CWS/ATR/ID/2022/JP

Annual Technical Report on Industrial Design Information Activities in 2022 submitted by Japan

Please provide links to your website where the requested information can be found in English, French, or Spanish. Alternately, you may provide text responses instead of URLs if desired. If the information is not available on your website in an ATR language, then please provide text.

URLs in responses should meet the following requirements:

* Link to pages with information in English, Spanish, or French
* The URL will remain stable over time (at least three years, preferably more)
* Goes to the specific information requested, not to a general homepage
* If the URL goes to a long PDF document such as an annual report, please indicate which sections or pages contain relevant information.
* Provide additional instructions for using the URL if needed. For instance, if the page requires the user to login first, or if the requested information requires selecting certain options or filters on the page that can not be included in the URL.

The term "industrial designs" covers industrial designs and models.

Offices which issue design patents should report their design patent information activities in this series of Annual Technical Reports.

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Outline of main policies and plans aimed at development of industrial design information activities and expected time frames for their realization**
2. **New projects launched or resumed this year in the context of the policies(plans) mentioned above, short description: aims, partners, tasks**
3. **Main areas of industrial design information activities and related information and communication technology (ICT) practices which were in the focus of attention last year**
4. **Statistics: changes in terms of application filings and grants (registrations) with respect to previous year; trends or areas experiencing rapid changes**
5. **Other matters and useful links (URLs): annual report of the Office, news page, statistics, etc.**

1. Outline of main policies and plans aimed at development of industrial design information activities and expected time frames for their realization
The outline of main policies and plans of patent information activities have officially been announced in the following report. "Toward further utilization of patent information" Report, submitted by the subcommittee on dissemination and utilization of patent information consisting of patent information experts, appointed under the Intellectual Property Committee under Industrial Structure Council, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, in May 2016. The future direction of the official patent information provision service operated by the JPO and the National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training (INPIT) has been summarized as below. The JPO and the INPIT should continuously improve the infrastructure of patent information provision service to broadly disseminate the patent information with the efforts to provide the world's utmost quality service for the users in Japan with full considerations of the trends of globalization, advancement of IT, approaches to the related services by foreign IP offices and private business operators, and requests from users in Japan including small and medium-sized companies and individuals. The following policies are mentioned in the report with the said fundamental concept. (i) Improving accessibility to foreign patent documents by using machine translation to Japanese. (ii) Provision of One Portal Dossier (OPD) service, which is to offer overseas dossier information collectively. (iii) Improving accessibility to unified database, which is internal and external to the JPO, through basic functions. (iv) Provision of the service to share Japan's world's fastest and utmost quality examination results. (v) External provision of substantive examinations/ appeal examinations related information regarding Design and Trademark.
2. New projects launched or resumed this year in the context of the policies(plans) mentioned above, short description: aims, partners, tasks

Refer to p.122(ii) of JPO Status Report.
https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2023/document/index/0203.pdf#page=9

3. Main areas of industrial design information activities and related information and communication technology (ICT) practices which were in the focus of attention last year
Refer to p.122(ii) of JPO Status Report.
https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2023/document/index/0203.pdf#page=9

4. Statistics: changes in terms of application filings and grants(registrations) with respect to previous year; trends or areas experiencing rapid changes
Refer to p.22-26 of JPO Status Report.
https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2023/document/index/all.pdf

5. Other matters and useful links (URLs): annual report of the Office, news page, statistics, etc.
(Annual Report in Japanese) https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/nenji/index.html
(Status Report in Japanese and English) https://www.jpo.go.jp/e/resources/report/statusreport/index.html

II. SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. Information and support provided by the Office to applicants regarding filing on paper and/or e-filing (instructions, seminars, etc.) - URLs
2. Availability of the application dossier in electronic form
3. Classification and reclassification activities; classification system used, e.g., International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification), other classification
4. Other activities

1. Information and support provided by the JPO to applicants regarding filing on paper and/or e-filing (instructions, seminars, etc.) – URLs
a)   Paper based application
The INPIT provides the free consultation service on the procedures for industrial property rights at the Consultation Desk in the JPO office building.
Moreover, the portal site for consultation and support on intellectual property is available at:
https://faq.inpit.go.jp/.
b)   Electronic application
The e-filing software allows users to conduct administrative procedures such as the filing of applications for patents, utility models, industrial designs and trademarks, and PCT-RO international application, appealing for trials and payment of the annual fees, and receipt of documents dispatched from the JPO, on-line. The software may be downloaded for free.
https://www.jpo.go.jp/system/process/shutugan/pcinfo/index.html

2. Availability of the application dossier in electronic form
a)   On-line reference
The software for electronic application allows users to request or refer to application documents and registers from computers from their home or office, and to make a request for issuing certifications on-line.
See 2. (1) b) for the software for electronic application.

