



Canadian Intellectual Property Office

Annual Report 2022–2023



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PDF catalogue no.: Iu71E-PDF

ISSN: 1702-935X

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Message from the CEO



Konstantinos Georgaras
Chief Executive Officer

I am pleased to introduce the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)'s Annual Report for 2022–2023. It was another successful year and this report presents the details of our achievements. After nearly 3 years of working from home due to the pandemic, 2022–2023 saw the gradual return of many of our employees to in-person work. Our teams put in some incredible effort to facilitate the transition to a hybrid model and we continued to invest in upgrading our infrastructure and modernizing our workplace.

The timely delivery of quality intellectual property (IP) rights remains central to what we do and we are continuously improving. This year, we introduced regulatory amendments to the *Patent Rules* to streamline the examination process and reduce unnecessary delays in prosecution. We expanded the list of pre-approved goods and services in the Goods and Services

Manual for trademarks and prioritized the examination of applications using the list, reducing the number of pending applications awaiting examination. New image recognition software tools were introduced to the industrial design examination process, resulting in a measurable reduction in the time spent on search and examination activities. These changes are just some of the many improvements implemented this year that aim to increase the efficiency and timeliness of the IP application process.

CIPO is focused on delivering an online service experience that is modern and responsive to our clients' needs. This year, we made substantial improvements to our e-services, resulting in a more efficient and seamless experience for clients. Significant efforts were put into the integration of client- and employee-facing systems, reducing the back-and-forth with the Office and improving the quality of our services. In the coming years, CIPO will continue to focus on replacing its legacy tools and systems, and modernizing digital services through self-service and process automation.

Over the past year, CIPO continued to deliver IP awareness and education services, building on the digital and virtual approaches that were instituted during the pandemic and increasing outreach through our existing partnerships and collaborations. We further added to our suite of digital tools with new e-learning modules to assist Canadian businesses and entrepreneurs in unlocking the value of their IP.

Working together with leading IP organizations from across the country on the "IP Village" has also provided a forum where thought leadership practices, practical intelligence and best practices are shared.

On the international stage, CIPO renewed and established new memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with international partners to advance IP issues of mutual interest, and we continued to be an active member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), helping to strengthen IP regimes worldwide and ensure the best possible service for CIPO clients and Canadians.

With the Government of Canada having chosen a hybrid model for the return of employees to the workplace, we had an opportunity to reimagine what our work environment might look like. CIPO is committed to providing employees with a modern and dynamic workplace that supports well-being, fosters

collaboration and enables high-quality service. Further, employing the necessary skills and competencies will be crucial in what is an ever-changing IP landscape. CIPO recognizes the importance of recruiting and developing a skilled and diverse workforce, and we have made a conscious effort to prioritize equity, diversity and inclusion as part of our recruitment and development strategies.

With an eye to the future, we are strategically aligning our resources to our operational service needs. To account for not having adjusted our fees in nearly 20 years, we have proposed an increase to fees for most CIPO services. The updated fees will allow us to continue serving clients with excellence and efficiency, while ensuring our long-term financial sustainability.

I am very proud of the work we have accomplished over the past year. We are laying the groundwork for the CIPO of the future—a modern office that is an integral part of the IP ecosystem. I look forward to the future as we continue to foster innovation and success for Canadians and make Canada a global centre for innovation.

About CIPO

CIPO is a special operating agency of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and is responsible for the administration and processing of IP in Canada. We have more than 1,000 employees and operate under a revolving fund authority. Our accountabilities are maintained through this annual report to Parliament, an annual private sector financial audit and our client service standards.

Areas of activity

Patents

A patent is a legal right to prevent others from making, using or selling an invention for up to 20 years. The invention can be:

- a product (e.g. a door lock)
- a chemical composition (e.g. a chemical composition used in lubricants for door locks)
- a machine (e.g. a machine that makes door locks)
- a process (e.g. a method for making door locks)
- an improvement on any of these

Trademarks

A trademark is used to distinguish the goods or services of a person or an organization from those of others. It can be any of the following or a combination thereof: words, designs, tastes, textures, moving images, modes of packaging, holograms, sounds, scents, 3-dimensional shapes and colours.

A registered trademark provides exclusive rights to use the trademark for a term of 10 years (renewable) and protects it under law from misuse by others.

Industrial designs

An industrial design comprises the visual features of shape, configuration, pattern or ornament, or any combination of these features, applied to a finished article. In other words, it is about how something looks. An industrial design registration provides exclusive rights for up to 15 years and protects a product's unique appearance.

Copyright

Copyright is the exclusive legal right to produce, reproduce, sell, license, publish or perform any of the following, as long as it is an original:

- literary work
- artistic work
- dramatic work
- musical work
- sound recording
- communication signal
- performance

Unlike other IP rights, a copyright subsists in an original work from the moment it is created. Generally, copyright protection lasts for the lifetime of the author, plus 70 years after their death. In Canada, a certificate of registration of copyright is evidence that copyright exists and that the person registered is the owner.

As of December 30, 2022, the general term of copyright protection in Canada changed from 50 to 70 years after the death of the author. The change to the term of copyright protection was not retroactive, meaning that it was only extended for works that were not already in the public domain. In other words, if the copyright in a work had already expired as of December 30, 2022, the extension of the copyright term did not apply.

Geographical indications

A geographical indication identifies a product (such as wine, spirits, agricultural products or food) with a specific geographical origin and a quality or reputation attributable to that origin. The term of protection for a geographical indication is indefinite.

Business priorities

In February 2023, CIPO released its 2023–2028 Business Strategy, setting the organization’s vision and priorities for the next 5 years. CIPO’s new strategy maintains a focus on providing the timely delivery of quality IP rights and services, and on improving processes through business and technological transformation. CIPO 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. Finally, CIPO will further strengthen its foundation through a modern, healthy and inclusive workplace, and by recruiting and developing a workforce that is skilled and representative of the diversity of Canadians we serve. Supported by strong management practices and good governance, CIPO will secure its sustainability and readiness to fulfill the evolving needs of its clients for years to come.

Priority 1: Timely delivery of quality IP services through operational excellence and a modern client experience

- Render quality decisions that are consistent, predictable and reasonable
- Optimize turnaround times
- Modernize the client service experience

Priority 2: Foster innovation and competitiveness through leadership and education

- Increase IP awareness, knowledge and the effective use of IP by Canadians
- Provide leadership to improve the IP system in Canada and globally

Priority 3: Be a high-performing organization that is built for the future

- Establish a modern and healthy workplace
- Recruit and develop a diverse and skilled workforce
- Pursue management excellence

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

2022–2023 by the numbers



Patents

40,702 applications (↑ 3%)

- ▶ Chemistry: 15,863 (↑ 19%)
- ▶ Electrical engineering: 5,740 (↓ 11%)
- ▶ Instruments: 6,153 (↓ 9%)
- ▶ Mechanical engineering: 8,240 (↓ 1%)
- ▶ Other fields: 4,706 (↓ 3%)

52,601 requests for examination (↑ 77%)

22,305 grants (↑ 14%)

32.5 months, on average, from request for examination to grant (up from 30.8 months in 2021–2022)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Figure 1: 2022–2023 top patent applicants

