AGREEMENT

between the Japan Patent Office
and the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization

in relation to the functioning of the Japan Patent Office
as an International Searching Authority
and International Preliminary Examining Authority
under the Patent Cooperation Treaty

(as in force from March 1, 2025)*

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* Done at Geneva on October 30, 2017, last amended with effect from March 1, 2025 (see *Official Notices (PCT Gazette)* dated January 18, 2018, page 97 *et seq.,* July 19, 2018, pages 268 and 269, July 18, 2019, pages 109 and 110, October 31, 2019, page 157, June 25, 2020, page 136, April 29, 2021, pages 87 and 88, February 10, 2022, pages 40 and 41, May 19, 2022, pages 128 and 129, September 7, 2023, pages 170 and 171, and February 6, 2025, page 50).

This consolidated text has been prepared by the International Bureau of WIPO on the basis of the original Agreement, which exists in English and Japanese.

Preamble

The Japan Patent Office and the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization,

Considering that the PCT Assembly, having heard the advice of the PCT Committee for Technical Cooperation, has appointed the Japan Patent Office as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty and approved this Agreement in accordance with Articles 16(3) and 32(3),

Hereby agree as follows:

Article 1
Terms and Expressions

(1) For the purposes of this Agreement:

(a) "Treaty" means the Patent Cooperation Treaty;

(b) "Regulations" means the Regulations under the Treaty;

(c) "Administrative Instructions" means the Administrative Instructions under the Treaty;

(d) "Article" (except where a specific reference is made to an Article of this Agreement) means an Article of the Treaty;

(e) "Rule" means a Rule of the Regulations;

(f) "Contracting State" means a State party to the Treaty;

(g) "the Authority" means the Japan Patent Office;

(h) "the International Bureau" means the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

(2) All other terms and expressions used in this Agreement which are also used in the Treaty, the Regulations or the Administrative Instructions have, for the purposes of this Agreement, the same meaning as in the Treaty, the Regulations and the Administrative Instructions.

Article 2
Basic Obligations

(1) The Authority shall carry out international search and international preliminary examination in accordance with, and perform such other functions of an International Searching Authority and International Preliminary Examining Authority as are provided under, the Treaty, the Regulations, the Administrative Instructions and this Agreement.

(2) In carrying out international search and international preliminary examination, the Authority shall apply and observe all the common rules of international search and of international preliminary examination and, in particular, shall be guided by the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines.

(3) The Authority shall maintain a quality management system in compliance with the requirements set out in the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines.

(4) The Authority and the International Bureau shall, having regard to their respective functions under the Treaty, the Regulations, the Administrative Instructions and this Agreement, render, to the extent considered to be appropriate by both the Authority and the International Bureau, mutual assistance in the performance of their functions thereunder.

Article 3
Competence of Authority

(1) The Authority shall act as International Searching Authority for any international application filed with the receiving Office of, or acting for, any Contracting State specified in Annex A to this Agreement, provided that the receiving Office specifies the Authority for that purpose, that such application, or a translation thereof furnished for the purposes of international search, is in the language or one of the languages specified in Annex A to this Agreement and, where applicable, that the Authority has been chosen by the applicant and that any other requirements regarding such application as specified in Annex A to this Agreement have been met.

(2) The Authority shall act as International Preliminary Examining Authority for any international application filed with the receiving Office of, or acting for, any Contracting State specified in Annex A to this Agreement, provided that the receiving Office specifies the Authority for that purpose, that such application, or a translation thereof furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination, is in the language or one of the languages specified in Annex A to this Agreement and, where applicable, that the Authority has been chosen by the applicant and that any other requirements regarding such application as specified in Annex A to this Agreement have been met.

(3) Where an international application is filed with the International Bureau as receiving Office under Rule 19.1(a)(iii), paragraphs (1) and (2) apply as if that application had been filed with a receiving Office which would have been competent under Rule 19.1(a)(i) or (ii), (b) or (c) or Rule 19.2(i).

(4) The Authority shall conduct supplementary international searches in accordance with Rule 45*bis* to the extent decided by it, as set out in Annex B to this Agreement.

Article 4
Subject Matter Not Required to Be Searched or Examined

The Authority shall not be obliged to search, by virtue of Article 17(2)(a)(i), or examine, by virtue of Article 34(4)(a)(i), any international application to the extent that it considers that such application relates to subject matter set forth in Rule 39.1 or 67.1, as the case may be, with the exception of the subject matter specified in Annex C to this Agreement.

