



Canadian Intellectual Property Office 2023–2028 Business Strategy



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CEO message

The Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)'s role in the administration of the intellectual property (IP) system is critical to innovation, technological change and creativity in Canada. A clear vision for the future is essential to ensure CIPO's continued relevance and contributions in the IP ecosystem and its enduring sustainability. Navigating change now and preparing for the future demands agility, efficiency and effectiveness. It relies on the integration of new tools and the transformation of practices and procedures. While every IP office faces different challenges and contexts, all are confronted with a rapidly changing global IP environment. CIPO will work with stakeholders across the IP ecosystem to respond to these changes, reach the goals and objectives of this strategy and provide Canadian innovators and businesses the services and support they need in a rapidly evolving world.

CIPO is proud to be a Special Operating Agency of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED). In 2018, the Government of Canada launched a comprehensive IP Strategy to ensure that Canada's IP regime is modern, supports the commercialization of Canadian innovation and creativity, fosters an ecosystem that supports businesses growing to scale, and ensures that firms have the awareness and incentive to strategically use IP to grow and compete. CIPO is integral to the implementation of the National IP Strategy and advancing innovation in Canada. At the core of our mandate CIPO provides the timely delivery of quality IP rights allowing innovators and businesses to get to market with confidence and in a timely manner.

Over the past decade, CIPO has made great strides internationally, joining 5 international IP treaties that make it easier for Canadian innovators and entrepreneurs to acquire high-quality IP rights in multiple countries and markets and grow their business. Implementation of these treaties represented some of the most important reforms to Canada's IP regime in decades, connecting our IP system to the world.



Konstantinos Georgaras
Chief Executive Officer

CIPO's IP awareness and education initiatives also provide businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators with the IP information needed to make informed decisions on seeking and using IP.

In a global economy that is increasingly focused on innovation and intangible assets, CIPO must continue to ensure that Canada's IP system is modern and connected. We are seeing increasing globalization in IP, a deepening intersection between IP, trade and innovation; the development of interdisciplinary technologies; and changes in the nature of work and the way we do business. With so much change occurring simultaneously, IP offices must ensure that they are agile and robust enough to manage change now and into the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic represented one of the largest societal and economic crises of our generation. It also impacted CIPO's operations and the lives of our employees. Led by their dedication and professionalism, CIPO staff faced the pandemic

and its challenges by being agile and maintaining focus on our core mandate of timely delivery of quality IP rights and services. By surviving and thriving through the COVID-19 crisis we have gained insight into how an IP office must equip itself for the future. It shined the light on our necessity for a robust IT infrastructure; emphasized the importance of engagement with employees, clients and stakeholders; and underscored the need to be nimble, innovative and deliberate in the face of adversity.

CIPO's 2023–2028 Business Strategy lays out the priorities that will guide us over the next 5 years and prepare us for the future. We will remain focused on delivering quality IP rights and services and improving our processes through operational excellence and a modern client service experience. We will continue to foster innovation and competitiveness in Canada by ensuring that the IP system serves the needs of Canadians and that innovators and entrepreneurs know the value of their IP and how to leverage it to prosper and grow. Most importantly, we will strengthen the foundation upon which we are built, by recruiting and developing a diverse and inclusive workforce and equipping our employees with the skills and tools needed to succeed now and in the future.

In developing this strategy, we consulted our employees on CIPO's priorities for the next 5 years and sought input from key government agencies. We held numerous consultations with key stakeholders from across the IP ecosystem who provided valuable insights and feedback on our strategic direction. The vision and priorities established in the strategy have been strengthened through this engagement.

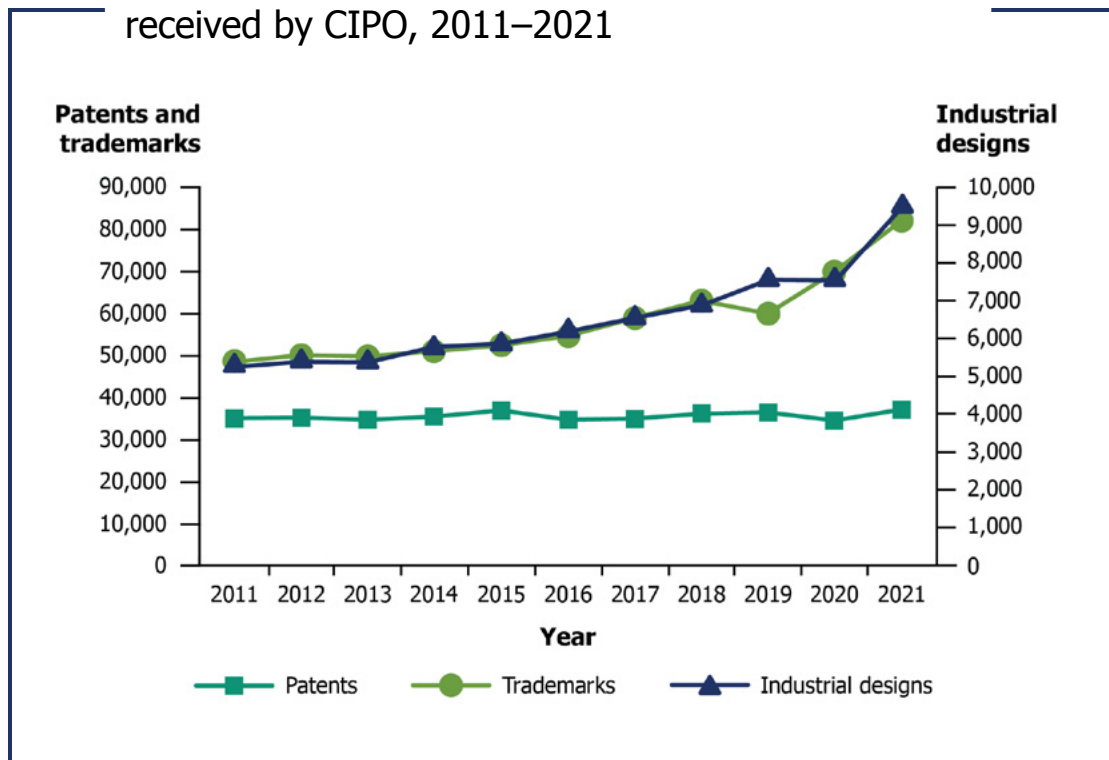
I am proud to introduce the CIPO 2023–2028 Business Strategy, and I look forward to the continued engagement with employees and stakeholders as we meet our challenges and attain our goals to position CIPO as a leading IP office and key contributor in Canada's innovation economy.