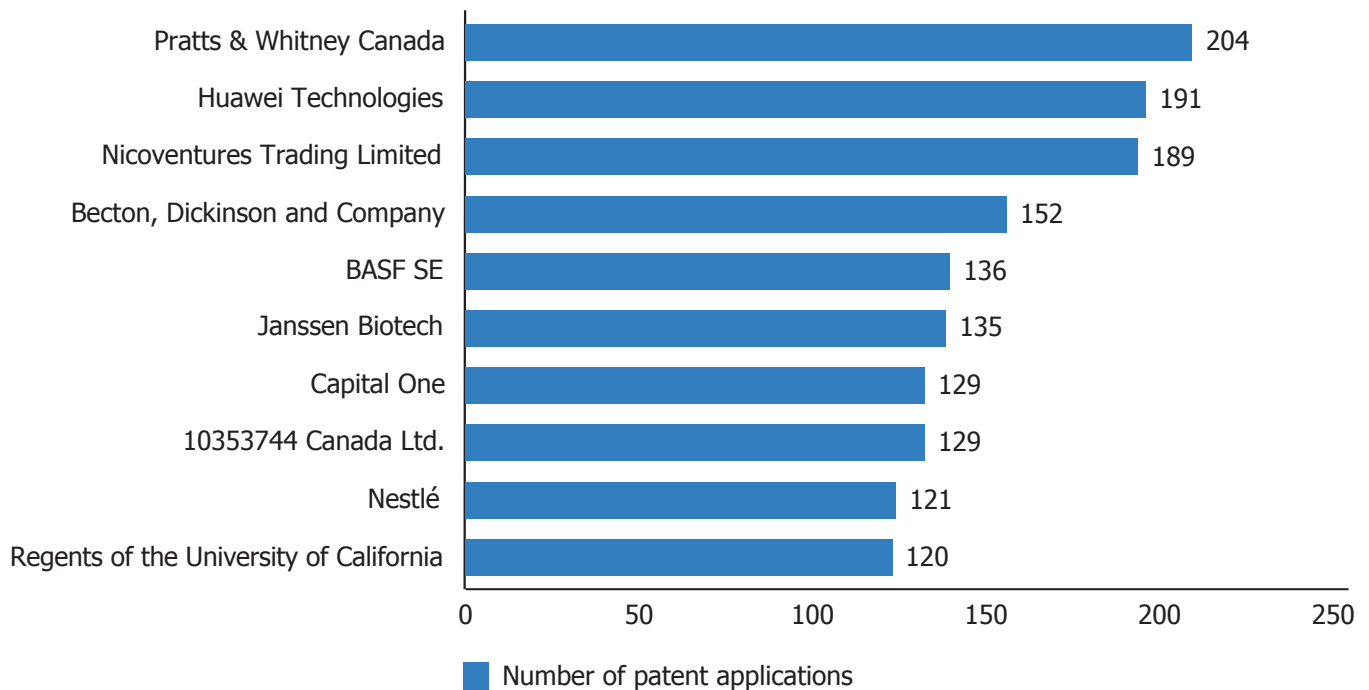
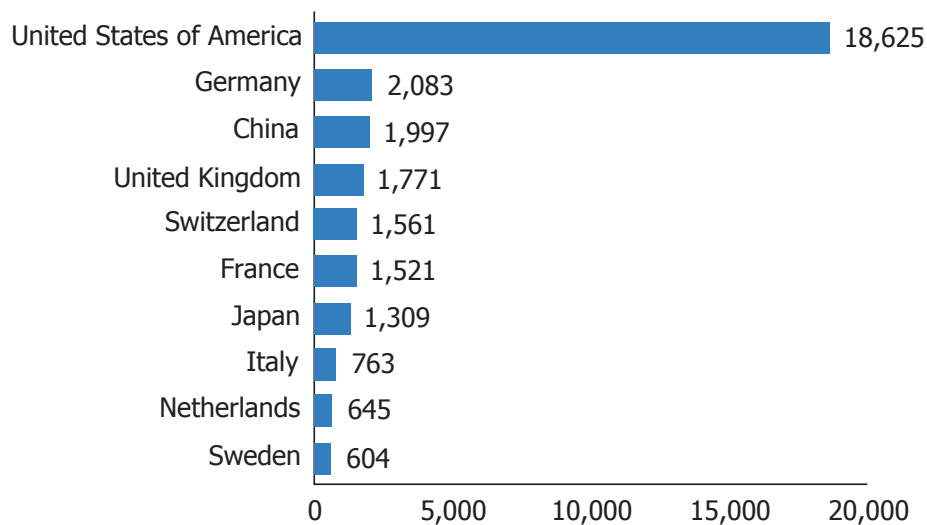
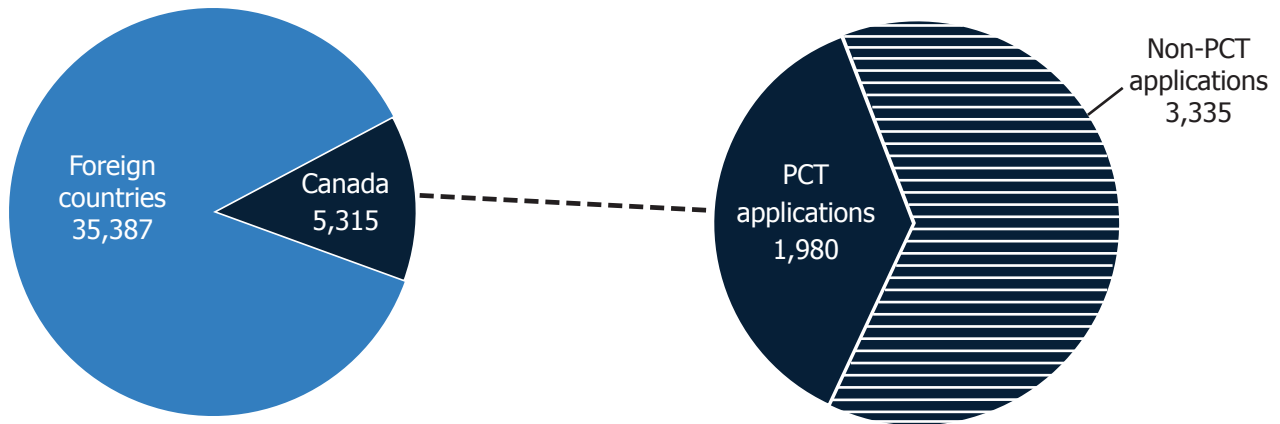


Figure 2: Country of origin of patent applications

Note: PCT = Patent Cooperation Treaty



CIPO received 2,420 International Searching Authority applications and 145 International Preliminary Examination Authority applications

Patent Appeal Board

24 rejected patent applications received at the Patent Appeal Board (PAB) (↓ 33%)

27 Commissioner's decisions rendered by PAB (↓ 50%)

24.8 months, on average, for issuing a decision on an appeal (down from 29.1 months in 2021–2022)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Trademarks

72,445 applications (↓ 9%)

Type of mark

- ▶ Standard characters: 47,431
- ▶ Design: 24,620
- ▶ Colour: 115
- ▶ Multi-type: 115
- ▶ Three-dimensional: 94
- ▶ Taste: 14
- ▶ Mode of packaging goods: 8
- ▶ Sound: 16
- ▶ Position: 17
- ▶ Texture: 3
- ▶ Motion: 7
- ▶ Hologram: 1
- ▶ Scent: 3

49,261 registrations (↑ 81%)

33.8 months, on average, from filing to registration (down from 35.7 months in 2021–2022)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Figure 3: 2022–2023 top trademark applicants

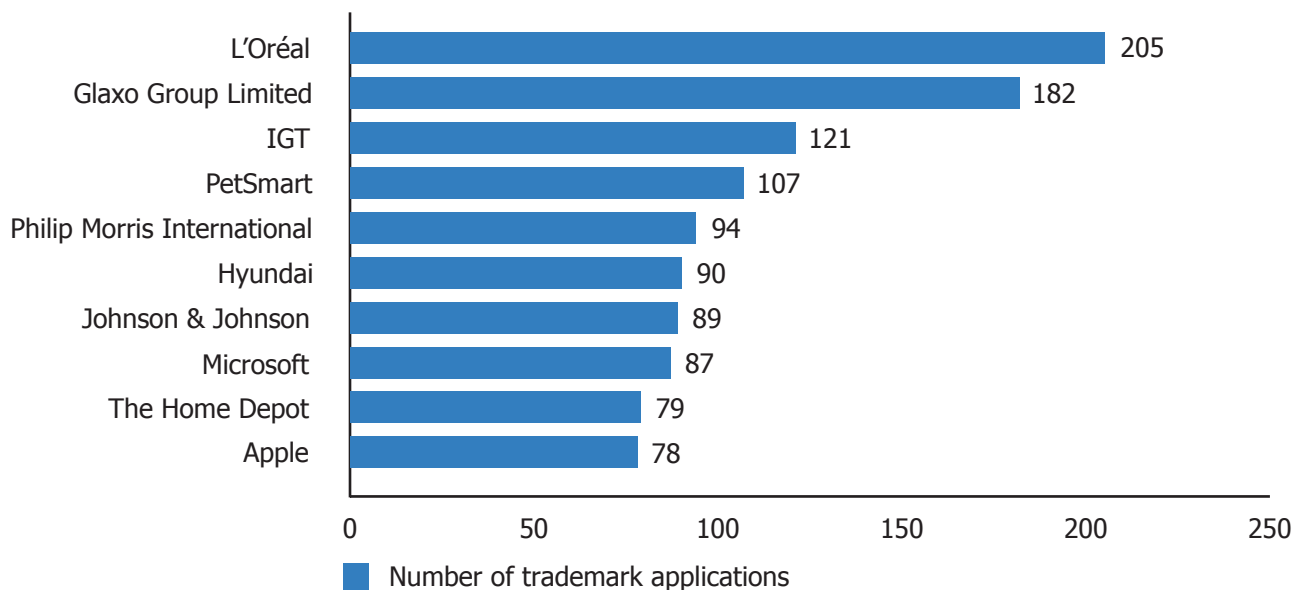
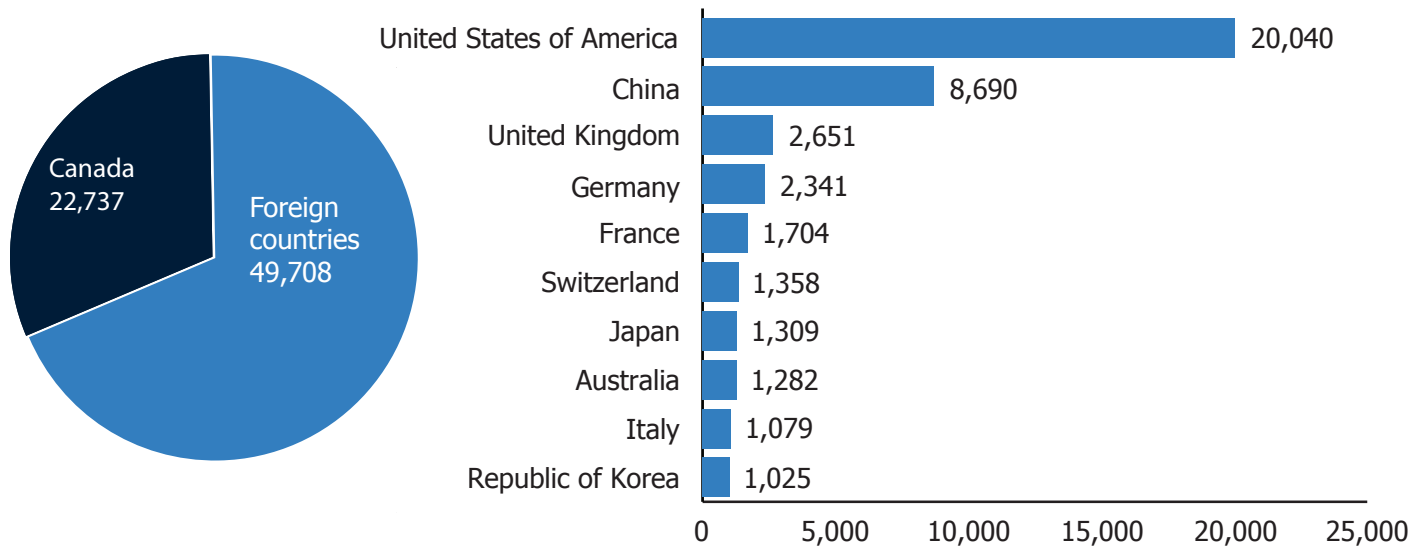


