inactive website.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, the Complainant contends that:

Firstly, the domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights:

- The Complainant is the rightful owner of SANOFI trademarks and maintains a portfolio of domain names where the SANOFI trademark forms the entirety of the second-level domain, across multiple generic Top-Level Domains ("gTLD") and country code Top-Level Domains. These trademarks and domain portfolio contain the distinctive word SANOFI and are registered all over the world prior to the registration of the disputed domain name.

- The Respondent could simply not ignore SANOFI whose trademarks and domain names are also worldwide.

- The disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the prior trademarks owned by the Complainant as:

  (i) the disputed domain name reproduces the SANOFI trademark;

  (ii) the Complainant is a multinational pharmaceutical company using SANOFI trade name for over 40 years;

  (iii) the disputed domain name entirely reproduces the Complainant's well-known trademark SANOFI as its sole and dominant component. The gTLD ".work" is viewed as a standard technical requirement and is disregarded when assessing confusing similarity. The generic English word "work" may even reinforce the association by suggesting an intranet, employment, or workplace portal linked to the Complainant;

  (iv) the likelihood of confusion is determined based on the Complainant's reputation, trademarks, domain names and goodwill, and SANOFI's trademarks have been considered as well-known trademarks in many jurisdictions.

Secondly, the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name:

- the Respondent has intentionally concealed its identity behind a privacy shield service. The Respondent is not known by the name SANOFI, and owns no trademark rights in this term.

- the Complainant has never licensed, sponsored, or otherwise authorized the Respondent to use its trademarks or to register any domain name incorporating the SANOFI brand. There is no business relationship whatsoever between the parties.

- The Respondent is not making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the domain name nor is he using the litigious domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, as the disputed domain name simply resolves to an inactive webpage.

Finally, the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith:

- Panel decisions regularly recognize opportunistic bad faith in cases in which the contested domain name appears confusingly similar to a Complainant's well-known trademarks.

- The disputed domain name was registered in bad faith as:

  (i) the Respondent used a privacy shield to hide its identity. The Respondent has neither prior right nor legitimate interest to justify the use of the already well-known and worldwide trademarks and domain names of the Complainant.

  (ii) Given the famous and distinctive nature of the mark SANOFI, the Respondent is likely to have had noticed the existence of Complainant's marks at the time he registered the disputed domain name. This suggests that the Respondent acted with opportunistic bad faith in registering the disputed domain name.

  (iii) The disputed domain name has obviously been registered for the purpose of creating a likelihood of confusion – or at least an impression of association – between SANOFI trademarks and the disputed domain name.

- The disputed domain name is being used in bad faith as:

  (i) the Respondent acted with opportunistic bad faith in registering the disputed domain name in order to make an illegitimate use of it.

(ii) For now, the disputed domain name resolves to an inactive website, while passive holding under the appropriate circumstances falls within the concept of the domain name being used in bad faith.

(iii) The lack of use of the disputed domain name particularly close to those used by the Complainant is likely to cause irreparable prejudice to their general goodwill.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1 Preliminary Issue: Language of the Proceeding

The language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Chinese. Pursuant to the Rules, paragraph 11(a), in the absence of an agreement between the parties, or unless specified otherwise in the registration agreement, the language of the administrative proceeding shall be the language of the registration agreement.

The Complaint was filed in English. The Complainant requested that the language of the proceeding be English for several reasons, including the fact that:

(i) The Complainant is not able to communicate in Chinese.

(ii) The disputed domain name reproduces the Complainant's SANOFI trademark in Latin characters and combines it with the English word "work" under the ".work" gTLD. Such English elements in the disputed domain name support the use of English.

(iii) Requiring the Complainant to translate the Complaint and supporting materials into Chinese would entail expense and delay. The Respondent's ability to submit a Response in Chinese would preserve a fair opportunity to participate without requiring translation of the entire Complaint at the outset.

(iv) The Complainant submits that the balance of fairness and efficiency favors English, having regard to its inability to conduct the proceeding in Chinese and the Respondent's ability to participate in Chinese.

In exercising its discretion to use a language other than that of the registration agreement, the Panel has to exercise such discretion judicially in the spirit of fairness and justice to both parties, taking into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including matters such as the parties' ability to understand and use the proposed language, time and costs (see WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.5.1).

The Panel notes that the disputed domain name comprises Latin characters and essentially the Complainant's trademark, and the gTLD containing the English word "work". The Respondent, despite being duly notified by the Center in both English and Chinese of the language of the proceeding and of the commencement of the proceeding, has not challenged the Complainant's language request and in fact has failed to file a response in either English or Chinese.

Having considered all the matters above, the Panel determines under paragraph 11(a) of the Rules that the language of the proceeding shall be English.

6.2 Substantive Issues

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

In what concerns the addition of the gTLD ".work" in relation to the disputed domain name, such is viewed as a standard registration requirement, and is disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.11.1.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Complainant represents that it has never licensed, sponsored, or otherwise authorized the Respondent to use its trademarks or to register any domain name incorporating the SANOFI brand, and the Respondent did not submit any evidence to the contrary. Besides, there is no evidence that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name, or has planned to use the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. The disputed domain name did not resolve to an active website when the Complaint was filed, nor does it do so as of this Decision. Under these circumstances, the Respondent cannot be deemed to have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

In addition, the Panel considers that the disputed domain name carries a high risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant since it is identical to the Complainant's trademark. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.5.1.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.1.

The Panel notes that a large number of panels have consistently found that the Complainant's SANOFI trademark is widely well-known. See *Sanofi v. Bryan Garrison*, WIPO Case No. D2025-5287, *Sanofi v. 苏永佳 (Su Yong Jia)*, WIPO Case No. D2024-2622, and *Sanofi v. Svetlana Guseva*, WIPO Case No. D2019-2815, etc.

The disputed domain name incorporates the entirety of the Complainant's distinctive and well-established trademark with no alterations or additions. In such cases, Panels have consistently found that the mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar to a well-known trademark, and particularly in the case of coined or fanciful marks, can by itself create a presumption of bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.1.4.

In addition, the Panel also considers the registration dates of the SANOFI trademarks and the disputed domain name; the fact that the SANOFI trademark is also protected in China, where the Respondent is purportedly located; the well-known and distinctive nature of the SANOFI trademark; and the fact that the disputed domain name is identical to the SANOFI trademark. Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the Respondent must have been aware of the Complainant's trademark when registering the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.2.

The disputed domain name resolved to an inactive website when the Complaint was filed, and continues to resolve to an inactive website as of this Decision. Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name would not by itself prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. To the contrary, in looking at the totality of circumstances in each case, panels have found that the registration and non-use of a domain name can still constitute bad faith for purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.3.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, and the failure of the Respondent to submit a formal response or to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <sanofi.work> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Xu Lin/
Xu Lin
Sole Panelist
Date: November 8, 2026