The evolving IP landscape

Rising demand for IP

Global demand for IP rights is rising, a trend that was undeterred by a global pandemic and is likely to continue as IP takes on greater prominence in the knowledge economy. Over the past decade, Canada has observed steady growth in applications for trademarks, industrial designs and copyrights. Demand for patent protection has remained consistent, with long-term growth in non-resident applications. The rise in demand may be in part fuelled by an increase in awareness of the value of IP, the growing online presence of companies during the pandemic and by an increasingly brand-conscious society. A well-functioning IP office is fast becoming a cornerstone of successful innovation ecosystems and economic growth.

Figure 1: Patents, trademarks and industrial designs received by CIPO, 2011–2021

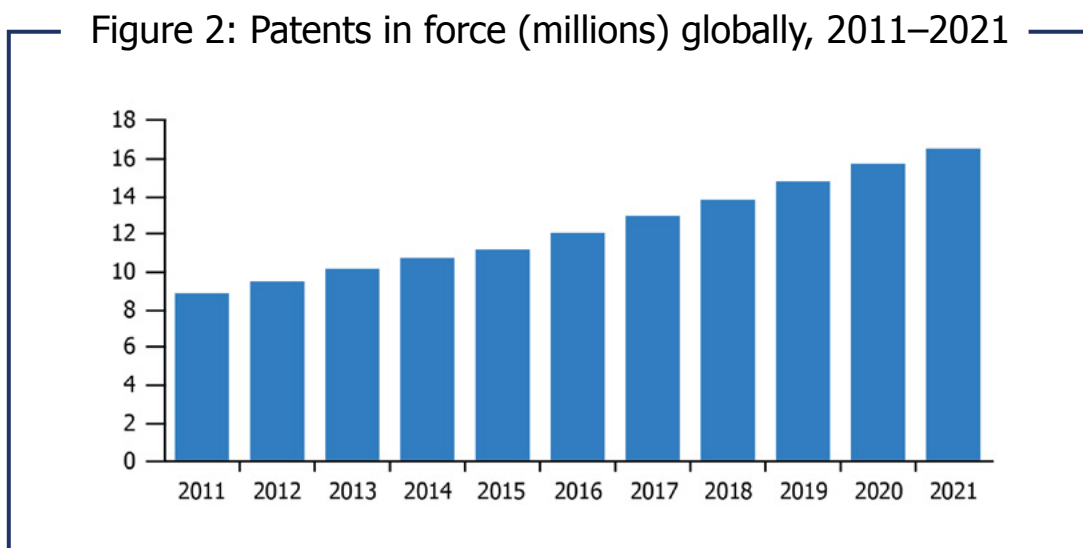




The NASA James Webb Space Telescope is the world’s premier space science observatory. This is a great example of how technology keeps evolving and that, indeed, the sky knows no limit. Source: Cosmic Cliffs in the Carina Nebula (NIRCam Image), <https://webbtelescope.org/news/first-images>

Increasing complexity and pace of technological change

At the same time, new technologies are being developed that are increasingly complex due to the changing nature of innovation. Innovation is becoming more global, interconnected and interdisciplinary, and the pace of change is accelerating. The amount of available IP data is growing at a staggering rate. In 2020, 15.9 million patents were in force worldwide along with 64.4 million active trademark registrations and 4.8 million industrial designs. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a technology area that has garnered considerable interest in recent years, as it can now be used to support IP administration. As innovation continues to evolve, new technologies will emerge that will require IP offices to adapt and will challenge the role of the IP system in creating certainty in the marketplace.



Source: WIPO Statistics Database

The growing role of IP offices in the IP ecosystem

IP offices play a significant role in advancing innovation and economic development. The Government of Canada has recognized the need for an effective IP system and has brought IP to the forefront through the National IP Strategy. We must work with domestic and international stakeholders within the innovation ecosystem to improve the functioning of the IP system and respond to clients' evolving needs. CIPO will support research and innovation in Canada by better understanding IP trends, providing education on the benefits of IP to address gaps in the marketplace and the needs of underrepresented groups and supporting the negotiation and implementation of regulatory, legislative and trade commitments.

Embracing equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility

There is a call to action in Canada's federal public service on anti-racism, equity and inclusion. Despite having made progress to become a more diverse and inclusive society, major advances must be made to tackle racism and discrimination and remove barriers to inclusion. The message extends not only to increasing representation in our organizations but also to understanding the challenges and obstacles faced by the under-represented groups and communities we serve and taking action to address barriers.

Focus on digital service delivery

Like many offices and organizations, CIPO quickly transitioned the majority of its workforce to remote work due to health and safety concerns surrounding COVID-19. To continue operating, some operational processes requiring a physical presence were retooled using technology, resulting in different ways of organizing work and providing service that will have positive and long-lasting effects. The future of work and service delivery will maximize the use of technology, a shift that will improve service quality, office efficiency, productivity and our environmental footprint.