3. Classification and reclassification activities; classification system used, e.g., International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification), other classification

In January 2005, the JPO started using the revised Japanese Design Classification in order to cope with the new conception of articles etc. such as the information and communication devices. The revised Japanese Design Classification mainly uses the concept of the usage in the same way as the former Japanese Design Classification, which is comprised of a 3-stage classification; group, main class, and minor class, and consists of about 3,200 classification branches in total. Also, the JPO provides about 2.000 branches of D-terms, which are search keys to further subdivide the Japanese Design Classification mainly based on the forms of articles.

Further, in April 2020, graphic image designs not recorded or displayed on goods were newly protected, and in response, a new classification branch and D-terms for graphic image designs that was subdivided mainly from the viewpoint of form was created. At the same time, a new classification branch was created for buildings and interiors, which were new protected objects.

In 2022, the JPO assigned the Japanese Design Classification and D-terms to about 31,000 filed application for design registration and about 342,000 cases of examination materials collected from foreign design gazettes, magazines, catalogues, Internet, etc.

In addition, the following information is provided.

A Cross-reference table between the Locarno Classification and the Japanese Design Classification (a concordance data)

For effective usage of the Japanese Design Gazettes as examination materials in foreign countries, the JPO established and published a cross-reference table between the Locarno Classification and the Japanese Design Classification (a concordance data). The JPO lists the Locarno International Classification in the gazettes in addition to the Japanese Design Classification.

4. Other activities

Nothing in particular

III. SOURCES OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Main types of publications in the field of industrial design information, outline of the content (industrial design applications, design patents, registrations, etc.) and medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URLs)**
2. **Official Gazettes: main types of announcements, frequency of publication, medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URL), etc.**
3. **Information products (coverage, medium, etc.) available to examiners, including external documentation and databases**
4. **Information products (coverage, medium, etc.) and services available to external users; conditions of access (e.g., free of charge, subscription, etc.)**
5. **Legal status information (kind of information, coverage, medium, etc.)**
6. **Other sources**

1. Main types of publications in the field of industrial design information, outline of the content (industrial design applications, design patents, registrations, etc.) and medium (on paper, on CDs, online – (URLs)

The JPO publishes the following official gazettes via the Internet in 2021:

- Publication of Registered Design

- Publication of Decision on Appeal/Trial in Design

The following is the URL of the Publication of Registered Design provided through the Internet.

URL:https://www.gazette.jpo.go.jp/scciidl010/onclickenglishbtn?hyouziFlag=2

*The renewal of the official gazette issuance website for the renewed official gazettes (release of the new official gazette system) was carried out on January 12, 2022.

2. Official Gazettes: main types of announcements, frequency of publication, medium (on paper, on CDs, online – (URL), etc.

Nothing in particular

3. Information products (coverage, medium, etc.) available to examiners, including external documentation and databases

a) Internal databases

See 4. (3) and (4).

b) External database

The external database is not used.

4. Information products (coverage, medium, etc.) and services available to external users; conditions of access (e.g., free of charge, subscription, etc.)

a) Providing patent information via the Internet

a-1) Providing official gazettes via the Internet

See 3. (1)

a-2) J-PlatPat

Refer to p.122(ii) of JPO Status Report.

https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2023/document/index/0203.pdf#page=9

Introduction to J-PlatPat

https://www.inpit.go.jp/english/library/index.html

a-3) FOPISER

In August 2015, the JPO launched the FOPISER a search service to promptly provide the general users with patent information obtained from foreign IP Offices through data exchange with foreign IP Offices. Design documents of Russia, Taiwan, EUIPO, Vietnam and Thailand which are not available on the J-PlatPat, are available for retrieval of document numbers using a Japanese user interface.

b) Providing JPO data

The following types of data is currently provided to commercial providers in Japan by bulk download service on the J-PlatPat.

b-1) New Standardized Data

This data is the JPO's bibliographical and status information converted and processed into TSV format for better usability for external users. The data has been provided since May 2019.

b-2) Publicly Known Design Image File

Document list and image data among publicly known designs, whose use is permitted by the copyright holder, is recorded.

b-3) Japanese Design Classification Reanalysis Data

This is the data in CSV format of the result of reanalysis of some of the registered designs that were assigned the Japanese design classification/D term before the revision of the Japanese design classification, using the revised Japanese design classification.

c)   Reference to design gazettes, etc.

