

Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Committee for Technical Cooperation

**Thirty-Third Session
Geneva, February 2 to 6, 2026**

EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINES AS AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AND PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY UNDER THE PCT

Document prepared by the International Bureau

1. All the existing International Authorities were appointed by the PCT Assembly for a period ending on December 31, 2027. Before the expiry of this period, the Assembly will need to decide on the extension of the appointment of each existing International Authority that wishes to seek an extension of its appointment, having first sought the advice of this Committee (see PCT Articles 16(3)(e) and 32(3)). Information concerning this process and the role of the Committee is set out in document PCT/CTC/33/INF/1.
2. On October 22, 2025, the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines submitted its application for extension of appointment, which is reproduced in the Annex to this document.

3. *The Committee is invited to give its advice on this matter.*

[Annex follows]

APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT AS AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AND PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY UNDER THE PCT

1 – GENERAL

(a) Name of Office or intergovernmental organization:

Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL)

(b) Name and contact details of official for any queries about this application:

Maria Cristina P. DE GUZMAN, Officer in Charge, Bureau of Patents, IPOPHL
cristina.deguzman@ipophl.gov.ph

(c) Date on which application for extension of appointment was received by the Director General:

October 22, 2025

2 – MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT

In addition to the annual report on the quality management system by the Office or organization for 2025 (“the QMS Report” <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/pct-system/quality/authorities#PH>) produced in accordance with paragraphs 21.31 and 21.32 of the International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines (“the Guidelines”), the Authority submits the following information.

2.1 – SEARCH AND EXAMINATION CAPACITY

Rules 36.1(i) and 63.1(i): The national Office or intergovernmental organization must have at least 100 full-time employees with sufficient technical qualifications to carry out searches and examinations.

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the infrastructure in place to ensure a sufficient quantity of technically qualified staff under paragraph 21.15(i) of the Guidelines, and on the training and development programs for staff involved in the search and examination process under paragraph 21.15(vi). The Authority also includes the following information on numbers of employees qualified to carry out search and examination.

IPOPHL meets the prescribed criteria for appointment as an ISA/IPEA in terms of the number of full-time employees with sufficient technical qualifications to carry out search and examination. The Office currently employs a total of 122 Patent Examiners with degrees in various fields of engineering and science and have acquired substantial experience in patent search and examination.

To ensure a sustainable pool of qualified professionals, IPOPHL continuously recruits new Examiners as part of its capacity-building strategy. All new intakes undergo the Skills Training for the Examination of Patents (STEP) program - a structured, comprehensive, and competency-based training curriculum designed to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge for patent search and examination. Furthermore, IPOPHL maintains a strong

commitment to continuous professional development. All Examiners regularly participate in both internal and external training programs aimed at further enhancing their technical proficiency and search and examination capabilities.

As required by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) of the Philippines, IPOPHL's Patent Examiners possess degrees in Engineering, Natural Sciences, Medical Sciences and other allied disciplines. In addition, Examiners are required to pass the appropriate Professional Licensure Examination administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), and/or the equivalent Career Service Examination for Professionals by the CSC.

A significant number of Examiners hold advanced degrees or are pursuing postgraduate studies, with full institutional support from the Office. To further strengthen the technical expertise, IPOPHL has established partnerships with two of the country's leading science and engineering universities - the MAPUA University (MU) and De La Salle University - for the implementation of specialized graduate programs. These programs are designed to equip Examiners with the necessary technical competencies to handle patent applications in highly specialized and emerging fields of technology.

Through these partnerships, several Examiners have successfully completed the Master of Science in Biological Engineering program. Additional batches of Examiners are currently pursuing graduate studies, including Master of Science (MS) in MicroElectronics, MS in Biology, and MS in Medical Engineering. Moreover, other Examiners are undertaking Master's degree programs in other prestigious universities in the Philippines, while others are pursuing studies in Law to further broaden their expertise in intellectual property and related disciplines.

All IPOPHL Examiners operate under the guidance of highly experienced supervisors and are subject to a two-level in-process quality review for all search and examination reports. Division supervisors possess postgraduate degrees in technical or management fields - or are currently completing such programs, and have extensive search and examination experience, averaging over 23 years of service. To ensure continued technical excellence, supervisors regularly participate in both domestic and international training programs focused on patent quality review, coaching, and mentoring to further enhance the Office's overall examination quality and efficiency.