CIPO's 2023–2028 Business Strategy

Priority 1

Timely delivery of quality IP services
through operational excellence
and a modern client experience



Priority 2

Foster innovation
and competitiveness
through leadership
and education

Priority 3

Be a high-performing
organization that is
built for the future



Priority 1

Timely delivery of quality IP services through operational excellence and a modern client experience

Defining success

- **Clients have confidence in their IP rights.**
- **Turnaround times for IP services meet clients' expectations.**
- **Clients have access to e-enabled IP services that are seamless, integrated and harmonized with other jurisdictions.**

What we will do



Render quality decisions that are consistent, predictable and reasonable

- Maintain ISO certification for patent processes.
- Operationalize and support patent practice changes resulting from regulatory amendments (Patent Law Treaty and streamlining provisions) and court decisions by 2024.
- Develop a quality framework and program for trademark and industrial designs examination by 2025.
- Introduce new regulatory authorities regarding the Trademark Opposition Board (cost awards, confidentiality orders, case management, official marks) by 2024.
- Engage with clients and stakeholders to establish relevant quality metrics and regularly report on performance by 2024.



Optimize turnaround times

- Complete implementation of the trademark recovery plan to restore turnaround times to internationally comparable standards by 2026.
- Assess all IP processes to identify efficiency opportunities, simplify administration and streamline operations.
- Reduce trademark inventories and deliver on service standards that meet client expectations.
- Reduce inventories and deliver on service standards that meet client expectations.
- Leverage best practices and operational data to drive process improvement.
- Introduce a CIPO service dashboard that presents data from across all service activities.
- Build and strengthen partnerships with leading IP offices to benchmark and align ourselves with best practices.



Modernize the client service experience

- Implement front- and back-office IT solution for patent processes by 2023.
- Launch front- and back-office IT solution for trademarks processes.
- Design end-to-end digital services with integrated self-service capabilities.
- Equip and empower employees with the training and tools to deliver excellent client service.
- Build an evidence-base of client feedback and operational data to inform service development and improve service delivery.
- Deliver the Client Satisfaction Survey to establish baseline performance and refine service standard targets by 2023.



CIPO is focused on the timeliness and quality of its services and is cognizant of the varying and emerging needs of its clients. With the rapid pace of innovation, businesses and entrepreneurs face an increasing need to protect their intellectual assets in a timely manner. By their nature, innovations in some fields will require longer than others to examine and grant IP protection, and ensuring the quality of these IP rights is paramount. Balancing optimal turnaround times with quality supports a competitive and well-functioning marketplace and provides IP owners with the confidence to operate, knowing their ideas are recognized and protected.



Render quality decisions that are consistent, predictable and reasonable

The primary focus of CIPO's examination process is on providing a quality review. CIPO has established a record of granting and registering quality IP rights, we are committed to sustaining or improving these high levels of service. Having obtained and maintained ISO certification (ISO 9001:2015) for our patent processes since 2017 and through the wider implementation of quality management practices across the organization, CIPO will continue to instill a culture of quality and service excellence. The quality of an IP right is defined by its reliability and consistency in the decision to grant. CIPO's future

efforts will emphasize the quality of written reports, supported by sound reasoning in opinions and consistency in decisions. To address specific quality issues, targeted training will be provided to ensure established procedures are followed and current regulations, policies and impacts of court decisions are consistently applied.

Our quality management approach takes into account adherence to standards, the comprehensiveness of searches and evidence and overall quality of written reports and decisions. By establishing and communicating new quality metrics, CIPO will be able to identify further areas for improvement, increase transparency and achieve more consistent outcomes for clients.





Optimize turnaround times

As the pace of innovation continues to accelerate, so does the demand for timely IP rights. IP rights play a pivotal role in advancing innovation and driving economic growth and competitiveness, and securing protection in a timely manner is paramount. Moreover, Canada's recent adherence to international treaties and implementation of trade agreements have further changed the nature and demand for IP.

As a result of the implementation of 3 international trademark treaties and continued growth in the demand for trademark protection, CIPO is facing significant turnaround time challenges in its trademark operations. The implementation of a modernized legislative framework and the ongoing transformation of business processes has led to a sizeable backlog in the examination of trademark applications. As part of our trademark operational plan, we will increase our examination capacity and leverage IT solutions that bring process efficiencies.

Further, we will continue to expand the pre-approved list of goods and services, both saving time at examination and helping to reduce inventory. CIPO is steadfast in providing the best possible client service. We recognize that a high-quality examination is of utmost importance, and an "optimal" turnaround time is one that serves clients' needs. The focus for CIPO will be on "optimal" pendency and establishing service standards that are predictable and internationally comparable. CIPO is committed to engaging with clients and stakeholders to ensure their needs are well understood and service standards are predictable and transparent.

The streamlining of CIPO's operations is a continued priority and will demand an end-to-end review

of all IP application processes. The emergence of new technologies presents an opportunity for organizations to improve service by bringing efficiencies to their operations. CIPO will seek to take advantage of the benefits of new technologies by introducing tools that expedite the search process for trademarks and preliminary search of patent prior art. As new IT solutions become available, there will be more opportunities to better address the demand for IP, refine business processes and increase efficiency through automation. Further improvement of turnaround times will come from regulatory and legislative amendments. For example, new provisions in Canada's *Patent Rules* will include a request for continued examination requirement and fees for excess claims that will streamline patent applications and reduce patent pendency.