The INPIT has 4 access devices which is available in the Official gazettes reading room in the JPO office building. This allows free public access to the J-PlatPat Service, gazettes on CD-ROM/DVD-ROM, etc.

d)   Reference to examination and trial documents

The INPIT is collecting various technical documents (books, etc.), which are used in the examinations and trials by the JPO, widely from inside and outside of Japan and making them available to the public.

e) Search support tool for Image Design Gazettes (Graphic Image Park)

INPIT started providing "Search support tool for Image Design Gazettes (Graphic Image Park)" using Image Matching technology in October 2015. Graphic Image Park is a tool which enables users to search image designs registered as Design in Japan by just entering image files.

(URL) https://www.graphic-image.inpit.go.jp/

5. Legal status information (kind of information, coverage, medium, etc.)

Legal status information of applications filed in 1964 onwards can be searched on the J-PlatPat by using document numbers such as application numbers and registration numbers, etc. In addition, Alert Service (RSS distribution) to notify of the status information update of designated applications is also available. RSS distribution has been expanded to cover all design applications from 2021.

6. Other sources

Nothing in particular

IV. ICT SUPPORT TO SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Specific software tools supporting business procedures within the Office: general description, characteristics, advantages, possible improvements**
2. **Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office**
3. **Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources**
4. **Establishment and maintenance of electronic search file: file building, updating, storage, documents from other offices included in the search file**
5. **Administrative management electronic systems (register, legal status, statistics, and administrative support)**
6. **Other matters**

1. Specific software tools supporting business procedures within the JPO: general description, characteristics, advantages, possible improvements

In January 2000, a paperless system for design was launched and the administrative and examination procedures were completely moved to a system based on electronic data. Therefore, a total system, covering every procedure from design application filing, formality check and substantive examination, dispatching, registration, publishing the gazette, requesting inspection of files, to requesting certification, was realized. The effect of this system is far reaching, such as more efficient drafting based on the close link between the administrative system and the design search system, more efficient examination by implementation of electronic approval, faster design gazette publication and the separate management of each application.

With the realization of the above system, the JPO started receiving online applications for designs. Since the introduction of the system, the online filing rate has been consistently high.

Refer to p.122(i) of JPO Status Report for information on system improvements.

https://www.jpo.go.jp/resources/report/statusreport/2023/index.html

2. Hardware used to support business processes of the JPO

Servers, network devices, PCs for business use etc.

3. Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources

a)   Design search system

This is a client server-type online system for retrieving application documentary materials and publicly known documentary materials (including foreign design gazettes) by using the Japanese Design Classification and D-terms (search keys that subdivide the Japanese Design Classification), indication of articles (goods), applicant identifying numbers, etc. as search keys. The image data of the document retrieved is sent from the image file server and displayed (color image data is displayed in color) onto the screen of a terminal, for enabling high-speed screening. For an efficient document search, a function is provided to display the design classifications and applicant identifying numbers etc. by the frequency of them coming up as cited references based on past examination results.

As bibliographic data of filed applications for searches, application numbers, filing date, registration numbers, registration date, indication of articles (goods), Japanese Design Classification, D-terms, the International Classification of Industrial Design (Locarno Classification) and others are used. As bibliographic data of other documents for searches, disclosure dates, acceptance dates, publishing date, indication of articles (goods), Japanese design classifications, D-terms and others are used. The data is stored in a database according to the type of materials.

b)   Search System for Appeal/Trial and Court Decisions (J-term search system)

Appeal/trial and court decisions are accumulated in the form of electronic data with a search index, called "J-term" and searching and screening for the appropriate appeal/trial and court decisions are conducted by using "J-term."

In addition, a full-text search service is available for appeal/trial and court decisions issued after January 2000.

4. Establishment and maintenance of electronic search file: file building, updating, storage, documents from other offices included in the search file

a)   File building

The JPO has stored in search files the image data (including color image data) and the bibliographic data (including the Japanese Design Classification and D-term) of designs presented in the following: magazines published in Japan and abroad, catalogs, websites, foreign design gazettes and elsewhere. These are used as the base data for the JPO's design examination.

On January 1, 2000, the JPO started accepting design registration applications on-line. Accordingly, information on designs of which the registration has been applied for is automatically put into the search files. By the end of 2022, the search files accumulated the image data and bibliographic data of about 2.7 million application material and about 9.315 million publicly known designs.

b)   Updating

In 2022, the image data and bibliographic data for about 31,000 applications and about 342,000 publicly known designs were added.

c)   Storage, including mass storage media

The image data is stored on RAID and the bibliographic data on a database.

d)   Documentation from other offices maintained and/or considered part of the available search file

The bibliographic data and image data of design gazettes published by the CNIPA, the EUIPO, the KIPO, the USPTO, and the WIPO are stored, and those data can be searched by using the Japanese Design Classification.