Employees qualified to carry out search and examination:

Technical field	Number (in full-time equivalent)	Average experience as examiners (years)	Breakdown of qualifications
Mechanical, Civil and General Engineering	29	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate of Bachelor of Science (major in technical field). • Masteral degree. • Licensed profession. • Certificate of eligibility. • Specified number of Training hours in related field
Electrical/electronic and Integrated Circuits	35	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate of Bachelor of Science (major in technical field). • Masteral degree. • Licensed profession. • Certificate of eligibility. • Specified number of Training hours in related field
Chemistry and Chemical Technology	30	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate of Bachelor of Science (major in technical field). • Masteral degree. • Licensed profession. • Certificate of eligibility. • Specified number of Training hours in related field
Biotech – pharmaceutical, agricultural	28	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate of Bachelor of Science (major in technical field). • Masteral degree. • Licensed profession. • Certificate of eligibility. • Specified number of Training hours in related field
<i>Total</i>	122		

Other information beyond the QMS Report and the above table (optional):

With respect to PCT Rules 36.1(iii) and 63.1(iii) requiring Examiners to have the language facilities to understand at least those languages in which the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34 is written or is translated, Examiners of IPOPHL possess high skills and understanding in the widely used English language.

All IPOPHL Examiners are proficient both spoken and written Filipino and English languages. All examiners possess high level proficiency and technical comprehension in the English language, which is one of the principal languages used in PCT applications. In

the Philippines, English serves as an official language, and is commonly used government transactions, business communications, and academic instruction, thereby ensuring that Examiners are fully capable of conducting searches, examinations, and preparing reports in English with precision and clarity.

2.2 – MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION – MAKING AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION

Rules 36.1(ii) and 63.1(ii): That Office or organization must make available for consultation as part of the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34, in accordance with the requirements specified in the Administrative Instructions, any patent issued, and any patent application published, by it, and where applicable by its legal predecessor(s).

The requirements specified in the Administrative Instructions are set out in [Circular C. PCT 1672](#), dated June 19, 2024.

The making available for consultation as part of the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34 of the patents issued and patent applications published by the Office or, where applicable, the Offices that are members of the intergovernmental organization in accordance with the Understanding adopted by the PCT Assembly in paragraph 8 of document PCT/A/55/2, is reported as follows:

Either:

- The PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force has tested the availability of the patent documentation collections before November 1, 2025, and certifies that the requirements have been met. The extent and format of the documents that the Authority has made available for consultation has been published in the PCT Gazette on October 23, 2025, and a corrigendum has been published in the PCT Gazette on November 27, 2025, at:
<https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/pct-system/docs-en-official-notices-officialnotices.pdf#page=201> and <https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/pct-system/docs-en-official-notices-officialnotices.pdf#page=247>.

Or:

- The Authority reports on the availability of its patent documentation collection as follows, including a timetable for when testing and full availability can be certified by the PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force. Please also provide details of your Authority File with any links, as appropriate.

2.3 – MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION – ACCESS

Rules 36.1(iii) and 63.1(iii): That Office or organization must have in its possession, or maintain access to at least the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34, for search purposes in accordance with the Administrative Instructions.

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the infrastructure in place to ensure that at least the minimum documentation referred to in Rule 34 is available, accessible, properly arranged and maintained for search and examination purposes under paragraph 21.15(iv) of the Guidelines.

Other information beyond the QMS Report (optional):

IPOPHL endeavors to keep up with the latest developments in IT technologies to support its examiners in the conduct of their search and examination such as advance servers and network infrastructures. Aside from this, customized computer software is likewise being utilized to effectively carry out processes involved in search and examination.

As regards network infrastructure, IPOPHL has in place a complete and integrated security solution starting with a security firewall appliance alongside an Intrusion Prevention System with Anti-Virus, Anti-Bot and Anti-Spam capabilities, and an IPSec Virtual Private Network capability for secure site-to-site connections. The core network switch is powered by two active Internet nodes with sufficient bandwidth to service the entire network and a fail-over capacity in the event of the failure of one of the nodes. Server virtualization is implemented which provides faster provisioning and deployment of application systems while ensuring higher availability and uptime. IPOPHL has contracted Cloud-based data backup services, and data back-up and testing procedures are also conducted regularly.

