

The Japan Patent Office



The Japan Patent Office (JPO) is the special agency of the Japanese government responsible for administering patent, utility-model, design, and trademark systems. In so doing, the JPO always keeps both internal and external intellectual-property (IP) users in mind and strives to provide them with the most convenient, user-oriented services possible.

◆ Cooperation Activities in Africa ◆

The JPO has continued to support improvements to the IP landscape in the African region, actively cooperating with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), and with African countries on an individual basis. Support especially for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups is one of the most important focuses of the JPO's cooperation activities.

- The JPO reached an agreement in August 2019 with the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI), the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) in South Africa, and the OAPI, which includes various initiatives such as sharing knowledge on support programs for SMEs such as startups.¹
- As an official side event during the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7), the JPO and WIPO co-organized a panel discussion called "Startups Tell Good Things about the Innovative Continent".¹
- In order to support African startups from the viewpoint of IP, in February 2020 the JPO co-hosted with WIPO and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) the "Seminar on IP Support to Startups in Africa and One-on-One meetings", by bringing together the representatives of governmental organizations and startups in Africa.²

◆ Initiatives Supporting SMEs and startups ◆

For SMEs and startups aiming to achieve rapid growth by making use of their innovative technologies and ideas, it is essential for them to forge IP strategies that enable them to compete internationally. In order to support the IP activities of SMEs and startups, the JPO has implemented various initiatives based on diverse aspects, such as providing information, offering consultation services, and making available support dealing with fees. In particular, in July 2018, the JPO created a new section called the Startup Support Section, and as a result strengthened support dedicated to startups. You can find further, detailed information on the JPO's website at the link below.

<https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2021/document/index/0203.pdf>

<https://www.jpo.go.jp/support/startup/document/index/jireishu-e.pdf>

https://www.jpo.go.jp/support/startup/document/index/venture_tebiki_e.pdf

¹ https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2019/0829_001.html

² https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2020/0221_003.html