

The European Intellectual Property (IP) Helpdesk: Helping SMEs And Researchers Valorise Their IP

With knowledge being one of the main driving forces of modern-day economies and “Open Innovation” becoming an increasingly important concept of collaboration, intellectual property (IP) has become a central (business) asset. Different kinds of IP—whether trademarks, patents, copyright, know how or design—can be used and exploited in various settings and multiple ways. It is the effective use and uptake of novel scientific discoveries and promising research results that will keep European businesses at the forefront of growth, prosperity, and competitiveness in the future. Consequently, project teams and companies engaged in research and innovation activities need to come up with convincing valorisation strategies to actually turn those results into “real” innovations capable of addressing pressing societal and economic challenges of our time.

However, successfully assessing, monitoring, and managing IP remains a daunting task for many, especially for researcher and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This is where the European IP Helpdesk¹ comes into play: conceived as a first-line IP support service funded by the European Commission, the European IP Helpdesk helps European SMEs and research teams involved in cross-border business and/or EU-funded research activities manage, disseminate, and valorise their IP.

Offering a broad range of informative material, a Helpline service for direct IP support, as well as a training schedule boasting more than 70 training sessions per year, the main goal of the initiative is to promote IP capacity building along the full scale of IP practices: from awareness to strategic use and successful exploitation. In addition, the European IP Helpdesk in collaboration with the Enterprise Europe Network, the world’s largest support network for SMEs, has set up an extensive network of national “European IP Helpdesk Ambassadors” all across Europe aiming to overcome language barriers and help SMEs deal with IP issues at their doorstep.

Given the increasingly complex and diverse landscape of IP, business, and innovative support services available in Europe, cooperation between the different players to join forces and streamline activities is key. To this end, the European IP Helpdesk and the European Patent Organisation (EPO)/European Patent Academy (EPA) look back on a long-standing collaboration especially with regard to joint training activities and publications. One of the most recent joint activities has been the development of a new series of case studies showcasing how IP (and patents in particular) facilitate technology transfer from universities and public research organisations in Europe and help boost their market success.

Featured in this special edition of *les Nouvelles*, the new technology transfer case study series forms an important milestone in the EPO’s and European IP Helpdesk’s shared mission to develop hands-on, relatable, and practical information material to raise awareness of the value of IP in general, and to help small and medium-sized enterprises, academic institutions, and public research organisations make better use of their IP. The case studies are accompanied by a series of podcasts on the EPO’s “Talk Innovation” channel. Plus, the European IP Helpdesk and the European Patent Academy have teamed up for an online training series, which takes a closer look at each of the cases and provides key takeaways for stakeholders in universities, public research organisations, and businesses. ■

“From Lab to Market” Training Series— Upcoming Sessions

29 June 2022: Atlantic Therapeutics

12 July 2022: Dermis Pharma

13 September 2022: Blubrake

18 October 2022: Perceive3D

1. For further details on the service please visit: https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/regional-helpdesks/european-ip-helpdesk_en.

Find all podcast episodes here: https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/podcast_en.