



CELEBRATING 2023 WORLD IP DAY

Women and IP: Accelerating Innovation and Creativity

Dear Director-General Daren Tang,

As a global coalition of 110 public policy organizations from 53 countries, we are pleased to celebrate World Intellectual Property Day alongside WIPO once again.

This year's theme "*Women and IP: Accelerating innovation and creativity*" highlights the important contribution of women in innovation.

As women shape the present and the future, policymakers must ensure the right of women to create and own their works is protected. According to the Gender Equality component of the International Property Rights Index, there is a deep gender-rights disparity in some countries and regions. Simply, not all women enjoy the same freedoms to participate in the innovation economy.

The four worst-performing indicators in regard to the Gender Equality component of the International Property Rights Index are: Women's Access to Social Rights, Inheritance Practices, Women's Access to Land Ownership, and Access to Property Other than land. Without these indicators improving to parity, it will be impossible for women to fully participate in the social and economic life of their country, robbing the world of their potential groundbreaking contributions to science and innovation.

IP RIGHTS IGNITE INNOVATION

Intellectual property (IP) rights are a central pillar to sustaining continued advancement of technologies that save lives, improve productivity, and pave the way to a future of prosperity and abundance. This is accomplished by securing, for a limited time, the rights of artists, inventors, and businesses the ability to own their work exclusively.

This protection gives creators and innovators the ability to monetize their works, and provides a financial incentive for continued innovation. It allows bakers, engineers, and scientists the ability to share their knowledge, recipes, processes, and even methods with manufacturers as they have the secure backing of IP preventing unsanctioned and substandard production.

IP is a critical component of a thriving and dynamic economy, making it a vital cornerstone for economic growth and prosperity. This is reflected in the International Property Rights Index which finds that advanced economies have steadily improved their protection of property rights, especially IP rights.¹ It also finds that finally the gap between these protections and the rest of the world is closing. In 2007 the score for advanced economies in protection of IP was 45 percent greater than the rest of the world, today it is 33 percent greater.

The study finds a strong IP rights ecosystem correlates to greater GDP per capita, a more environmentally sustainable economy, a robust innovation environment, and a thriving biotech sector to name a few indicators.

IP RIGHTS SAFEGUARD A THRIVING AND HEALTHY WORLD

IP rights play a critical role in promoting health by providing incentives for the development of new and innovative medical treatments, drugs, and technologies. These incentives contribute to de-risking investments and financing the next generation of medicines that will allow people all over the world to live longer healthier lives.

Drug development pushes the boundaries of known science, it's not straightforward and far from guaranteed. In fact, according to the latest studies, 91 percent² to 86 percent³ of new drugs fail to get market approval. Of the drugs that do, the full process from lab to doctor script takes on average 10.5 years⁴ and can cost as much as \$2.6 billion.⁵ Without the incentive of secure exclusive ownership, this process wouldn't be possible.

IP rights backed by the Trade-Related Aspects on Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement has fueled biopharmaceutical innovation and enhanced access to medicines. Unfortunately, some countries have used the COVID-19 pandemic to try to weaken IP regimes. The most extreme examples include suspending portions of the very same TRIPS Agreement that allowed them to play a leading role in ending the pandemic. IP has never been a barrier to access: indeed, it has facilitated the hundreds of collaborations necessary to develop a global surplus of vaccines and therapeutics critical to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

IP RIGHTS FUEL ECONOMIC GROWTH

Thomas Edison, the inventor of the lightbulb, phonograph, and the motion picture camera once said "Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent. Its sale is proof of utility, and utility is success." This reminds us that behind the artistic works, trademarks, and inventions protected by IP rights is a potential industry that can mature into an institution employing millions of people.

1. https://atr-ipri22.s3.amazonaws.com/IPRI_ExecSummary2022_v5.pdf

2. <https://archive.bio.org/media/press-release/new-study-shows-rate-drug-approvals-lower-previously-reported>

3. <https://mitsloan.mit.edu/press/measuring-risks-and-rewards-drug-development-new-research-mit-shows-success-rates-clinical-trials-are-higher-previously-though>

4. <https://www.bio.org/blogs/how-long-does-it-take-get-drug-approved>

5. <https://www.genengnews.com/news/tufts-study-pegs-drug-development-approval-cost-at-2-6b/>

In the United States, IP-intensive industries account for 44 percent of total employment, and jobs in these industries came with a 60 percent weekly wage premium over jobs in other industries.⁶ As of 2019, IP-intensive industries represented 83.3 million jobs in the European Union, or 38.9 percent of total employment. These jobs came with a 47 percent wage premium over jobs in non-IP-intensive industries in the EU.⁷ Globally, the UN estimates IP-intensive industries provide 6.2 percent of all employment generating nearly 50 million jobs.⁸

As exports of IP-intensive goods and services continue to grow, up to \$524 billion in goods and \$1.1 trillion in services⁹ so do counterfeits and other forms of IP theft threatening these jobs and the economy they serve. The OECD estimates 3.3 percent of global trade is counterfeit or pirated goods, virtually equivalent in value to legally traded IP-intensive goods.

The 2021 International Trade Barrier Index (TBI), identifying the most direct and indirect trade barriers, found that enforcement of IP rights correlates to a strong trade-facilitating environment, reduced corruption, and a prosperous economy.¹⁰ This helps promote cross-border trade and investment, boost economic growth, and support job creation.

WIPO MUST PROTECT IP

A future of abundance marked by dynamic economies, thriving populations, and continued revolutionary innovation demands that IP be protected. WIPO plays a critical role to make this happen.

By administering various international treaties, WIPO helps to create a level playing field for IP owners around the world, thereby promoting economic and social development.¹¹

We have to continue emphasizing international cooperation to solve global issues and with a dedicated agency such as WIPO, the cooperation and coordination between different countries on IP matters can be significantly facilitated. Having WIPO oversee and coordinate IP protection on a global scale must be the highest priority in ensuring a fair and effective IP system in the future.

6. <https://www.uspto.gov/sites/default/files/documents/uspto-ip-us-economy-third-edition.pdf>

7. https://euipo.europa.eu/tunnel-web/secure/webdav/guest/document_library/observatory/documents/IPContributionStudy/IPR-intensive_industries_and_economicin_EU/WEB_IPR_intensive_Report_2019.pdf

8. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditctsce2022d1_en.pdf

9. IBID

10. https://atr-tbi19s3.amazonaws.com/TBI_ExecSummary_2021_FINAL.pdf

11. https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_450_2020.pdf

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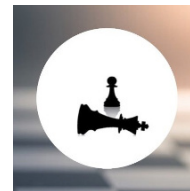
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