

Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) **Committee for Technical Cooperation**

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

EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE 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 November 24, 2025, the United States Patent and Trademark Office 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:

United States Patent and Trademark Office

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

Michael Neas

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

November 24, 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#US>) 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.

Employees qualified to carry out search and examination:

Technical field	Number (in full-time equivalent)	Average experience as examiners (years)	Breakdown of qualifications
Mechanical	2643	12	See below
Electrical/electronic	4086	14	See below
Chemistry	983	13	See below
Biotech	812	11	See below
<i>Total</i>	<i>8524</i>		

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

Data source: [tcleveldashboard.xlsx](#)

In addition to the resources identified above, the USPTO leverages additional resources for performance of international searches under Chapter I of the Treaty through contractual arrangements as referenced in our QMS report.

Breakdown of qualifications:

The following are basic general qualifications. It should be noted that the USPTO often focuses hiring on more specific technical fields for which the qualifications may be more specific. Several examples are provided below, including computer science.

Generally:

Either:

- A) Successfully completed a full four-year course of study in an accredited college or university leading to a bachelor's or higher degree in engineering, OR a combination of qualifying education and experience; OR
- B) A combination of education and experience. This combination of college-level education, training, and/or technical experience must have furnished both: a thorough knowledge of the physical and mathematical sciences underlying professional engineering; AND a good understanding, both theoretical and practical, of the engineering sciences and techniques and their application to professional engineering.

Chemistry:

Either:

- A) At least a bachelor's degree in physical sciences, life sciences, or engineering that included 30 semester hours in chemistry, supplemented by coursework in mathematics through differential and integral calculus, and at least 6 semester hours of physics; OR
- B) Have a combination of education and experience-course work equivalent to a major as shown in A above, including at least 30 semester hours in chemistry, supplemented by mathematics through differential and integral calculus, and at least 6 semester hours of physics, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

Computer Science:

Either:

- A) Bachelor's degree in computer science; OR
- B) Bachelor's degree with 30 semester hours in a combination of mathematics, statistics, and computer science. At least 15 of the 30 semester hours must have been any combination of statistics and mathematics that included differential and integral calculus. All academic degrees and coursework must be from accredited or pre-accredited institutions.

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 30, 2025, at: <https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/pct-system/docs-en-official-notices-officialnotices.pdf#page=216>.

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):

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):

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://pctllegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=US&doc-lang=en#ISA> and <https://pctllegal.wipo.int/eGuide/view-doc.xhtml?doc-code=US&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):

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]