Figure 4: Country of origin of trademark applications



Use of the Madrid Protocol

23,682 international trademark applications received through the Madrid System (↓ 4%)

885 trademark applications for international registration certified by CIPO as an office of origin (↓ 20%)

Trademarks oppositions

980 oppositions (↑ 61%)

- ▶ 88% did not require a hearing or decision
- ▶ 77 opposition hearings held (↑ 57%)
- ▶ 129 opposition decisions rendered (↓ 11%)

745 requests for expungement (section 45) (↑ 35%)

- ▶ 57% of trademarks automatically expunged since no evidence of use was filed by the registered owner
- ▶ 56 hearings held (↓ 11%)
- ▶ 161 section 45 decisions rendered (↓ 71%)
- ▶ 191 files awaiting a decision from the Trademarks Opposition Board

11 months, on average, to schedule a hearing (down from 19 months in 2021–2022)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Industrial designs

8,895 applications (↓ 2%)

9,307 registrations (↑ 39%)

15.6 months, on average, from filing to allowance (down from 16.4 months in 2021–2022)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Figure 5: 2022–2023 top industrial design applicants

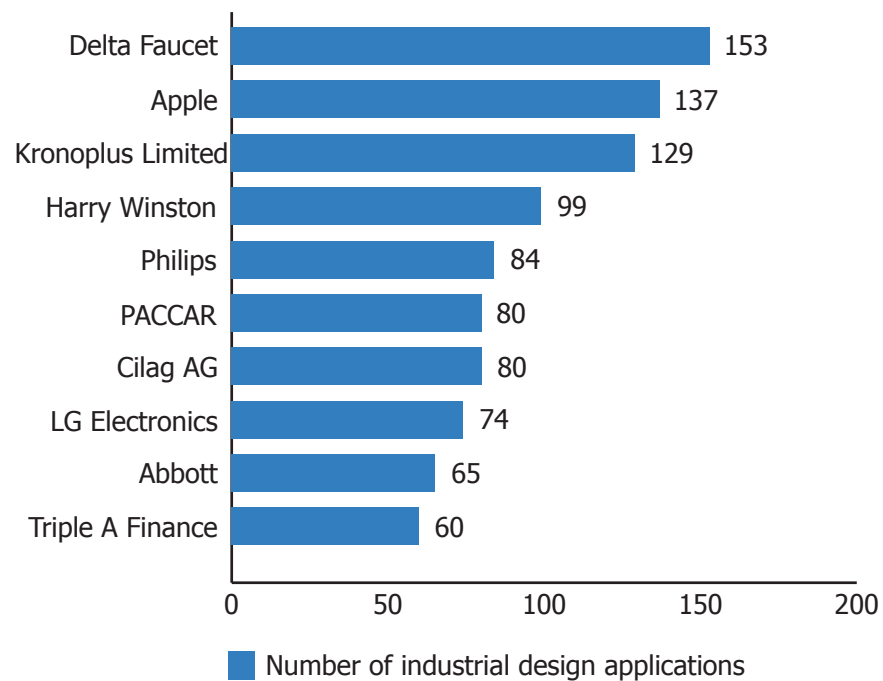
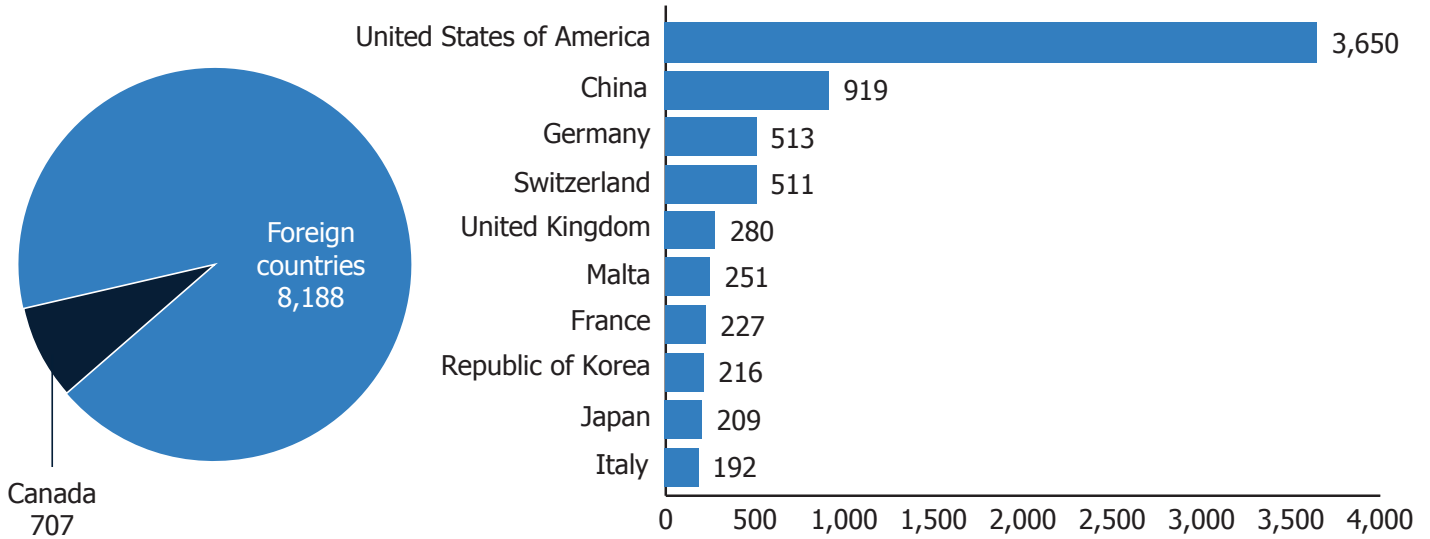


Figure 6: Country of origin of industrial design applications

Note: Figures for industrial design applications do not include designs filed at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) that have not yet been received in Canada.



Use of the Hague Agreement

3,713 international industrial design applications received under the Hague Agreement (↑ 10%)

Copyright

8,873 applications (↓ 21%)

- ▶ Literary: 4,204
- ▶ Artistic: 1,066
- ▶ Dramatic: 1,199
- ▶ Musical: 766
- ▶ Combination of literary, musical, dramatic or artistic: 1,146
- ▶ Sound recording: 442
- ▶ Performance: 43
- ▶ Communication signal: 7

8,827 registrations (↓ 21%)

