



Intellectual
Property
Office

Corporate Plan

2025 to 2026



A woman with curly hair and glasses is smiling while working on a laptop. The image is overlaid with a blue geometric design consisting of several overlapping triangles. The text is positioned in the lower-left area of the image.

**Our mission is to help people
grow the UK economy by
providing an IP system that
encourages investment in
creativity and innovation.**

Corporate Plan

2025 to 2026

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CEO foreword

I am pleased to introduce this year's corporate plan, which outlines our main activities in the second year of our strategy for 2024 to 2027.

Intellectual property (IP) is a powerful enabler of innovation and creativity across the UK economy. The government has set out a clear plan to deliver change and we will make sure that IP plays a crucial role in encouraging creativity, accelerating innovation and driving economic growth, in support of its national missions.

At the Intellectual Property Office (IPO), our strategy clearly sets out our mission to help grow the economy by providing an IP system that encourages investment in creativity and innovation. I am pleased with the progress we have made. This has provided us with the solid foundations to achieve our goals over the coming years.

We want to make working with IP easier for everyone and our One IPO Transformation Programme is delivering the most complex and comprehensive changes to our services in our 170-year history. As part of a modern digital government, we will allow creators, innovators, and businesses to deal with their IP rights seamlessly and efficiently in one place.

Earlier in 2025, we launched the first of our new services, One IPO Search. This represents a generational leap forward in how businesses and innovators search for and access patents information to exploit opportunities to innovate and grow.

As part of this corporate plan, we are making our final preparations to launch a suite of new digital patents services and have started to work on the next phase of our transformation including trade marks, designs and tribunals services.

Whilst we are proud of our digital transformation, we are equally focussed on ensuring the UK IP system is globally admired and highly regarded.

We must make sure it continues to help the UK protect, maximise, and enforce IP in a fast-changing and digital world. This is vital to help our firms thrive domestically as well as in attracting investment to the UK.

We have ambitious plans here at the IPO, and above all, it is our people, culture and commitment to an excellent customer service that will enable our success. Together, we are embracing the challenge laid down by our strategy and becoming a more resilient and high-performing organisation with the skills and capabilities required for now and the future.

In addition to our plan, I have with Minister Clark, agreed to progress these priorities:

- work with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and DSIT to develop practical measures which progress the government's priorities on copyright and AI: Driving economic growth by supporting the UK's world-leading creative industries and rapidly growing AI sector
- target information and guidance to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on how to protect and use their IP: Supporting businesses to thrive and grow by ensuring they can make informed decisions that maximise the value from their IP
- launch the One IPO patents service for all customers: A significant milestone in the IPO's service transformation that will make it easier for everyone to work with IP and encourage innovation

Adam Williams

Chief Executive and Comptroller-General



The government has set out a clear plan to deliver change and we will make sure that IP plays a crucial role in encouraging creativity, accelerating innovation and driving economic growth, in support of its national missions.

Introduction

Who we are and what we do

The Intellectual Property Office is an executive agency and trading fund, sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. We are responsible for the UK IP framework including the patents, trade marks, designs and copyright systems.

Our mission is to help people grow the UK economy by providing an IP system that encourages investment in creativity and innovation.

Our journey dates back more than 170 years, a rich history that strengthens our enduring commitment to foster investment in innovation and creativity within the UK.

Our core responsibilities are the examination, granting and registration of IP rights, and the maintenance of the IP registers. These responsibilities are the foundation on which the IPO is built upon and continue to remain important to us.

The data we hold is valuable with more than 3 million granted rights held across these registers. We make this data publicly and freely available for researchers, inventors, and creators. In doing so, we support the UK to maintain and grow its reputation for innovation and help society to benefit from knowledge and ideas.

We formulate advice on and implement Intellectual Property (IP) policy, shaping the national framework governing IP rights. We also promote the UK's interests in the development of the international IP rights system. The activities we undertake support a wide policy ecosystem; from helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) achieve their potential to empowering consumers to make informed choices in competitive markets.

We also raise business and consumer awareness of the risks surrounding IP crime and infringement and work closely with law enforcement and other agencies to protect IP rights.

Our strategy

In 2024, we published our strategy, [IP for a creative and innovative UK 2024 – 2027](#), which explains what we aim to achieve by the end of the 2026-27 financial year.

Our strategy sets out our strategic pillars, which inform, guide, and support us in our work.

They are:



Our services:

High-quality, efficient and accessible;



Our policy:

Supporting innovation and the economy;

Through:



Our organisation:

High-performing, with skilled people connected by shared purpose.