Setting up and maintaining a solid IT infrastructure is critical to the effective functioning of an organization. It is what employees depend on every day to do their jobs and stay connected and is a gateway for doing business with clients. CIPO has begun a multi-year IT modernization plan that makes significant investments in both client-facing and internal infrastructure, giving us greater capacity to deliver services online. Transformation of our IT will be centered on serving business, employee and client needs now and into the future.

The ongoing and continuous improvement of CIPO's processes will require a data-driven approach. Data can provide insights into an organization's operations that allow for more informed decision-making and better service. Tools will be developed and enhanced to enable increased use of operational data to better understand client behaviour and drive business transformation. CIPO will leverage the full value of its data to inform employee training, identify areas for improvement and deliver more consistent service to clients.

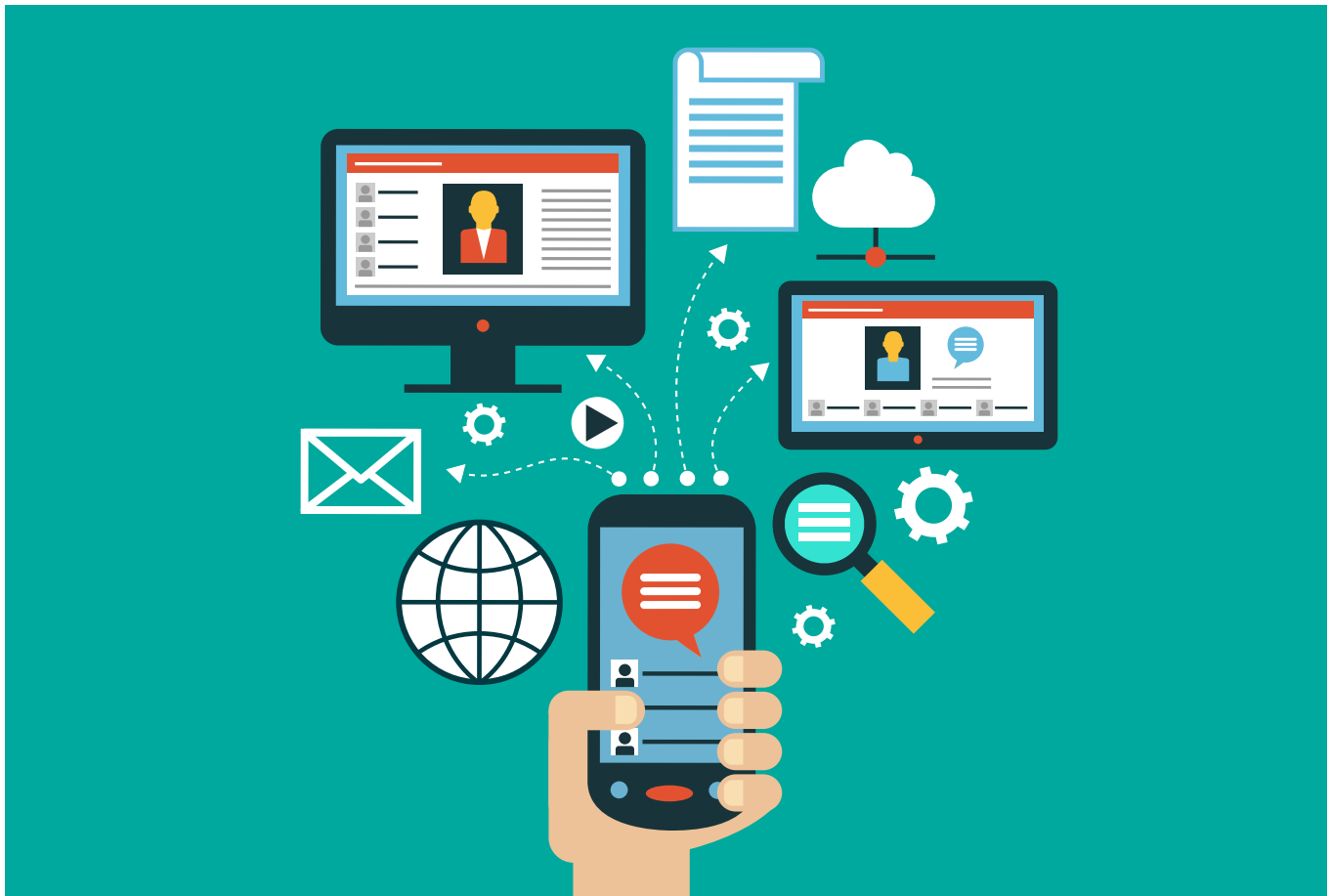


Modernize the client service experience

CIPO prides itself as being an organization dedicated to delivering excellent service. CIPO interacts with hundreds of clients every day to deliver IP services that play an important part in their business's success. We actively engage with both clients and employees to better understand their needs and expectations when it comes to their interactions with CIPO, and we improve service delivery wherever possible. Collecting ongoing service feedback supports continuous improvement and allows us to track client satisfaction as we modernize our business. Clients expect easy access to clear, accurate, consistent and secure IP information and services. More and more, the expectation is that

these services can be transacted online and that resources be available at one's convenience. CIPO's service strategy ensures that the IP services clients receive are e-enabled, timely and accessible. As we continue to build CIPO's digital capacity, enhance our web presence and promote self-service, the client service experience will be integral to the successful implementation of CIPO's future service transformation.

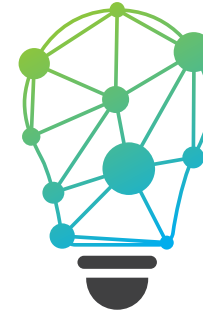
Empowering employees to deliver quality service is central to CIPO's service strategy. Employees are supported by policies, procedures and business processes that promote excellent service. New technologies are changing client and employee's needs. CIPO is focused on what we do and how we operate in support of service transformation and our ultimate goal of service excellence.