Article 5
Fees and Charges

(1) A schedule of all fees of the Authority, and all other charges which the Authority is entitled to make, in relation to its functions as an International Searching Authority and International Preliminary Examining Authority, is set out in Annex D to this Agreement.

(2) The Authority shall, under the conditions and to the extent set out in Annex D to this Agreement:

(i) refund the whole or part of the search fee paid, or waive or reduce the search fee, where the international search report can be wholly or partly based on the results of an earlier search (Rules 16.3 and 41.1);

(ii) refund the search fee where the international application is withdrawn or considered withdrawn before the start of the international search.

(3) The Authority shall, under the conditions and to the extent set out in Annex D to this Agreement, refund the whole or part of the preliminary examination fee paid where the demand is considered as if it had not been submitted (Rule 58.3) or where the demand or the international application is withdrawn by the applicant before the start of the international preliminary examination.

Article 6
Classification

For the purposes of Rules 43.3(a) and 70.5(b), the Authority shall indicate the classification of the subject matter according to the International Patent Classification. The Authority may, in addition, in accordance with Rules 43.3 and 70.5, indicate the classification of the subject matter according to any other patent classification specified in Annex E to this Agreement to the extent decided by it as set out in that Annex.

Article 7
Languages of Correspondence Used by the Authority

For the purposes of correspondence, including forms, other than with the International Bureau, the Authority shall use the language or one of the languages indicated, having regard to the language or languages indicated in Annex A and to the language or languages whose use is authorized by the Authority under Rule 92.2(b), in Annex F.

Article 8
International-Type Search

The Authority shall carry out international-type searches to the extent decided by it as set out in Annex G to this Agreement.

Article 9
Entry into Force

This Agreement shall enter into force on January 1, 2018.

Article 10
Duration and Renewability

This Agreement shall remain in force until December 31, 2027. The parties to this Agreement shall, no later than July 2026, start negotiations for its renewal.

Article 11
Amendment

(1) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) and (3), amendments may, subject to approval by the Assembly of the International Patent Cooperation Union, be made to this Agreement by agreement between the parties hereto; they shall take effect on the date agreed upon by them.

(2) Without prejudice to paragraph (3), amendments may be made to the Annexes to this Agreement by agreement between the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization and the Authority; and, notwithstanding paragraph (4), they shall take effect on the date agreed upon by them.

(3) The Authority may, by a notification to the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization:

(i) add to the indications of States and languages contained in Annex A to this Agreement;

(ii) amend the indications on supplementary international searches contained in Annex B to this Agreement;

(iii) amend the schedule of fees and charges contained in Annex D to this Agreement;

(iv) amend the indications on patent classification systems contained in Annex E to this Agreement;

(v) amend the indications on languages of correspondence contained in Annex F to this Agreement;

(vi) amend the indications on international-type searches contained in Annex G to this Agreement.

(4) Any amendment notified under paragraph (3) shall take effect on the date specified in the notification, provided that:

(i) for an amendment to Annex B to the effect that the Authority shall no longer conduct supplementary international searches, that date is at least six months later than the date on which the notification is received by the International Bureau, and

(ii) for any change in the currency or amount of fees or charges contained in Annex D, for any addition of new fees or charges, and for any change in the conditions for and the extent of refunds or reductions of fees contained in Annex D, that date is at least two months later than the date on which the notification is received by the International Bureau.

Article 12
Termination

(1) This Agreement shall terminate before December 31, 2027:

(i) if the Japan Patent Office gives the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization written notice to terminate this Agreement; or

(ii) if the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization gives the Japan Patent Office written notice to terminate this Agreement.

(2) The termination of this Agreement under paragraph (1) shall take effect one year after receipt of the notice by the other party, unless a longer period is specified in such notice or unless both parties agree on a shorter period.

Annex A
States and Languages

Under Article 3 of the Agreement, the Authority specifies:

(i) the following States for which it will act:

so far as Article 3(1) is concerned:

Japan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America, Uruguay and Viet Nam;

so far as Article 3(2) is concerned:

where the Authority has prepared the international search report,

Japan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America and Viet Nam.

