

FAQs

1. I am a Singaporean youth aged 35 and under, however, I am currently working, does that mean I no longer qualify?

The IAP Singapore Chapter aims to help under resourced young Singaporean inventors who may not be able to access professional patent services. As such, youths on any kind of remuneration, including that earned from part-time or contract work arrangements, or who have incorporated companies in Singapore and are paying themselves a salary do not qualify for the IAP. Students receiving a stipend as well as those on internships remain eligible for the IAP.

Singapore citizens or permanent residents and/or Singapore registered businesses who do not qualify for IAP may consider [complimentary* IP Legal Clinics and IP Business Clinics](#) sessions instead. Appointments can be made online.

*Complimentary for first-time requestors only

2. How do I know if my invention meets the patentability requirements?

As a general guideline, for an invention to be patentable, it should satisfy three key criteria:

1. **New** – The invention should not be publicly known in any way, anywhere in the world. Owners of inventions should be careful to keep the invention secret until a patent application has been successfully made. If the idea has already been talked about, commercially exploited, advertised or demonstrated, then the novelty of the invention may be compromised.
2. **Inventive step** – The invention must be an improvement over any existing product or process that is already available. The improvement must not be obvious to someone with technical skills or knowledge in the field of the invention.
3. **Industrial application** – The invention must be useful and have some form of practical application. It should be capable of being made or used in some form of industry.

A method of treatment of the human or animal body by surgery, therapy or diagnosis practised on the human or animal body is not patentable.

An invention that is generally expected to encourage offensive, immoral or anti-social behaviour will not be published or patentable.

3. How might I check if my invention has not been done before?

You can do a preliminary art search for similar patents filed with IPOS using the [IPOS GO mobile app or IPOS Digital Hub](#). For a more comprehensive preliminary search, it is advisable to utilise a variety of databases such as WIPO's Patentscope and Google Patents.

You may also choose to experiment with the search terms and consider the lexicon that may be used in place of more common terms.

Note: After a patent application has been filed, it will have to undergo a formal search and examination conducted by IPOS before a patent grant is considered.

4. Do I need to be a Singaporean or a Singaporean permanent resident to qualify?

Yes, you will need to be a Singaporean or a Singaporean permanent resident to qualify for the Singapore chapter of the IAP. Citizens of [these participating countries](#) may wish to apply for their national IAP programme instead.

5. How do I demonstrate knowledge of the patent system?

All applicants are required to complete a compulsory Learning Module to demonstrate basic knowledge of the patent system before access to the IAP online application form is granted. The Module, which consists of two parts and takes around 30-45 minutes to complete, will introduce the key aspects of patents and patenting process, as well as the benefits of pro bono legal services and the IAP.

6. I have engaged the services of a patent attorney/agent previously, however, the patent was not granted. Will I still qualify for the IAP?

Those who have previously engaged professional patent services are no longer eligible for the IAP.

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7. How can I be assured that what I disclose about my invention as part of the IAP process remains confidential?

As part of the IAP process, an agreement including a confidentiality clause will be signed between the professional IAP volunteer and the successful IAP applicant.

Please note that as part of the patent application process, a disclosure of your invention is required at the publication stage. For information on the patent application process, refer to [this link](#).

8. How do I prove that I own the rights to my invention?

A declaration will be required. You will also be required to provide a write-up describing your invention.

9. Does the IAP cover filling fees?

No. The IAP covers professional services associated with drafting a patent application and its prosecution. These do not cover filing/official fees. The list of the official fees can be found [here](#).

10. My invention was developed as a school project and/or in conjunction with my lecturer, do I still qualify for the IAP?

If the invention was created in the course of studies, or as part of collaborative projects, and/or if there is declaration of joint ownership, then all inventors listed in the IAP application must meet the eligibility criteria as outlined above. In cases where the lecturer/institute had contributed to the invention, we would have the student defer to the institute's IP policy as indicated in the student handbook.

11. Is there a closing date for the IAP?

Applications are held year-round and processed on a quarterly basis. This page will be updated when all slots have been filled up.

12. I wish to learn more about the various forms of IP (and not just patents). Do you have any complimentary resources?

Complimentary resources can be found: [WIPO's online IAP training module](#) and [IP Clinics](#).

In addition, you can access case studies and bite sized learning modules [here](#)

For more IAP queries, you may visit [WIPO IAP FAQ page \(external link\)](#).

For questions relating to IAP- Singapore Chapter, you may write to the Singapore IAP Team IP_Skills@ipos.gov.sg

For general IP questions, please refer to our [FAQs](#). For further queries, please write to IPOS_Enquiry@ipos.gov.sg