Digital transformation and IP

Digital innovation is transforming every aspect of our daily lives, from the way we work, shop, interact and access information and services. Likewise the administration of IP is also transforming from opportunities created by these emerging technologies. As the volume of IP information and data increases, CIPO must evolve its technological and administrative capabilities to enable technological transformation.



In the applications we receive, technology is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary in nature, blurring the lines for IP classification. Moreover, the regulatory environment in which these new technologies are operating continues to evolve.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies as clients have moved dramatically toward online channels. The rapid shift toward digital interactions will drive the way service is delivered and consumed in the future, creating both opportunities and challenges. As CIPO moves away from paper-based processes and legacy IT systems, we will develop user-focused solutions that are nimble, resilient and responsive to the needs of our clients. We aim to expand and continually improve our digital services to make the process of protecting IP as seamless as possible.

A successful digital transformation requires an end-to-end mindset, a creative approach to meeting client needs, seamless interaction between processes and the ability to break silos across the organization. The potential of new and emerging technologies to deliver service and optimize operations is significant. Yet, adapting these technologies to meet specific business needs and integrating them with existing systems is complex. Our IT modernization initiatives look to transform both our tools and processes, increase efficiencies, as well as improve the quality and timeliness of service delivery.

Data will be the key ingredient underpinning our technological change. As a data-driven organization, CIPO will implement a data strategy and establish a chief data steward to develop the evidence base to optimize operational decision-making, inform IP policy and support follow-on innovation. We will treat CIPO's data as an asset and make it accessible, discoverable, usable and shareable. We will also install the proper analytics and intelligence tools to collect, manage, store and analyze our data holdings. Most importantly, CIPO will ensure data is handled ethically and securely and ensure that privacy is protected.



Priority 2

Foster innovation and competitiveness through leadership and education

Defining success

- **Canadians have an increased awareness and knowledge of IP and use it effectively.**
- **There is an improved use of IP among underrepresented groups.**
- **CIPO is a leader in the Canadian and international IP ecosystem.**

What we will do



Increase IP awareness, knowledge and the effective use of IP by Canadians

- Support the National IP Strategy key initiatives through the sharing of information and best practices.
- Employ an evidence-based approach to target setting and refine delivery of awareness and education services.
- Increase the availability and accessibility of digital awareness and education material for the effective use of IP along a lifecycle approach.
- Work with domestic and international partners to understand diversity and inclusion in the society we serve.
- Develop a range of targeted educational resources and tools to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as women, Indigenous and Black entrepreneurs.
- Engage with key partners within the IP ecosystem and grow the IP Village to extend the reach of the awareness and education services.



Provide leadership to improve the IP system in Canada and globally

- Actively engage with domestic stakeholders and government counterparts to promote IP.
- Support the advancement of Canada's international trade and investment priorities.
- Collaborate with international partners to share best practices, represent Canada's interests and advance harmonization of the global IP system.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to IP offices in economically developing countries.
- Establish an IP data and research agenda to support business decision-making, policy development and follow-on innovation.
- Produce IP analytics to inform innovation in key sectors, markets and technologies.
- Publish an annual economic research plan.
- Increase online access to IP data, documents and information holdings.



Canada's IP system functions well, supporting innovation and creativity and making the knowledge protected by IP rights publicly available for others to learn from and build upon. Beyond the administration of IP rights and the dissemination of the information they generate, CIPO plays a critical role in driving innovation in Canada by advancing IP harmonization, supporting the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements and delivering IP education and information to clients and stakeholders. By providing essential IP information, resources and tools, CIPO is making it easier for Canadian entrepreneurs and innovators to grow and expand their business. CIPO also advances Canada's IP interests both domestically and internationally and will remain attentive to the trends that will shape the future of our IP system.



Increase IP awareness, knowledge and the effective use of IP by Canadians

Increasing awareness of IP can support business growth and create opportunities to leverage IP rights to obtain financing or expand into new markets. It is important that businesses understand the benefits of IP throughout the lifecycle of innovation and how IP is an integral part of their business strategy. CIPO contributes to raising IP awareness in Canada and supporting the development and commercialization of IP, through a range of initiatives that help innovators make informed decisions on seeking and using IP. We will pursue an evidence-based approach to refine our suite of service offerings, tailoring them to address the targeted needs of specific client groups (including underrepresented communities) and empower businesses to make more informed decisions about their IP. Analysis from the 2019 IP Awareness and Use Survey has highlighted specific technology fields and IP-intensive industries where the knowledge gap is greatest, allowing us to maximize the impacts of our efforts.