↓ Decrease from 2021–2022

↑ Increase from 2021–2022

Figure 7: 2022–2023 top copyright applicants

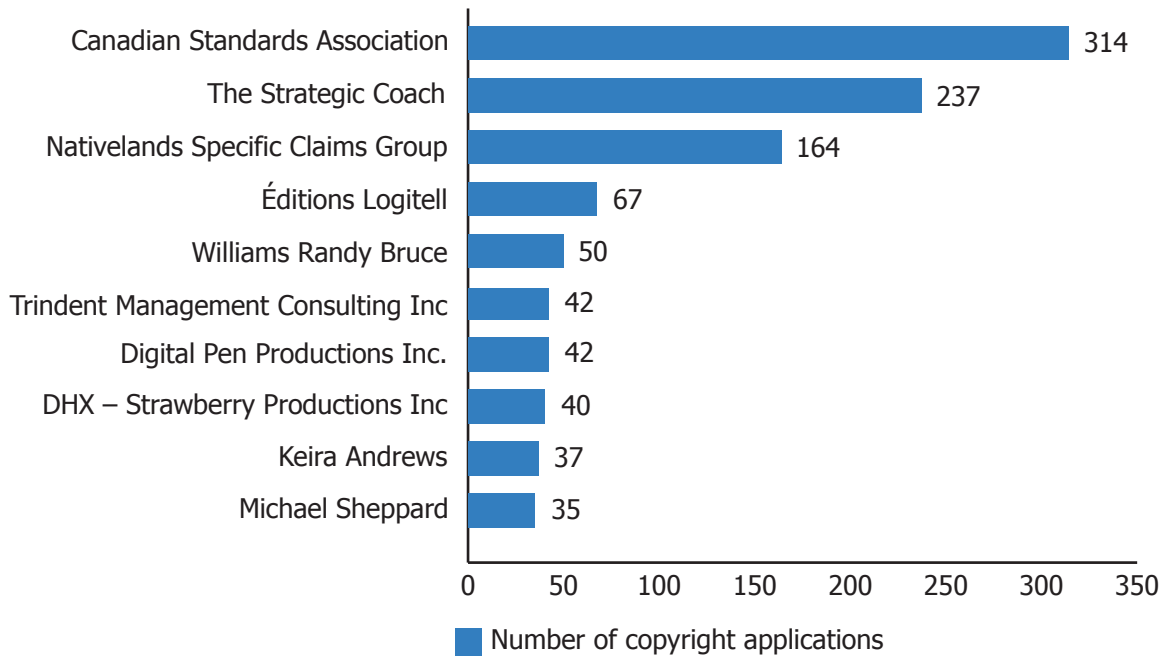
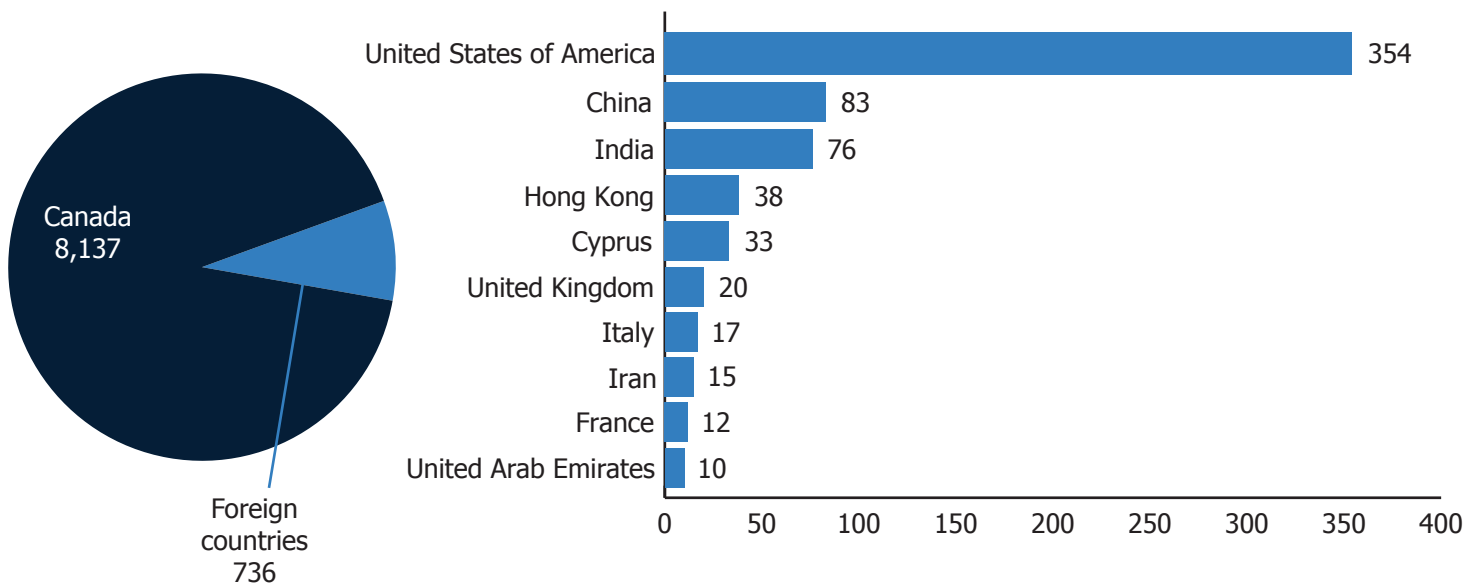


Figure 8: Country of origin of copyright applications



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

CIPO's number one priority is the timely delivery of quality IP services. In an economy that is becoming increasingly dependent on intangible assets, it is crucial that innovators and businesses have the certainty and confidence to invest in their ideas and bring them to market. CIPO strives to deliver quality IP rights in a timely manner, while offering a seamless and client-focused service experience that is digitally enabled and efficient. Our clients' needs are at the forefront of service development and we consider their perspective at every step of the IP journey. In the past year, CIPO implemented a host of measures to ensure that our services are modern, streamlined and of the highest quality. These measures include expanding our online services, automating our processes and integrating cutting-edge technologies like machine-learning and artificial intelligence in the examination of IP.



Render quality decisions that are consistent, predictable and reasonable

In June 2017, CIPO was awarded ISO 9001:2015 certification for its patent processes from the International Organization for Standardization. CIPO has maintained this certification through successful external surveillance audits, affirming our commitment to the highest standards of quality. In March 2023, CIPO was successfully ISO recertified for its patent processes, further demonstrating its commitment to continually improving its quality management system (QMS). By maintaining this certification, CIPO's Patent Branch has demonstrated to an independent third party that it continues to have an operational and effective QMS that meets the requirements of this international standard.

The Manual of Patent Office Practice (MOPOP) sets out CIPO's administrative and examination practices with respect to patent applications and related procedures, and is an important resource for clients and patent examiners alike. The MOPOP helps our clients navigate the patent system more effectively and make informed decisions when filing and prosecuting a patent application. It also provides a consistent and transparent framework for patent examiners, helping ensure that patent applications are evaluated in a consistent and unbiased manner. The MOPOP's accuracy and continued relevance to the patent system is assured through regular reviews and updates. In 2022–2023, several chapters of the MOPOP were revised to ensure compliance with the new sequence listing requirements of the WIPO Standard 26 (ST.26), and to provide guidance on new mechanisms to streamline examination, safeguards for applicants and patentees, and other amendments in alignment with the amended *Patent Rules*.

CIPO's Goods and Services Manual (GSM) is a searchable database that facilitates the selection of appropriate terms to accurately describe the goods and services for which a trademark registration is sought. The terms included in the GSM have been pre-approved by CIPO and are organized in a manner

consistent with the internationally recognized Nice Classification system. This past year, CIPO continued to improve and expand the GSM to meet the needs of clients and stakeholders. A dedicated mailbox was created in April 2022, making it easier for agents and stakeholders to recommend additions to the GSM. To align with the accepted terms of our major trading partners, CIPO initiated a comprehensive review of the TM5 ID List, a database containing the terms commonly agreed upon by the world's 5 largest trademark offices. Further, CIPO sought to incorporate terms that were consistently accepted in previous trademark registrations but not yet included in the GSM. Finally, in partnership with the Ontario government, CIPO collaborated with Ontario's automotive sector to expand the terms included in the GSM to better reflect the industry. As a result of these initiatives, CIPO added a total of 78,361 new entries to the GSM since April 2021, leading to improvements in quality, consistency and productivity in the trademark examination process.

CIPO promotes transparency and accountability for clients by providing easy access to information about service standards and performance information on its website. CIPO's patent quality dashboard presents an overview of the latest patent quality statistics, including metrics on the quality of examiners' reports, applications proceeding to allowance and search reports. To offer a more comprehensive representation of CIPO's levels of service, performance targets for patent quality were also established in addition to existing performance targets for timeliness, and published on CIPO's performance target web page.

Optimize turnaround times

In recent years, CIPO has been grappling with a mounting backlog of trademark applications and lengthier processing times, due partly to a surge in filings following Canada's accession to the Madrid System for international trademark registration in 2019. In response, CIPO launched a multi-year recovery plan aimed at reducing the number of pending applications,

streamlining the trademark registration process and aligning processing times with those of our major trading partners. The plan centres on leveraging process efficiencies, improving online services, adopting international best practices and attracting and retaining qualified examiners through targeted recruitment and career development opportunities.

CIPO has already implemented a number of measures to improve efficiency and turnaround times for trademarks, including expanding the list of pre-approved goods and services in the GSM and prioritizing the examination of trademark applications using this list. Applications filed online using the GSM pre-approved list require less time to examine, and 70% of these applications are approved without the need for a first report. This not only leads to reduced turnaround times for trademark registrations overall, but also results in a lower volume of incoming responses from clients, which ultimately contributes to a more efficient examination process. Additionally, CIPO introduced an automated pre-assessment process for all pending domestic trademark applications, which identifies potential issues related to goods, services or Nice Classification. To incentivize the use of the GSM pre-approved list and reduce objections during the examination stage, CIPO began sending automated letters to applicants, informing them of whether or not potential issues related to goods, services or Nice Classification had been identified and highlighting the benefits of submitting an amended application using the pre-approved list of goods and services.

In January 2022, CIPO confirmed that trademark application number 2,152,699, which had a filing date of September 14, 2021, would be the last file available for examination as a “paper file.” All applications filed after this date are scanned and only made available to examiners electronically by way of a digital IP file. In support of this initiative, CIPO introduced the electronic research sheet, which enables the creation of a digital version of the existing research sheet used by examiners to record objections.