5. Administrative management electronic systems (register, legal status, statistics, and administrative support)

See 4. (1)

6. Other matters

Nothing in particular

V. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AIMED TO SUPPORT USERS IN ACCESS AND EFFICIENT USE OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **Office's library (if deals with industrial design information): equipment, collection management, network of libraries in the country, cooperation with foreign libraries**
2. **Publications related to different business procedures and industrial design information sources available to users, for example, books, brochures, Internet publications, etc.**
3. **Cooperation with universities, technology and innovation support centers, etc.**
4. **Education and training: training courses, e learning modules (URLs), seminars, exhibitions, etc.**
5. **Other activities**

1. Office's library (if deals with industrial design information): equipment, collection management, network of libraries in the country, cooperation with foreign libraries

a) Operation of the JPO Library, collection, and management of materials

a-1) Operation of the JPO Library

The JPO Library, as a branch library of the National Diet Library, is located on the first basement of the JPO office building, and is operated in the following manner:

1. Users

- JPO staff and general users

2. Open

- 9:30 to 17:30

a-2) Collection of materials

The followings are collected: Materials concerning IP right legislation and the peripheral laws inside and outside of Japan, related materials necessary for understanding IP rights, related materials necessary for study of IP rights, and reference materials for general administration.

a-3) Preservation method of materials

The books are labeled and stored with a storage number and classification data, and the bibliographic information is inputted in the library system constructing a database for the books.

2. Publications related to different business procedures and industrial design information sources available to users, for example, books, brochures, Internet publications, etc.

a) J-PlatPat and Graphic Image Park

The INPIT compiles an instruction brochure/manual for how to operate and utilize various search services provided by the J-PlatPat and Graphic Image Park.

URL

https://www.inpit.go.jp/j-platpat_info/reference/index.html

b) e-filing

Useful information on e-filing including how to fill out application forms and FAQs is provided at the "E-filing software support website".

URL https://www.pcinfo.jpo.go.jp/site/

See 3. (4) for information products available to external users.

3. Cooperation with universities, technology, and innovation support centers, etc.

Nothing in particular

4. Education and training: training courses, e-learning modules (URLs), seminars, exhibitions, etc.

a) J-PlatPat and Graphic Image Park training seminars

Training seminars of the J-PlatPat and Graphic Image Park were held online by the INPIT for beginners of industrial property right search from individuals and SMEs. In addition, videos of the seminar were provided through the e-learning system (IP ePlat).

b) Search expert training seminars

The INPIT held the following trainings.

Training for Design Search(Let's get closer to the Examiner's viewpoint!)

The seminar aims at developing human resources, who are capable of effectively protecting product designs by industrial design rights and are properly figuring out scopes of rights after acquisition of rights and utilizing design rights under business strategies. (One time)

5. Other activities

Nothing in particular

VI.INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION

Information on the following topics is desired:

1. **International exchange of industrial design information in machine-readable form (e.g., Official Gazettes)**
2. **Participation in international or regional activities and projects related to industrial design information**
3. **Assistance to developing countries**
4. **Other activities**

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1. International exchange of industrial design information in machine-readable form, e.g., Official Gazettes

a)   Sending Official Gazette on CD-ROM to overseas

In 2015, the JPO exchanged official gazettes, etc. with 56 organizations (including international organizations) in 53 nations, out of which it sent information on CD-ROM Published Registered Design Applications to 23 organizations.

The JPO discontinued sending official gazettes on CD-ROM overseas in March 2015 and is currently providing the data online.

2. Participation in international or regional activities and projects related to industrial design information

The JPO started providing the Design Gazette which carries information about registered design of Japan on a worldwide industrial design information database, "Global Design Database" owned by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), on August 1, 2015.

3. Assistance to developing countries

a)   Activities/cooperation through voluntary contributions (Funds-in-Trust Japan Industrial Property GlobalFIT Japan IP Global) for WIPO

a-1) Workshop on utilization of the WIPO-IPAS, etc.

The JPO supports the holding of a workshop aiming at promoting the spread and use of WIPO-IPAS. In this workshop, staff members of IP Offices in developing countries learn how to use WIPO-IPAS, acquire knowledge about the information that can be referred to in the system and how to utilize it, and lectures are given to deepen awareness of the importance and effectiveness of work-sharing in industrial design examination.

a-2) Digitization support

In FY2022, the digitalization project was implemented in Malawi, Sri Lanka, and OAPI (Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle), and the data validation and other projects were implemented in Eswatini, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and OAPI.

b) Training for IT human resource development

In FY2022, the JPO conducted an online training program to develop human resources for efficient construction and utilization of IT infrastructure in IP offices, and 13 IT personnel from IP offices in developing countries completed the program.

4. Other activities

Nothing in particular

VII. OTHER RELATED MATTERS