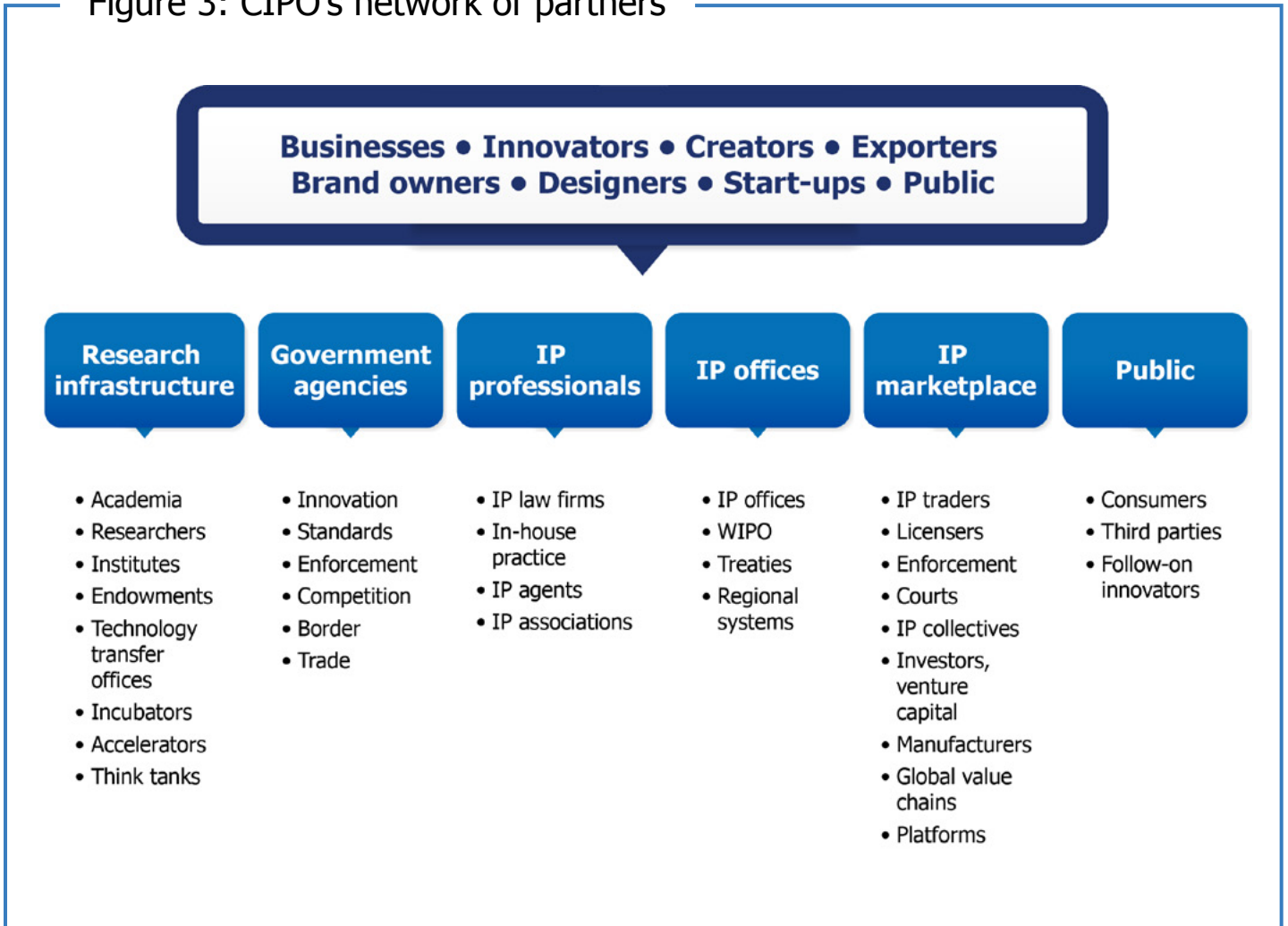
Through its IP awareness and education services, CIPO works to better understand the varying needs of different audiences and client groups and tailor

information and awareness products and services accordingly. Knowledge gaps are identified through interviews, focus groups, roundtables and surveys. Using a "lifecycle" approach to understand the information barriers that innovators and businesses experience, we are able to chart their IP journey, from basic research and discovery to seeking IP, interacting with the office and using IP in the marketplace. Each point along this continuum has different IP information needs for different types of potential beneficiaries of the IP system. Further, CIPO tracks the effectiveness of its educational efforts to understand their reach and impact, measure their performance and inform future service improvement.

Given its unique position within the IP ecosystem, CIPO has developed an extensive network of partners that share an interest in developing the knowledge and effective use of IP by Canadians. CIPO will continue to tap into this network to learn from best practices and leverage existing resources, tools and channels to extend the reach of its awareness activities. CIPO will equip intermediaries such as other agencies, universities and business associations who regularly interface with potential IP applicants with the tools to help make informed decisions on seeking IP, effectively interact with CIPO and benefit from their innovations. CIPO will also deepen its partnerships within the IP ecosystem to better inform and support SMEs and underrepresented groups through the "IP Village" as a common place for SMEs to understand and act on IP matters.



Figure 3: CIPO’s network of partners



The COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the delivery of CIPO’s IP awareness and education services. Many of our existing services that were traditionally offered in person pivoted to online. E-enablement of our service delivery not only allowed service to continue but also was a cost-effective way of expanding our reach and increasing accessibility and self-service. CIPO will adopt a digital-first approach to any new service development and increase the online availability of existing service offerings as it transitions its program delivery to principally electronic means.



Provide leadership to improve the IP system in Canada and globally

Over the past 20 years, IP has played a prominent role in the Canadian economy, bringing IP to the forefront of policy. In 2018, Canada unveiled its first National IP Strategy to help innovators secure and leverage their IP, recognizing the importance of an effective IP system. CIPO is inherently central to this ecosystem through examination and registration of IP rights and delivery of its IP awareness and education program. We will continue to play a key role in the modernization of the IP framework in Canada, providing expert support to the government in developing and implementing IP policies and negotiating and implementing trade agreements.

CIPO's accession to 5 international treaties has created a more level playing field for Canadian innovators and businesses to grow on a global scale. Canada has also benefited from an increase in international applications for IP protection as a result of these harmonization efforts. Moving forward, harmonization will focus not only on the alignment of our legal IP frameworks but also on the harmonization of tools and processes. Together with other IP offices, CIPO will benefit from an exchange of best practices that leads to decreased costs, increased efficiency and quality and an improved experience for clients.

