

Financial Support for Green Patent Applications



One way that IP Offices can contribute to green innovation is by reducing fees for patent prosecution for companies with green technology solutions. This can apply to green innovative SMEs, or it can apply on a sectoral basis to cover any green innovator.

Another approach is the provision of an IP “voucher” that covers part of the costs of preparing the patent application, without reduction of the fees for the application. Denmark, for example, has this type of program in place. It is applicable to all sectors, with strong representation of the green technology sector among the applicants. The program is reserved for SMEs.

Intended impact

Encourage green innovation, by making it more affordable for green technology innovators to secure patents, especially for SMEs.

Beneficiaries

Companies seeking patents on green technology solutions.

Considerations for implementation

- Reducing fees for green patent applications is a straightforward policy action for IP Offices, although resources for the office could decline depending on uptake by clients.
- An existing voucher program could be easily adapted to expressly include a specific green component, perhaps reserving a portion of the benefits for innovators in green technology. Voucher program administration is more complex than simply reducing fees for patent applicants.
- The criteria for benefitting from these programs needs to be clearly defined if meant to target green innovators. This could be done using classification systems or definitions of what constitutes a “green” solution.