

Website news

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Trilateral IP Offices Re-Envision Global Coordination on Key Initiatives

Known as the Trilateral Offices, the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), held their 40th annual meeting today in Durham, North Carolina. Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and USPTO Director, Kathi Vidal, hosted the meeting, which focused on making the patent system more accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to drive economic growth. She was joined by EPO President António Campinos and JPO Commissioner Koichi Hamano. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) also participated in the meeting in an observer capacity, with Lisa Jorgenson, Deputy Director General, Patents and Technology Sector, in attendance.

Recognizing the key economic contribution that IP-intensive industries make to the economy in each jurisdiction, the Trilateral Offices reaffirmed their commitment to expand and enhance access to tools, information and other resources useful to the innovation community. Given that SMEs account for a significant proportion of global business and patent filings, key discussions centered on identifying and providing information and tools best suited to the needs of SMEs, with a particular focus on more direct outreach to SMEs

Additionally, discussions included support for all segments of the innovation community, including, in particular, women and youth, as well as initiatives such as mentorship, education programs and networking opportunities. Going forward, the Offices agreed to explore how to achieve further, meaningful progress at a strategic level by leveraging longstanding Trilateral cooperation, expertise and experience, as well as continued input from and engagement with stakeholders.

“I’m excited about our new direction for the Trilateral Cooperation which aligns with the USPTO’s mission to expand innovation — including in key technologies and in traditionally under-represented and under-resourced communities. We each committed to innovating our collaborative approach and doing more together to create jobs, foster economic prosperity and solve world problems.” — USPTO Director Kathi Vidal

“The key to the success and longevity of the Trilateral Co-operation is our shared understanding that global challenges demand global solutions. We know that innovation, supported by a strong and high-quality IP system, can offset the threat to sustainability. We also know that high-growth potential SMEs have a big role to play in driving many of these world-changing innovations - but are sometimes prevented from doing so because of barriers to access. This is where Europe’s soon-to-be-launched Unitary Patent can be a real game-changer for businesses from the Trilateral regions.” — EPO President António Campinos

“It is amazing that the Trilateral Offices have held 40 annual heads meetings to date. This fact itself proves that such international cooperation is extremely important in the field of intellectual property, and we will continue seeking the realization of an ideal IP global ecosystem through our cooperation.” — JPO Commissioner Koichi Hamano.

Today’s meeting follows on a Trilateral-sponsored conference, “[International Perspectives: IP, SMEs, and Global Markets](#),” held on November 8 and hosted by the Center for Innovation Policy at Duke University Law School. The program focused on the critical role of IP in protecting intangible assets and expanding businesses to global markets, and enhanced the awareness of the various resources that the three Trilateral Offices provide to SMEs, including pro bono services and discounted fees.