For the United States of America, the Authority will act under Article 3(1) provided that (a) the international application is submitted in English; and (b) the Authority has not received more than 10,000 international applications from the United States Patent and Trademark Office during the five-year period from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2028, and not more than 500 applications each quarter. Where the Authority has prepared the international search report, the Authority will also act under Article 3(2) if these conditions are met.

Where a receiving Office specifies the Authority under Articles 3(1) and (2), the Authority shall become competent for international applications filed at that receiving Office from a date to be agreed by the receiving Office and the Authority and to be notified to the International Bureau.

(ii) the following languages which it will accept:

(a) for international applications filed with the receiving Office of Japan:

Japanese, English;

(b) for international applications filed with the receiving Office of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America, Uruguay and Viet Nam:

English;

(c) for international applications filed with the receiving Office of, or acting for, the Republic of Korea:

Japanese;

(d) for international applications filed with the International Bureau as receiving Office acting for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America, Uruguay and Viet Nam:

Japanese, English.

Annex B
Supplementary International Search: Documentation Covered; Limitations and Conditions

The Authority does not conduct supplementary international searches.

Annex C
Subject Matter Not Excluded from Search or Examination

The subject matter set forth in Rule 39.1 or 67.1 which, under Article 4 of the Agreement, is not excluded from search or examination, is the following:

any subject matter which is searched or examined under the patent grant procedure in accordance with the provisions of Japanese Patent Act; and methods for treatment of the human body by surgery or therapy, as well as diagnostic methods.

Annex D
Fees and Charges

Part I. Schedule of Fees and Charges

Kind of fee or charge	Amount (Japanese yen)
Search fee (Rule 16.1(a)) (for an application in Japanese)	143,000[1]
Search fee (Rule 16.1(a)) (for an application in English)	169,000
Additional fee (Rule 40.2(a)) (for an application in Japanese)	105,000
Additional fee (Rule 40.2(a)) (for an application in English)	168,000
Preliminary examination fee (Rule 58.1(b)) (for an application in Japanese)	34,000[1]
Preliminary examination fee (Rule 58.1(b)) (for an application in English)	69,000
Additional fee (Rule 68.3(a)) (for an application in Japanese)	28,000
Additional fee (Rule 68.3(a)) (for an application in English)	45,000
Cost of copies (Rules 44.3(b), 71.2(b), 94.1*ter* and 94.2), per request	1,400

Part II. Conditions for and Extent of Refunds or Reductions of Fees

(1) Any amount paid by mistake, without cause, or in excess of the amount due, for fees indicated in Part I shall be refunded.

(2) The amount of either 57,000 Japanese yen (for an application in Japanese)[2] or 67,000 Japanese yen (for an application in English) shall be refunded upon request by the applicant where the Authority benefits from one of the following earlier searches to a considerable extent:

(i) where the international application claims the priority of an earlier international application which has been the subject of an international search made by the Authority, the international search of the earlier international application;

(ii) the earlier search of a Japanese national application for a patent or for a utility model registration which was filed by the same applicant as that of the international application.

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[1] This fee is reduced for (i) applications filed in Japanese or (ii) applications to which translations into Japanese have been furnished, for the purposes of International Search under Rule 12.3, by applicants who are eligible for fee reductions, such as applicants who are small or medium-sized enterprises, micro enterprises, and academic institutions. For further details on the eligibility, see https://www.jpo.go.jp/system/process/tesuryo/genmen/genmen20190401/document/index/leaflet_e.pdf.

[2] The amount of any refund of search fees will be reduced where the fee reductions stated in footnote 1 are applicable.

(3) In the cases provided for under Rule 58.3, the amount of the preliminary examination fee paid shall be fully refunded.

(4) As long as the refund of the search fee (in the case where the international application is withdrawn or considered withdrawn, under Article 14(1), (3) or (4), before the start of the international search) and the refund of the preliminary examination fee (in the case where the international application or the demand is withdrawn before the start of the international preliminary examination) continue not to be compatible with the national law applicable to the Authority, the Authority may abstain from refunding those fees.

Annex E
Classification

Under Article 6 of the Agreement, the Authority specifies the following classification systems in addition to the International Patent Classification: the FI.

Annex F
Languages of Correspondence

Under Article 7 of the Agreement, the Authority specifies the following languages:

Japanese, English.

Annex G
International-Type Search

Under Article 8 of the Agreement, the Authority specifies the following extent of international-type searches:

The Authority does not conduct international-type searches.