Innovation is global, likewise, IP is global. To ensure that Canadian businesses can grow and succeed beyond its borders, Canada must support improvements to the functioning of the global IP system. CIPO's active international agenda will focus on working through international fora to represent Canada's interests abroad, exchanging best practices, providing technical assistance and advancing harmonization of the global IP system. CIPO has

signed memoranda of understanding with key IP offices around the world and is an active participant at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as well as many multilateral working groups that explore topics including work sharing, IT tools and harmonization of the IP regime. CIPO aligns its international engagement strategy with the Government of Canada priorities to help strengthen the global IP regime, facilitate international expansion for Canadian businesses and improve service delivery.

IP data is increasingly becoming an integral part of innovation, in the diffusion of knowledge, the application of new technologies (i.e. AI, blockchain) and the optimization of operational performance. As a key agency in the innovation ecosystem, CIPO collects and shares IP data and information and supports decision-making on matters of IP through our research and expertise. Our vision is to establish CIPO as a data-driven organization, one that is at the forefront of how it uses and shares data to support business decision-making, policy negotiations and follow-on innovation. CIPO will ensure open access to our data and research to support the dissemination of IP knowledge to Canadian innovators and the users of the Canadian IP system while at the same time paying close attention to important issues around privacy and security of data.

Canada's IP framework must respond to its specific socio-economic and innovation context. In-house research, combined with collaborative enquiry into IP issues with Canadian and international research and policy communities will better inform policy decisions that support innovation and economic success. These lines of enquiry will be aligned with the Government's focus on innovation-intensive industries that will boost Canada's global competitiveness. A strong evidence base comprised of timely and accurate IP analysis will also assist innovators in making decisions that affect the strategic direction of their business.

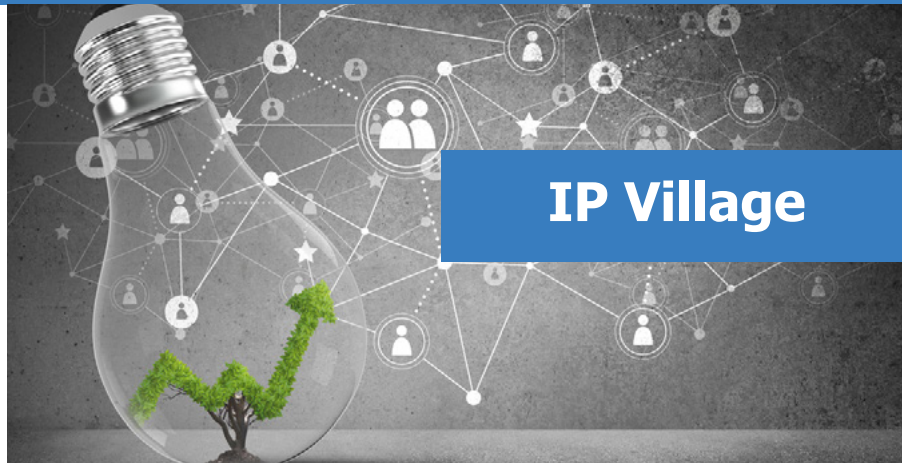


CIPO's IP Research Agenda

As CIPO becomes a more data-driven organization, research and data analysis are fundamental to understanding the factors that impact IP and inform decision-making. For example, research on innovation-intensive technologies is helping to better understand the IP landscape and Canada's position within these important technology fields.

Our gender-based analysis in international patenting is an important research priority. CIPO is working with partners to refine its methodology and leverage newly available data on gender participation from national surveys. CIPO will also continue to apply a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) lens to all aspects of its service offerings and partnerships to ensure underrepresented groups are well supported when it comes to their IP education and awareness needs.

We will also strengthen our involvement in key research committees and collaborate with domestic and international partners to gain insight into current innovation trends, research activities and data-sharing initiatives. CIPO actively engages in discussions with IP offices worldwide through its involvement in the WIPO Economist Network, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development IP Statistics Taskforce and other fora in a joint effort to advance IP research. CIPO will also continue to host its annual IP Data & Research Conference that brings together key players in the area of IP research from across Canada to discuss IP issues and trends.

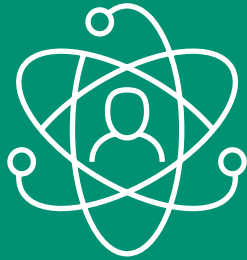


IP is a crucial business tool at all stages of a company's development. The IP and innovation ecosystem is extensive and evolving, and CIPO represents one piece of the puzzle. To help Canadian SMEs better understand how to use IP more effectively, key organizations in the Canadian IP ecosystem have come together to create the IP Village. This initiative enhances partnerships where leadership practices, practical intelligence, best practices, questions and answers are shared.

Successful entrepreneurs need to know how to write a business plan, access capital and tap into industry expertise in order to innovate, identify market opportunities and create an effective market entry strategy. They also need to know how to protect and leverage their IP.

The IP Village will leverage its network of trade commissioners, industrial technology advisors, international business advisors, IP agents and lawyers, IP educators, program officers and investors to help the SME community by:

- coordinating and tapping into their areas of expertise to identify and bridge gaps in the effective use of IP among Canadians and support available for IP-rich SMEs
- developing, presenting and promoting IP education and information
- limiting duplication of effort
- strengthening the ability of all parties to guide Canadian enterprises and connect them with IP information and expertise



Priority 3

Be a high-performing organization
that is built for the future

Defining success

- **CIPO employees are healthy, engaged, connected and productive.**
- **CIPO's workforce is inclusive, diverse and representative of the Canadians we serve.**
- **Management excellence and good governance will create a sustainable position to meet client needs, now and into the future.**

What we will do



Establish a modern and healthy workplace

- Establish a positive and productive workplace culture that fosters diversity, inclusion and mental health.
- Transition to a hybrid work model that promotes the best of on-site and remote work arrangements.
- Create a modern and accessible workspace that provides employees the resources to work effectively and collaboratively.



