International Inventor Assistance Program

International Opportunities

A collaboration involving WIPO, WEF, Institute of Professional Representatives before the European Patent Office (EPI), the Inter-American Association of Intellectual Property (ASIPI), the International Federation of Inventors’ Association (IFIA), Novartis, Qualcomm, and the Federal Circuit Bar Association, the Inventor Assistance Program (IAP) seeks to assist economically disadvantaged inventors around the world. The program connects inventors and small businesses from developing countries, with limited financial means, to patent attorneys willing to provide pro bono legal assistance to secure patent protection. Currently, participating countries include Columbia, Morocco, and the Philippines.

Visit www.wipo.int/iap for more information.

U.S. National Stage Entry Outreach. Process In General

In general, the outside the United States (OUS) foreign attorney representing the foreign inventor (Patent Applicant) will contact the Federal Circuit Bar Association’s (FCBA) Pro Bono Coordinator (Coordinator) expressing initial interest in IAP pro bono consideration. The FCBA will forward the information from the OUS to attorneys who have identified themselves as having possible interest in providing pro bono assistance (Possible Pro Bono Counsel). The Possible Pro Bono Counsel will sign up for these FCBA alerts by recording certain information through this LINK. The resulting list of names (List) will be maintained by the FCBA and organized on a first-in-time basis. The OUS continues to represent the Patent Applicant. The FCBA will alert up to two Possible Pro Bono Counsel, proceeding down (in time sequence) the List on a first-in-time basis. Pro bono representation is not guaranteed.

Whether an attorney client relationship is reached, the terms of any such relationship, and any communications relative to the consideration of such a relationship are matters solely for the Patent Applicant, the OUS, and the Possible Pro Bono Counsel. The Possible Pro Bono Counsel may decline participation as pro bono for any reason and determine the terms on which he/she is prepared to consider pro bono representation. The Association does not represent the Patent Applicant, the OUS, or the Possible Pro Bono Counsel. Professional responsibility insurance remains a matter for the Pro Bono Counsel. The Association does not provide insurance. In no event should the Pro Bono Counsel, the Patent Applicant, or the OUS provide any information to the FCBA as to which confidentiality is necessary.

If an attorney client relationship is reached, the Pro Bono Counsel agrees to provide the Association with certain publicly available information which is used by the Association in updating WIPO on the status of the proceeding. For instance, when the Pro Bono Counsel receives the U.S. National Stage Entry filing receipt from the USPTO, counsel will complete the case closing form and return to the FCBA Pro Bono Coordinator within three business days of filing.
Timelines. The OUS is expected to take steps to arrange that any patent filing deadlines will be met. Requests to forward information to U.S. volunteer attorney should be made no later than three months before the U.S. national phase deadlines. Requests made in disregard of this timeline will not be honored. (See MPEP Ch. 1800 sec 1842 Basic Flow Under the PCT [R-07.2015])

Inaugural Friends of the Inventors Assistance (IAP) Program: United States National Stage Entry Outreach

As IAP enters upon the United States National Stage Entry Outreach, sincere appreciation extends to the following organizations for their energy in, and encouragement of, the Outreach.

Smiths-Medical
Fish & Richardson
Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP
Troutman Sanders LLP
Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.
Wuersch & Gering, LLP.
Cravath, Swaine & Moore, LLP.
Morrison & Foerster LLP.
Patterson Thuente IP
Plumsea Law Group LLC.

Disclaimer:
PLEASE NOTE: The IAP Outreach undertakes to provide information to attorneys for consideration, by those attorneys, with respect to possible representation. As noted above, the consideration of representation is a matter for the attorney and his or her firm. The attorneys are not agents of the FCBA. The outreach is not a guarantee of pro bono representation. The FCBA is pleased to offer this informational service. The Federal Circuit Bar Association is not an instrument or agency of the United States Government or of any other government or organization.