DesignVision from Clarivate™ is an AI-based search tool that utilizes image recognition software, enabling

examiners to efficiently search, in a single database, millions of industrial design prior art based on visual similarity. In April 2022, CIPO introduced this innovative tool to its industrial design examination process, resulting in a measurable decrease in the time spent on search and examination activities, as well as reducing the industrial design application backlog. CIPO also finalized the migration of industrial design system applications and related content to a new IP document and file management system. This web-based file repository offers industrial design examiners immediate access to applicant files and electronic documentation through a secure interface, saving time that can be passed on to clients.

Trademark recovery: An update on improvements

Since the implementation of CIPO’s trademark recovery plan, examination efficiency and productivity have significantly increased, reducing the trademark examination backlog and turnaround times. In 2022–2023, CIPO conducted a record number of trademark examinations (74,986 first actions including an examiner’s report or approval) and issued its largest number of approvals in history (53,332). The inventory of domestic applications awaiting an examination was successfully reduced to 153,466 in March 2023.

On October 3, 2022, amendments were made to the *Patent Rules* to streamline the patent examination process and reduce unnecessary delays in patent prosecution. Changes included new fees for excess claims and limits on the number of examiner reports. Additionally, conditional notices of allowance (CNOA) for applications with minor defects were introduced. When an application is in a condition for allowance except for certain minor defects—such as those relating to margins, line spacing and font size—the Commissioner will send a CNOA to the applicant requiring the correction of these minor defects by

amendment or argument, and payment of the final fee. These regulatory changes will help to increase the efficiency and timeliness of patent processes.

CIPO continued to promote the use of the Patent Examination Interview Service, which allows examiners and clients to communicate by telephone to correct minor application defects for patents that are likely to be granted. In an effort to further increase efficiency and productivity while fostering a greater sense of contribution and belonging, CIPO also launched the Great Ideas Database. This new employee feedback mechanism captures innovative ideas, tips and tricks related to patent examination and processes. The employee “ideas” are recorded and shared with the appropriate group for assessment and potential implementation.

The Patent Appeal Board (PAB) is responsible for hearing and resolving appeals from applicants who disagree with an Office decision made during the patent examination process. Its role is to provide an independent and impartial review of the examination decision in accordance with Canadian patent law and regulations, and ensure consistency and fairness in the examination process. In 2022–2023, the PAB received 29 rejected patent applications, down from 36 in 2021–2022. On average, the turnaround time for issuing a decision on an appeal was 24.8 months, down from 29.1 months the previous year. To reduce turnaround times for patent appeals, PAB implemented 2 new processes to improve operational efficiency and reduce the inventory of rejected patent applications awaiting a decision. A “fast track” process was introduced for eligible cases where applicants do not respond to the preliminary review letter. For these cases, the Commissioner’s decision is short, concise and entirely based on the content of the preliminary review letter. This reduces the effort and time associated with writing a decision, and subsequently the time needed for panel or peer review. Further, a process was introduced whereby an applicant may indicate their intention to allow their

case to go abandoned, allowing for the removal of the rejected application from the active inventory and reducing overall turnaround times.

Incoming correspondence at CIPO

The Incoming Correspondence Unit (ICU) is where correspondence is received at CIPO, whether it is sent electronically, by mail or by fax. On average, the ICU receives 13,500 patent correspondences in a month. However, in September 2022, the ICU received in excess of 25,000 patent correspondences in advance of legislative changes to examination fees that came into force on October 3. Despite an initial delay of 28 business days in processing patent correspondences, the ICU addressed this surge by increasing its capacity through internal reallocation, overtime, staffing and through collaboration with internal partners to streamline processing. By January 2023, the backlog was eliminated entirely, and service levels had returned to the established 3 business day standard.

Modernize the client service experience

CIPO strives to deliver online services that are modern, responsive to changing legislation and practices, and that meet our clients’ needs. The Information Technology Modernization (ITM) program is a multi-year initiative that is transforming how CIPO does business by modernizing our digital services, internal tools and systems.

In recent years, significant efforts were put into achieving a smoother bilateral flow of data between our client-facing and employee-facing patent systems. The integration of systems has resulted in a more streamlined experience for both clients and employees,

reducing back-and-forth with the Office, decreasing the likelihood of data entry errors and correction requests, and incentivizing the use of e-services. In 2022–2023, CIPO achieved full integration of 2 additional service requests: Request for Examination and Request for Advanced Examination. In coming years, CIPO will further focus on replacing its legacy tools and systems, and modernizing digital services through self-service and process automation.

The Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) allows applicants to accelerate the examination of a patent application in a participating country by allowing the use of examination results of a corresponding application filed in another participating country. CIPO has established PPH partnerships with 25 IP offices worldwide under a global PPH pilot program, as well as with 5 IP offices through bilateral PPH pilot programs. In the past year, CIPO enhanced its PPH online application form by simplifying entry fields, adding help and hover text to facilitate form completion, and allowing applicants to sign the form electronically.

Over the past year, CIPO made significant strides to improve trademark e-services, resulting in a more efficient and seamless experience for clients. A key enhancement gave clients the ability to create and update an agent account for correspondence in real time, allowing for greater control over their accounts. In addition, the Trademarks Office and Trademarks Opposition Board added electronic correspondence as an option for clients who prefer to receive correspondence via email. Furthermore, CIPO introduced the Trademark Document Retrieval Service, providing clients with instant online access to all trademark and Trademarks Opposition Board correspondence, making it easier to stay informed about the status of an application or an opposition or section 45 proceeding. Initiatives such as these not only reduce CIPO's operational costs and environmental footprint, but improve turnaround times for clients and decrease the potential for lost correspondence.

In 2018, Canada joined the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs. At the time, CIPO elected to delay the implementation of a system to receive and process

renewals received from WIPO, since renewals would be due 5 years from the registration date—therefore in 2023 at the earliest. In July 2022, CIPO implemented a system that enables the automatic processing of international renewals, partial renewals and corrections to renewals received from WIPO, and reconciles the financial requirements for such requests.

In March 2023, in addition to being able to submit amendments to basic application information, CIPO expanded the suite of services available within its Industrial Design E-Services application. New transaction types were introduced, including the ability to change an agent or applicant name or address, and request a refund. Clients now have access to a more personalized and on-demand service experience, which simultaneously alleviates the workload of operational staff, mitigates the risk of errors and expedites the process of granting industrial design rights. As part of ongoing efforts to enhance its digital services, CIPO will introduce additional transaction types to its Industrial Design E-Services, such as requests for a delay of registration, advanced examination, as well as appointment and revocation of agents.

In an effort to enhance transparency and accessibility, the names of the members or hearing officers presiding over these hearings are now included to the online calendars for Trademarks Opposition Board hearings. This addition to the online calendars aligns with CIPO's commitment to promote transparency in its operations and ensure that relevant information is easily accessible to all interested parties.

Understanding the importance of preserving its rich history and making it accessible to Canadians, CIPO initiated a legacy document scanning project to digitize a significant inventory of legacy information holdings. The project encompasses a range of resources including index cards, trademarks journals, microfiche and microfilms, ledgers, and Canadian Patent Office Records. Once completed, these digital files will be made available on the CIPO website, and physical formats will be disposed of as appropriate. CIPO also took the initiative to digitize its collection of historical annual reports dating from 1867 to 1995, which will be eventually published on the Publication Canada website. With approximately 100 requests annually

for historic IP data, it became increasingly important to preserve and facilitate search and retrieval of these valuable legacy reports, which were in a fragile state. These initiatives will improve access for our clients as well as reduce our physical footprint and associated cost.



Foster innovation and competitiveness through leadership and education

CIPO plays a pivotal role in supporting innovation and competitiveness in Canada by promoting awareness, knowledge and use of IP. Our extensive data holdings and research products support businesses in their decision-making, inform policy development and drive follow-on innovation. We also provide leadership in advancing Canada's IP interests and improving the IP system both domestically and internationally through ongoing collaboration with our many partners and stakeholders.



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

In 2022–2023, CIPO continued to deliver IP awareness and education services mainly through digital and virtual approaches, with a mandate to help Canadian businesses, entrepreneurs, creators, innovators and underrepresented groups, such as women and Indigenous peoples, make informed decisions about IP and recognize its importance to business growth. CIPO has successfully pivoted towards more digital IP awareness and education tools and resources and is focused on increasing IP outreach through existing partnerships and collaborations, and continued development of the IP Village.

CIPO took steps to enhance its IP awareness and education presentations by introducing more information on common IP questions that businesses face, and practical insights for protecting IP. We also launched a web optimization initiative to enhance the accessibility and ease of finding tools on the CIPO website. In addition, we continued to add to our suite of digital tools, which now include a new e-learning module on IP commercialization. These resources were designed to assist Canadian businesses and entrepreneurs in unlocking the value of their IP by using it strategically when growing to scale.

This year, CIPO delivered a number of webinars to the general public, empowering individuals and organizations with the knowledge and tools to navigate the complex world of IP. The IP awareness and education team hosted and participated in over 250 webinars, training sessions and events, attracting an audience of more than 3,500 participants from across Canada. The webinars covered a wide range of topics, including the basics of IP, IP strategies and commercialization, and how to apply for IP abroad.

The inaugural season of Canadian IP Voices, a podcast series where experts and IP lawyers explore real-life scenarios of IP at work, was positively received. Twenty episodes were released in both English and French on a range of topics including data and AI, open source

software, counterfeit products, IP in the academic sector and plant breeders' rights. The second season, launched in October 2022, features topics such as the difference between a corporate name and a trademark, the role of incubators in supporting innovators, the FIFA World Cup, and more.