Recruit and develop a diverse and skilled workforce

- Establish a talent management framework to foster recruitment, engagement, development and succession planning by 2023.
- Promote equitable HR practices for diversity and inclusion with a focus on recruitment and leadership development.
- Recruit the people and identify and develop the skills and competencies needed to succeed now and in the future.
- Foster a bilingual workforce and workplace.



Pursue management excellence

- Review CIPO's fee structure to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Maintain executive oversight and good governance of CIPO's IT modernization initiative.
- Institute a data governance structure to ensure sound stewardship of CIPO's data holdings.
- Modernize CIPO's financial systems.



The overall IP ecosystem proved to be resilient throughout the global pandemic, and many lessons were learned along the way to build back even better. Overnight, the majority of CIPO employees began working from home, and in a matter of months, we made significant digital transformations to our operations, without interruption to service. The necessity of finding solutions laid the groundwork for the CIPO of the future: a modern office that is fully digitally enabled and fosters innovation and success for Canadians. Continuing the shift requires investments in people, IT systems and the workplace as well as the evolution of policies to enable digital transformation. It will also require CIPO to be a more agile and effective organization and to establish more diverse and inclusive HR practices.



Establish a modern and healthy workplace

CIPO takes pride in providing an environment that encourages work-life balance and has long offered telework or alternative work arrangements when operational requirements allow. In defining its “workplace of the future”, CIPO will favour best practices and leverage opportunities to build back better. CIPO will adopt a hybrid work model that balances employee preferences with operational needs and support this new model with the necessary tools and an office design that promotes a healthy, collaborative and connected work environment.

The link between employee well-being, engagement and productivity is well established. Employees who work in a healthy work environment are not only happier but also more engaged, productive and committed to their organization. CIPO strives to create a healthy, positive and productive work environment and a culture that is respectful and conducive to the mental health of its employees at all levels. We are committed to equipping managers and employees with the knowledge and critical resources to talk about mental health and provide the support they need. We spend a good portion of our working lives in the workplace, so it is important to our well-being that our work experiences be positive ones.





Recruit and develop a diverse and skilled workforce

Diversity is one of Canada's greatest strengths and at CIPO, we are taking a deliberate approach to building a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization. Having a diverse workforce promotes innovation by bringing multiple perspectives to the table and positively impacts job satisfaction. CIPO will focus on creating an accessible workplace and increasing the representation of people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities. By prioritizing diversity and inclusion, developing equitable HR plans and embracing learning and cultural awareness, we are setting the foundation for change. This will ensure that we are not only recruiting talented people with diverse backgrounds but also developing them so we may be confident that our progress is enduring and result in a workforce that is representative of the Canadians we serve.

The changing IP landscape is altering our resourcing needs, requiring new skills to deal with new innovations, tools and technology. We must understand the impacts of these changes on our workforce and proactively plan to meet the opportunities they present. That is why it is important that CIPO continues to identify the emerging skills, competencies and attributes our employees need to succeed now and in the future and addresses any gap in skills through recruitment, ongoing learning and continuous development. CIPO will expand training and development opportunities that will ensure all employees have the knowledge, resources and tools, they need to reach their full potential and provide clients the best possible service. Our overall approach to recruitment and development will be strategic and proactive and ensure we can continue to thrive in a rapidly changing environment.

CIPO is proud to be part of Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada. For its efforts on employee recognition, supporting mental health and talent development programs, ISED is recognized as one of Canada's top 100 employers and one of the National Capital Region's top employers. The department is also viewed as one of Canada's best diversity employers with programs aimed at emphasizing equal participation of women in the Canadian economy, Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and the provision of meaningful employment opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities.



Pursue management excellence

Success in the intangible economy is becoming increasingly important and an efficient and agile IP administrative system will be integral to supporting innovation in Canada. As a special operating agency of ISED, CIPO's operations are financed entirely by revenues from our clients. It is vital that we continue to be a well managed and efficient organization that demonstrates sound governance and financial stewardship. To support our continued modernization efforts to improve client service, CIPO will undertake a review of its fees and governance structure to assure the organization is positioned to meet the needs of Canadians now and into the future.

CIPO maintains many established and productive stakeholder relationships, including through formal consultations, regular and ad hoc meetings, working groups and bilateral engagement with partners from across the IP ecosystem. Building on these relationships, CIPO will establish a forum to discuss and share input on topics relating to CIPO's programs and operational policy direction. This forum will include representatives from leading IP associations, business groups and academia with a view to supporting greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of CIPO's mandate.



CIPO – After the pandemic

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, CIPO was faced with many challenges as we continued to deliver on our core mandate of providing IP rights and services. Learning from the experience, CIPO looks to seize the opportunity to evolve and even thrive in the aftermath. Fortunate to have a well-established teleworking capability, CIPO deployed the majority of its workforce remotely. Feedback has been positive, and CIPO looks to leverage hybrid work arrangements in a way that serves both employee and operational needs.

The shift to telework also brought significant technological transformations, resulting in different ways of organizing our work and offering services that will have long-lasting positive effects. More than ever, clients expect to be able to transact online, accelerating the transition to digital self-service. CIPO must continue to meet client expectations in this regard, by expanding its electronic filing and IP issuance services.

Collaboration with domestic stakeholders and international IP offices increased considerably during the pandemic, strengthening the resolve of all involved. Moving forward, we will continue to grow these relationships to learn from each others' experiences and share best practices. By focusing on our core mandate, embracing digital transformation and connecting with employees, clients and stakeholders, CIPO is equipping itself to be successful now and into the future.