IPOPHL Examiners currently have access to the following patent and non-patent databases:

- a. *Publicly available databases such as: (i) OPSIN (Open Parser for Systematic IUAPAC nomenclature); (ii) NCBI (National Centre for Biotechnology Information); (iii) EMBL-EBI (European Molecular Biology Laboratory - European Bioinformatics Institute) for sequence listing search; (iv) 3GPP (Telecommunication Technologies); (v) WIPO CASE; and (vi) PATENTSCOPE;*
- b. *Databases such as PubMed which provides non-patent articles in chemistry, molecular biology and other preclinical sciences, and The Lens for comprehensive DNA and protein sequence search;*
- c. *IPOPHL IPDL (Industrial Property Digital Library) and IPOPHL's internal database IPAS (Industrial Property Automation System); and,*
- d. *TKDL (Traditional Knowledge Digital Library) through an access agreement with the Council of Science and Industrial Research*
- e. *National patent databases of other IP Offices such as USPTO, J-PATPLAT, AUSPAT, Espacenet, and AIPN;*
- f. *EPOQUENet, STNext, IEEE Digital Xplore, Scopus and Science Direct; and*
- g. *Commercial search platform Thomson Innovation which covers Derwent World Patent Index (DWPI)*

2.4 – QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Rules 36.1(iv) and 63.1(iv): That Office or organization must have in place a quality management system and internal review arrangements in accordance with the common rules of international search,

The QMS Report provides information from the Authority on the quality management system in place under Chapter 21 of the Guidelines and includes a report under paragraph 21.09 of the internal review arrangements that are further described in paragraphs 21.27 to 21.30 of the Guidelines.

Other information beyond the QMS Report (optional):

IPOPHL has maintained its quality management system (QMS) compliance with the International Organization for Standardization's (ISO) 9001:2015 Certification, which essentially covers the process for the grant of patents and other IP registration services. IQA conducts internal audits twice a year (actual and verification) and a third party (external) audit once a year that are consistent with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 standards on all work processes. The results of the audits are communicated to the IPOPHL top management during the Management Review for evaluation.

Additionally, the Quality Management Services Unit (QMSU) implements the Patent Quality Review System (PQRS) within the Bureau of Patents and evaluates its effectiveness. The quality objectives serve to provide a clear understanding of what quality means and a framework in which the Bureau applies the quality standards and provides guidance for further development in examination practice. It conducts an evaluation of the system every six (6) months covering the results of the quality review of the search and examination, issues in the examination and procedure of the quality review, and comments or suggestions from the applicants or examiners. After the evaluation, corrective and preventive actions and amendments to the PQRS standards or policies, if any, are recommended to the Quality Management Committee (QMC) for consideration and approval. The QMSU Head reports to the Bureau Assistant Director and/or Bureau Director.

Moreover, the QMSU prepares a monthly PQRS report which is presented during the monthly Management Committee (Mancom) meeting and forms part of the documents subjected to the internal and external audits. The report contains the findings on the quality review of all work products including the search and examination reports captured through the PQRS random sampling. It also includes identification of gaps and other concerns/ issues in the process of search and examination, as well as recommendations for addressing the said gaps. A QMC meeting is conducted quarterly, or anytime as necessary, tackling detailed issues of compliance and non-compliance with standards.

3 – SCOPE OF OPERATION

(a) Current scope of operation

The receiving Offices for which the Office or intergovernmental organization is competent as an International Searching Authority and an International Preliminary Examining Authority, language(s) in which services are offered and other details of scope of operation are listed in the PCT Applicant's Guide at the following links: <https://pctlegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=PH&doc-lang=en#ISA> and <https://pctlegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=PH&doc-lang=en#IPEA>.

(b) Planned changes to scope of operation as an Authority, such as the receiving Offices for which the Authority is competent and languages offered (if any):

In line with its continuing commitment to contribute to the global patent system, the Office is also exploring opportunities for further designations and strengthened cooperation with other national and regional patent offices, with a view to expanding its service coverage and enhancing international collaboration.

4 – OTHER

Any further information relevant to the extension of appointment as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority:

[End of Annex and of document]