To celebrate World IP Day 2022, CIPO partnered with the Rideau Hall Foundation to offer a webinar that explored this year's theme—IP and Youth: Innovating for a Better Future. CIPO also published 3 IP success stories highlighting the work of young entrepreneurs at Omy Laboratories, Clean Valley CIC and Roll Up, who have been supported through Futurpreneur, a not-for-profit organization, and are making a difference through their innovative work.

CIPO extended the reach of its IP awareness and education program through virtual means. This has enhanced our ability to serve our extensive regional and national networks of partners and collaborators, and businesses, including underrepresented groups. Presentations and training sessions were provided to national partners such as the National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Research Assistance Program, Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Trade Commissioner Service and CanExport program, and various ISED programs. In addition, MOUs were renewed with Corporations Canada and the Department of National Defence's Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security. These continued partnerships will help ensure that CIPO's IP awareness and education efforts reach their targeted audience.

To help Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) understand how to use IP more effectively, leading IP organizations in the country have come together to establish the IP Village, a working group where thought leadership, practical intelligence, best practices and questions and answers are shared. The IP Village is a joint effort between CIPO, the Business Development Bank of Canada, GAC's Trade Commissioner Service, the Intellectual Property Institute of Canada, the National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Research Assistance Program,

Export Development Canada and ISED. After the successful delivery of IP Talks, a webinar series that covers the typical lifecycle of IP, the IP Village launched a LinkedIn account to share trusted IP tools and resources with followers on a regular basis. Moreover, the IP Village launched IP Insights, a 4-part panel series that delved into IP topics of particular pertinence to companies that specialize in commercializing data, clean technologies, medical technologies and consumer products. Expert panelists with backgrounds in legal, regulatory, industry and funding, shared lessons learned, highlighted key challenges to entering the industry, discussed unwritten rules and provided tips to avoid common mistakes.

CIPO remains steadfast in its commitment to support underrepresented groups such as women, Black and Indigenous entrepreneurs, and to foster inclusivity and diversity within the entrepreneurial community. This year saw CIPO's active participation in an Indigenous IP roundtable organized by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. The roundtable brought together Indigenous entrepreneurs and IP experts to discuss Indigenous innovation and the importance of IP in protecting traditional knowledge and cultural expressions. CIPO also collaborated with ISED's Indigenous Employee Network to deliver presentations on "Engaging with Indigenous Peoples" to partners including ISED and Parks Canada. CIPO's IP advisors were vital in supporting ISED's Indigenous IP Program, providing guidance to several entrepreneurs who had applied for a grant. Presentations were also made virtually to the Africa Centre, a council dedicated to the advancement of African Canadians in Alberta, as well as to the Innovation Information Forum: Black Business Edition and the Black Business Association of British Columbia. Our IP advisors also met with more than 120 women entrepreneurs across the country and delivered presentations to regional partners such as Alberta Women Entrepreneurs, TechAlliance and the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs.

CIPO's in-person presence at conferences and events resumed gradually this year. Our IP advisors participated in events including: Inventures in Calgary, AB; AgSmart in Olds, AB; Atlantic Venture Forum in

Halifax, NS; Energy Disruptors: UNITE in Calgary, AB; Stratégies PME in Montréal, QC; CASI ASTRO 2022 in Montréal, QC; West Coast Business Forum in Vancouver, BC; WeaveSphere in Toronto, ON; and Propulsion Québec in Montréal, QC. Presentations and training were also delivered to various regional organizations, such as Startup Montréal, Invest Ottawa, l'École des entrepreneurs du Québec, TechAlliance, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Calgary Economic Development, and NorthLight Innovation, as well as multiple universities across the country. Further, IP advisors met virtually with over 550 entrepreneurs and innovators to provide tailored IP resources and answer their IP-related questions.

Provide leadership to improve the IP system in Canada and globally



Kathi Vidal, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and Konstantinos Georgaras, Chief Executive Officer of CIPO, signing Canada's first-ever memorandum of understanding with the USPTO.

CIPO is a signatory to more than 20 MOUs with other countries and organizations that promote cooperation and improve the functionality of the international IP

system. Over the past year, CIPO renewed MOUs with France's Institut national de la propriété industrielle (INPI) and the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property, and signed new MOUs with the IP offices of the United States of America, Chile and Korea.

In February 2022, the bilateral Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) pilot program between CIPO and INPI was initiated, allowing clients to accelerate the examination of their patent applications in the partner country. In April 2022, to promote the 3 bilateral PPH agreements that INPI signed with Canada, Brazil and the United States, INPI organized a webinar titled "NOUVEAUX ACCORDS PPH : Accélérer sa délivrance de brevet." CIPO's participation in the webinar sought to promote the use of the PPH, a filing option that provides greater convenience for Canadian clients seeking patent protection in France.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is the premier forum dedicated to advancing economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. One of the key entities under the APEC umbrella is the APEC IP Rights Experts Group (IPEG), which coordinates and conducts work related to IP rights. CIPO leads Canada's participation in the IPEG and works closely with other IP offices in the

region to promote dialogue and cooperation on IP-related issues. In 2022–2023, CIPO participated in an APEC–IPEG project titled "Women and Patents in the APEC Region: Current Situation, Performance and Challenges" through a survey and virtual workshop. The project's objective is to understand the relationship between women and patents in the region and to promote policies that support women in utilizing patents to foster gender equality and economic growth.

The G7 Heads of IP Office Conversation is a forum for leaders of IP offices in G7 countries to discuss issues of mutual concern related to IP. In December 2022, CIPO participated virtually in the Conversation, which was hosted by the German Patent and Trade Mark Office and attended by representatives from Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the Director General of WIPO. The Conversation focused on 2 main topics: establishing a positive culture of IP and fighting counterfeiting and piracy. Following the event, a joint statement was released, emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues through coordinated international efforts, multilateral approaches and IP education and awareness.

The Vancouver Group (VG) is a collaborative initiative between the IP offices of Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. By fostering regular engagement among VG members, our offices can share information and experiences on common issues related to managing medium-sized national IP offices, as well as identify potential areas for cooperation. In July 2022, heads of offices convened for an in-person meeting to discuss recent office developments and assess collaboration efforts. At the operational level, VG offices held numerous meetings and discussions on topics of shared interest, such as hybrid work, conflict of interest and improving the IP office. Additionally, VG's economic and analytics experts actively engaged in roundtable discussions on research and data developments. The research teams continuously exchange ideas and explore areas of common interest to better understand the business drivers of IP engagement.



Konstantinos Georgaras, Chief Executive Officer of CIPO, and Dr. LEE Insil, Commissioner of the Korean Intellectual Property Office, signed a memorandum of understanding between CIPO and the Korean Intellectual Property Office.

Established in 2018, the VG Searching Working Group (VGSWG) aims to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by our respective offices and strengthen the IP system through international collaboration and information-sharing on search tools and practices, quality and training. To accomplish this, the VGSWG identified 5 project streams for cooperation, including search tools and databases, search collaboration workshops and a comparison of manuals of search practice, search quality and search training. In 2022–2023, the VGSWG successfully concluded these projects and continued to share information and best practices on several topics, including the handling of private inventor cases, Cooperative Patent Classification implementation, training and quality assessments, citations of non-patent and Asian literature in examiner reports, and post-pandemic work arrangements.

In July 2022, CIPO participated in the WIPO Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of Member States (GA) held in Geneva, Switzerland. This year's GA marked the resumption of in-person meetings with our international counterparts after a 2-year pause due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. During the GA, CIPO played an active role in advancing discussions on: emerging economic and innovation trends in the post-pandemic era; best practices for IP office operations in a post-pandemic world; efforts to better understand artificial intelligence-related issues; and the importance of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility within IP offices.

For over 35 years, WIPO has served as the hub of discussions on patent law harmonization. In 2005, WIPO established Group B+ to promote and facilitate progress of substantive patent law harmonization and in 2014, a sub-group was created to further advance work on select topics. Since then, private-industry groups and professional IP associations have drafted, in parallel, various position papers on patent law harmonization. In summer 2022, as a member of Group B+, CIPO conducted a public consultation with Canadian stakeholders to gather their perspectives on harmonization proposals advanced by private-industry groups and IP associations, notably on the harmonization of the grace period, prior user rights and the approach to conflicting applications.



Canadian delegation at the WIPO Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of Member States in Geneva. From left to right: Patrick Blonar, Director, Copyright and Trademark Policy Directorate, ISED; Scott Vasudev, Director, Patent Policy and International Affairs, CIPO; Christine Piché, Director General, Corporate Strategies and Services Branch, CIPO; Konstantinos Georgaras, Chief Executive Officer, CIPO.

The WIPO Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) was established in 2007 to ensure that IP rights and systems contribute to development in countries around the world, especially those with limited resources or capabilities to develop their own IP frameworks. In 2022–2023, CIPO participated in the 28th and 29th sessions of the CDIP along with Global Affairs Canada, and was invited to speak and contribute to a discussion on the methodology for the evaluation of the Development Agenda (DA) Project on Tools for Successful DA Project Proposals.

The 25th CIPO–WIPO Annual Executive Workshop on the Application of IP Management Techniques was held in May 2022. This virtual 2-week workshop provided senior officials from Ethiopia, Ghana, Lebanon, Malawi, Mexico and Saint Lucia a unique opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills in management techniques, share experiences and ideas, and gain first-hand experience of CIPO's IP expertise, products and



Vancouver Group Heads of Office meeting in Geneva. From left to right: Konstantinos Georgaras, Chief Executive Officer, CIPO; Tim Moss, Chief Executive Officer, UKIPO; Michael Schwager, Director General, IP Australia.

services. The workshop also featured a research component. Following the workshop, participants had 10 weeks to apply their newfound knowledge to specific concerns in their respective IP offices and complete a research project of their choice.

In November 2022, CIPO attended the 46th Session of the Administrative Council of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), which was held in the Republic of Mozambique. Additionally, in December 2022, CIPO participated virtually in the 62nd session of the Administrative Council of the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) held in Cameroon. Through our bilateral MOU with the OAPI and in our capacity as a bilingual IP office, CIPO was also invited to provide educational training to SMEs in OAPI member states. To that effect, CIPO conducted 2 webinars in May and October 2022 on the strategic use and commercialization of IP, helping to strengthen our relationships with OAPI member states. By offering technical assistance to senior officials from developing countries, promoting capacity development and fostering good governance practices, CIPO upholds its obligations under the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement.

The International Trademark Association (INTA) is a global association of brand owners and professionals dedicated to supporting trademarks and IP. Over the years, CIPO has formed an active and well-regarded relationship with INTA, formalized by an MOU signed in 2018. CIPO is a strong contributor to INTA's IP Office of the Future Think Tank, which offers a thought-provoking and holistic reflection on what an IP office (IPO) might look like over the next 10 to 20 years. In November 2020, the "The IPO of the Future" report was published, followed by the release of "The IPO of the Future Checklist" in November 2022. The Checklist distills the original recommendations into a concise format to facilitate discussion and practical application.

The International Patent Classification (IPC) system is a standardized classification system for patents recognized by WIPO. The IPC groups patents according to the technical fields and subject matter they relate to, and is used to facilitate patent searching and retrieval, and to promote the exchange of technical information. In collaboration with the European Patent Office, INPI and the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property, CIPO is leading the revision of the IPC classification schedules, as well as translating into French and verifying translations of the revised schedules. In recognition of CIPO's dedication and efforts as a rapporteur and translator of IPC revision and maintenance projects, WIPO gave CIPO the considerable honour of being the vice-chair for 2 IPC working group meetings.

CIPO also participated in the Women in IP meeting organized by the USPTO in March 2023. This 3-day global exchange, which coincided with the United Nation's International Women's Day, focused on developing strategies to overcome gender disparity and support women in the IP system. Backed by over 35 IP offices and organizations, the USPTO published a joint statement noting the importance of diversity in innovation and creativity, and the incredible value that women bring to economic progress worldwide. During a panel discussion on staff exchanges, representatives from CIPO and the Namibia IP office discussed a CIPO-led mentorship initiative that promotes peer-to-peer exchanges by matching CIPO executives with their counterparts from developing countries to establish

and implement a project of their choice in their home country. On the subject of demographic data collection, CIPO shared best practices in collecting demographic data through surveys and in-house data analytics, and emphasized the importance of fostering a healthy and inclusive work environment. CIPO also presented on the success of the Canadian Patent Law and Examination Workshop, a 7-day workshop where guest examiners from other IPOs visit CIPO to learn the particularities of Canadian patent law and examination practices.

Strengthen Canada's IP framework

To enhance communication and cooperation with Canadian IP stakeholders, CIPO and representatives from the Intellectual Property Institute of Canada collaborate through 3 committees: the Patent Practice Committee, the Trademark Practice Committee and the Industrial Design Practice Committee. These committees convene a few times a year to identify and address issues relating to IP practices and services by identifying solutions and implementing innovative policy approaches that support the delivery of quality IP rights. Last year, key topics discussed included CIPO's trademark recovery plan, court decisions affecting patent and trademark law, changes to examination guidelines, and initiatives to enhance IP awareness and education.

In 2022–2023, CIPO made changes to the *Patent Rules* to meet Canada's international obligations under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). On July 1, 2022, amendments came into force to ensure compliance with the sequence listing requirements of the WIPO Standard 26 (ST.26), providing uniformity in sequence listings presented in patent applications and clarifying sequence disclosures. The new ST.26 uses an improved data structure in XML format, enabling automation and data validation for IP offices, and improving sequence disclosures for researchers and searchability of future patent applications. On October 3, 2022, further amendments took effect to streamline the patent examination process. These amendments will enable CIPO to process patent applications in a more efficient and

timely manner as set out in CUSMA, with a view to avoiding unreasonable or unnecessary delays that could lead to patent term adjustments.

The *Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No.2* (Bill C-86) amended the *Trademarks Act* by introducing new provisions which, when in force, will give to the Registrar of Trademarks the authority to award costs, grant confidentiality orders and practice case management in proceedings before the Trademarks Opposition Board. These new provisions will also create a simple and efficient mechanism for the removal of public notice of official marks in specific circumstances. These changes seek to modernize and improve the efficiency of IP dispute resolution. CIPO conducted online consultations to canvass opinions from stakeholders who would be impacted by the amendments to the *Trademarks Regulations*. Stakeholder feedback was generally supportive of the proposed changes to the *Trademarks Regulations* and of the new proposed practice notices.

This fiscal year, CIPO and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada extended their MOU on the respective roles and responsibilities in the administration of the geographical indication (GI) system for wines, spirits and agricultural products and food. The MOU, which has been extended another 5 years until June 2027, supports the administration of an expanded system for the protection of GIs following Canada's implementation of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement in September 2017.

Foster innovation through data and research

IP data and research play a crucial role in innovation, helping businesses and innovators monitor market trends, identify new opportunities and make informed decisions about the development and commercialization of new products and services. CIPO is dedicated to advancing research to inform decision-making across the IP ecosystem.

CIPO's Data & Research Agenda serves as a comprehensive 5-year plan that outlines the objectives, strategies and timelines for CIPO's data

and research activities. In addition to being a valuable management tool, the Agenda addresses the pressing questions of policy makers on IP and innovation topics, and provides transparency about the current and future work of CIPO. The Agenda is regularly updated with new data and research projects.

In March 2023, CIPO published its IP Canada Report 2021, providing a comprehensive overview of IP activity in Canada and abroad by Canadians. It included key IP trends in patents, trademarks, industrial designs and plant breeders' rights. The Report also included special research sections on awareness and use of IP among Canadian firms, and on the growth in standard essential patent inventions. It highlighted resilience in IP filing activity in Canada in spite of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with growth in patents, trademarks and industrial designs.

IP Horizons is an online platform that provides bulk access to publicly available IP information based on patent, trademark and industrial design applications filed with CIPO. In 2022–2023, the IP Horizons platform was improved to provide patent image data in multi-paged TIFF format, including cover pages, patent descriptions, claims and drawings, among other elements. In parallel, CIPO updated its client feedback survey to gather evidence-based insights on client IP data needs and preferences, informing future product development.

In April 2022, WIPO published a new open-access book titled "Global Challenges for Innovation in Mining Industries," to which CIPO contributed a chapter on innovation in the Canadian mining sector. It was a collaborative effort between CIPO and the Centre for International Governance Innovation, that

provides a lens into the patenting efforts in the Canadian mining sector, including: trends, landscape maps and collaborations. Notably, it highlights the importance of IP protection in promoting innovation and competitiveness. CIPO also contributed a chapter to the WIPO eBook "Resilience and Ingenuity: Global Innovation Responses to Covid-19," launched in July 2022. The book sheds light on how the pandemic reshaped the innovation landscape of major economies and how scientists, entrepreneurs and creative professionals responded to the crisis. CIPO's contributions included a description of trademark trends in Canada during the pandemic's first year, using a natural language processing technique that analyses the words used in applications. This cutting-edge technique provided valuable insights into the factors that bolstered CIPO's trademark filings during the first year of the pandemic.

Standard essential patents: Insights from patent data

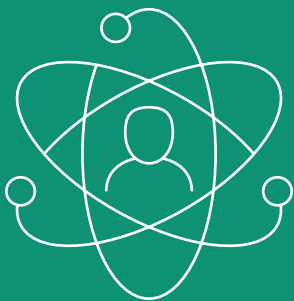
Standard essential patents (SEPs) are patents that protect the technologies necessary for compliance with industry standards. To provide clients and Canadians with a deeper understanding of the importance of SEPs, CIPO published a blog post entitled "Standard Essential Patents: Insights from patent data" that highlighted the evolution of SEPs led by Canadian and international institutions, using a newly acquired dataset—PatentVector. This study provided valuable insights into the distribution of SEPs by standard-setting organizations, prominent countries, along with their leading filers, and the overall global patent landscape.

The study revealed that between 1990 and 2018:

- close to 23,000 SEP inventions were identified globally, with an average annual growth of 16%
- the European Telecommunications Standards Institute accounted for 17,491 SEP inventions or 78% of the total number of SEP inventions
- Chinese, American and Japanese institutions were among the top filing countries of SEP inventions; With 1,041 inventions, Canadian entities accounted for approximately 4.6% of all SEP inventions worldwide

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

CIPO's ability to deliver excellent IP services and play a pivotal role in the innovation ecosystem hinges on the expertise and dedication of its employees, sound governance practices and responsible financial stewardship. CIPO is committed to offering employees a modern, healthy and inclusive workplace, and recruiting and developing a skilled workforce that is representative of the diversity of the Canadian population we serve. As we operate in an ever-evolving intangible economy, it is critical that Canada's IP system remain agile and efficient to support innovation.



Establish a modern and healthy workplace

At the onset of the pandemic, CIPO moved quickly to equip employees to work remotely. Telework has long been a part of CIPO's work model, with most of our examiners already working from home prior to the pandemic and some as far back as 1993. In the summer of 2022, following Government of Canada direction for a hybrid work model, CIPO employees that worked onsite prior to the pandemic began to return to the office 2 or 3 days a week. With employees having returned to the office on a part-time basis, CIPO has begun to reduce its office footprint and modernize its workspace to create a stimulating environment that fosters collaboration, productivity and innovation. CIPO is committed to providing employees with a modern and dynamic work environment that supports their well-being and enables them to provide a high level of service.

The past couple of years have highlighted the importance of mental health. CIPO's mental health champion has maintained regular communication with employees on the subject, encouraging employees to participate in events discussing well-being, mental health and empathy. As part of Mental Health Week in May 2022, CIPO co-hosted a virtual learning event with the Canada School of Public Service titled #GetReal for Mental Health Week: Preventing and Managing Burnout at Work. CIPO also offered its employees a Mental Health First Aider course, where participants learned how to recognize the signs of mental health decline, discuss and reach out to professionals or others for support, assist in a mental health or substance use crisis, and even use the knowledge and tools to maintain one's own mental health.

Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) are key aspects of a healthy and productive workplace. Beyond simply showing respect, EDIA encourages creativity, elevates team spirit, fosters a sense of belonging, and attracts highly skilled individuals. Throughout the year, CIPO promoted EDIA through a number of communications, initiatives and learning activities that raise awareness and celebrate diversity.

CIPO encouraged employees to include their preferred gender pronouns in their email user profile. Using someone's preferred pronouns is a simple way to show respect for their gender identity. Specifying one's pronouns allows others to address oneself according to one's preference, and creates a safe space for colleagues and members of the public with gender-diverse identities.

In 2019, the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) came into force, with an objective of achieving a Canada that is free of barriers by 2040. The ACA seeks to effectively eliminate obstacles and provide more opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Canada. Additionally, the ACA requires federal employers to make efforts to remove all obstacles that prevent employees from fully and equally participating in the workplace. In 2022–2023, CIPO made great strides in eliminating barriers relating to circulation, door access, as well as reception desk and service counter heights. Further, CIPO appointed a number of accessibility ambassadors who were trained to support their colleagues in practicing accessibility through document verification, coaching and information sharing on different accessibility topics.

Recruit and develop a diverse and skilled workforce

As the IP landscape evolves, CIPO recognizes the importance of recruiting and nurturing a diverse and skilled workforce. Having the right skills and competencies, in the right place, and at the right time is crucial to adapt and excel in an ever-changing environment. CIPO is making a conscious effort to foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce by giving top priority to EDIA in its recruitment and development strategies.

In the past year, CIPO has updated its people management strategic plan, which sets out the organization's priorities, plans and activities for managing its workforce over the next 3 years. By strategically aligning resources to operational and service needs, CIPO can better focus its efforts on

attracting, developing and retaining a skilled, productive and agile workforce, and support the objectives identified in its 2023–2028 Business Strategy. CIPO's people management strategic plan is closely aligned with its EDIA strategy, which aims to create a workplace culture that promotes well-being, health, mental health and security through collaboration, inclusion and respect. Our EDIA strategy identifies key focus areas to help us achieve greater representation, particularly among key employment equity groups where gaps must be addressed.

As part of its trademarks recovery plan, CIPO hired 31 new trademark examiners in 2022–2023, with the objective of expanding examination capacity and enhancing productivity and efficiency. After completing an intensive 6-week classroom training, a 2-week practical examination period in a group coaching mode and a 3-month coaching period, these newly trained trademark examiners are already making a valuable contribution towards reducing our trademarks backlog and improving turnaround times. In addition, CIPO onboarded 9 new industrial design examiners and 21 patent examiners in the biotechnology, electrical and mechanical disciplines.

CIPO also welcomed 5 new employees through LiveWorkPlay, an organization that aims to facilitate the inclusion into society of individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism or a dual diagnosis; enabling them to live, work and play as valued members of the community. We also sought to increase student recruitment throughout the year and provided enriching work experiences to 72 students through the Federal Student Work Experience Program and the Post-Secondary Co-op/Internship Program. The recruitment of these new employees brings a variety of skills and perspectives to CIPO, which is essential for creating a strong and talented workforce that is prepared to face the future with confidence.

CIPO is dedicated to ensuring its employees have the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to provide high-quality and efficient services. In 2022–2023, as new practices, tools and online service offerings were introduced, CIPO expanded its training, coaching and continuous development opportunities. The training

program for new trademark examiners was reviewed and now integrates adult learning concepts such as active learning, skills development and job-relevant learning. For example, a series of videos demonstrating procedural tasks were created to help trademark and industrial design examiners navigate IT tools. Furthermore, CIPO explored external learning opportunities, including events, podcasts and blogs, and collaborated with partners like INTA to provide trademark examiners with learning opportunities on various subjects, such as trademarks, communication and industry trends. For our trademark and industrial design managers, CIPO introduced a management development program consisting of mandatory training, coaching sessions and development opportunities for key competencies. Its goal is to equip managers with effective people management practices and provide communication and relationship-building training and support.

CIPO ensures that its services to Canadians are available in the official language of their choice, and fosters a workplace environment that values and supports bilingualism. In 2022–2023, we continued to enhance our bilingual capacity and encourage the use of both official languages in the workplace. CIPO's Official Languages Development Program (OLDP) is available to all employees interested in improving or maintaining their second-language proficiency. Throughout the year, 155 employees participated in the OLDP, amounting to 3,480 training hours. In addition, to address challenges in staffing bilingual managerial positions in our Trademarks and Industrial Designs Branch, we hired specialized second language trainers for an initial 2-year period to develop the language competency of our current and future managers.

Pursue management excellence

As a special operating agency of ISED, CIPO is entirely funded by revenues from client fees. With the exception of a revenue-neutral change for trademarks following Canada's adherence to international treaties in 2019 and some inflationary increases beginning in 2021, CIPO has not adjusted its fee structure since 2004. To account for inflation over the past 2 decades,

CIPO has proposed a 25% fee increase for most services. To mitigate the impact of this fee increase on small entities, CIPO will maintain the current patent fees for small entities and expand the definition of a small entity. In April 2022, CIPO held public consultations to solicit feedback from clients and stakeholders on the proposed fee increase, and on December 31, 2022, the proposed regulations were published in Part I of the Canada Gazette for a 30-day comment period. This fee adjustment will allow CIPO to continue serving clients with excellence and efficiency, while ensuring its long-term financial sustainability. In line with our commitment to management excellence and financial stewardship, CIPO's financial statements underwent an external audit ensuring responsible management of resources. In 2022–2023, CIPO received an unqualified financial audit opinion for its 2021–2022 financial statements, marking the 28th consecutive year that we receive this distinction.

Data plays a vital role in corporate planning at CIPO. Our research team continuously monitors domestic and international economic conditions affecting current and future IP trends, and updates its econometric models accordingly. Accurate information on future IP activity enables informed decision-making, a better allocation of human and financial resources and the provision of quality services to our clients. Additionally, as part of our trademarks recovery plan, CIPO collects and analyzes data on trademark processes to ensure fair examiner workloads, realistic production targets and an allocation of resources that is evidence-based. To better leverage our vast data assets, CIPO established a data working group dedicated to supporting ISED in delivering on the objectives outlined in its data strategy. Through the group's efforts, CIPO has further strengthened its ability to lead data science projects that serve both its research and operational needs, which will not only allow CIPO to maximize the value of its data assets, but also provide Canadians with the latest data and insights gained through its research.

The way forward

CIPO's role in Canada's IP ecosystem remains crucial to fostering innovation, technological advancement and creativity. Having a clearly defined vision for the future will be essential to ensuring CIPO's contributions to the IP ecosystem and our enduring sustainability. In February 2023, CIPO released its new business strategy, which sets the organization's vision and strategic priorities that will guide us for the next 5 years. The strategy describes how CIPO will 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.

The evolving IP landscape is transforming our resource requirements, demanding new skills and services to handle emerging innovations, tools and technology. It will be incumbent upon us to understand the effects of these changes on our organization and seize the opportunities they bring forth. CIPO will remain focused on the timely delivery of quality IP rights and services, as well as improving our processes through operational excellence. We will continue to invest in our IT infrastructure in order to provide a modern client service experience, and demonstrate sound governance and financial stewardship to ensure CIPO remains a leading IP office.

Additional information

Corporate and financial statistics are available on the CIPO website.

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Top 10 Canadian registered proprietors

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