Delivering our strategy



Our corporate plan sets out the key activities and commitments for April 2025 to March 2026. Collectively, these activities will help us to progress against the objectives set out in our strategy in its second year of delivery. Some of the highlights of our 2025-26 plan are:

- launching our One IPO patents service to all customers, allowing them to manage their patents in one place
- starting the next phase of our transformation programme, which focuses on our trade marks, designs and tribunals services, which will allow all our customers to deal with all their IP rights in one place
- maintaining our existing systems and begin to decommission legacy services while still providing excellent customer service
- working with DCMS and DSIT to develop practical measures which progress the government's priorities on copyright and AI
- continuing to develop our IP crime centre of excellence and delivering our work set out in the counter infringement strategy, strengthening enforcement efforts and improving collaboration to tackle IP crime more effectively
- supporting SMEs with access to finance and empowering them to make informed IP decisions that boost their ability to manage their IP effectively for growth
- continuing to shape the international IP system so that it supports UK and global innovation through our policy interventions, promoting an effective, balanced global IP framework
- progressing our work on standard essential patents, with a view to providing clarity and certainty for businesses and innovators operating in this eco-system
- continuing our review of the UK's designs framework, ensuring it remains fit for the future and supports UK right holders
- implementing our leadership and accommodation strategies, strengthening leadership capability and offering a modern, flexible working environment
- implementing our strategic workforce plan, ensuring we have the skills, capability and capacity to deliver our priorities effectively
- continuing our journey towards our future culture, focusing on creating the right conditions and support our teams and individuals to bring our culture to life; being accountable, adaptable and connected
- reviewing our current fees across all registered rights to ensure cost pressures are met and we remain self-funded and financially sustainable

Pillar:

Our services:

High-quality, efficient and accessible

Providing high-quality, timely and cost-effective IP registration services will continue to be core to how the IPO backs science, creativity and innovation to help grow the economy. We want to provide our customers with services that are more efficient, timely and accessible.

We have made huge strides in our One IPO Transformation Programme, which is a fundamental part of delivering our strategy. It will provide us with the modern infrastructure and a single, integrated system to make working with IP easier for everyone.

As we deliver transformation, we remain fully committed to delivering the IPO's core responsibilities through providing high-quality, timely, consistent, and fair rights-granting and dispute resolution functions.

Over recent years, we have seen an increase in patent, trade mark and design applications and we expect to see that trend continue into 2025-26 and beyond. Also, a post-EU exit increase in trade mark applications has caused a significant increase in demand for our hearings and tribunal services. Although demand has now stabilised, it will take some time to work through these cases.

Our teams of specialists continue to strive to meet our customers' needs and to provide excellent customer service, with a continued commitment to achieving an average overall customer satisfaction score of 85% or more, in line with our published [customer service standards](#). We closely monitor our performance against these standards throughout the year.

Our ability to deliver transformation while continuing to offer customers reliable digital services is underpinned by our ongoing investment in our digital systems and infrastructure. Our highly skilled Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) professionals are managing the complexities of building our new digital estate, while also maintaining our existing systems and protecting us and our data from growing cyber security threats.

Introducing customers to our One IPO patents service

We expect to launch this new service to all patent customers in 2025. The scale and complexity of the work has meant that some elements have taken us longer than we hoped. Our number one priority throughout is to deliver a quality service for customers, and we made the decision to take the time needed to get it right.

We continue to test the new service with a select group of customers, allowing us to work with them to improve the functionality involved in securing IP rights, from application through to grant or registration. The feedback we have received from these customers has been vital, as it is supporting us to develop a quality service that meets customers' needs before making it available to all patent customers.

The new customer account will become the gateway for our new services. Owners of IP and their representatives will be able to manage and renew their rights, update their details, transfer ownership, change representation, track progress, and communicate with us.

Following its launch, we will continue to improve it based on customer feedback. We will make the transition as smooth as possible for our customers, with updated guidance and online resources.

One IPO services for trade marks, designs and tribunals

Building on the technology and infrastructure that we have developed, this next phase of our transformation programme will allow creators, innovators, and businesses to deal seamlessly with all their IP rights in one place.

Phase 2 of the programme focuses on trade marks and designs. It also includes our tribunal services as most of the demand for them relates to trade marks.

We have learnt a lot from transforming our patents service and will apply these lessons as we move into the exploratory phases of transforming our services for trade marks, designs and tribunals.

Our transformed services will be designed to be easy to use, but we will provide our customers with updated guidance and online resources so that they feel confident in using them.



Developing One IPO Search to realise the potential of our data

We successfully launched our new patents search tool, One IPO Search, earlier in 2025. Our patents data is now more accessible than ever before, with better and faster ways to search, view and analyse it.

Users can make more informed decisions regarding their IP, allowing them to gain insights from our data and to identify and exploit opportunities for innovation. As part of a modern digital government, we are making it far easier for users to access all the information they need through our digital services.

This year, we will continue to iterate the search tool and introduce some additional features including the ability to save searches and get patent notifications. We will use the valuable feedback from customers to make sure that they have a positive experience.

Over the next few years, our aim is to enable searches for patents, trade marks and designs through one tool. Migrating our trade marks and designs data on to our new internal single data platform will be an important step to enable us to build these new search capabilities.

Improving the quality and management of our data will also allow us to improve our analytical capabilities to drive better-informed decisions on our internal activities and the products and service we provide.

IP education and skills that inspire innovation and creativity

When IP is understood and managed well, it provides incentives for investment in new ideas and ensures the UK's world-class research translates to commercial success.

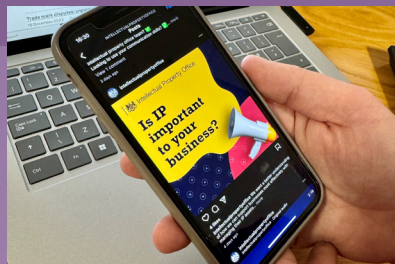
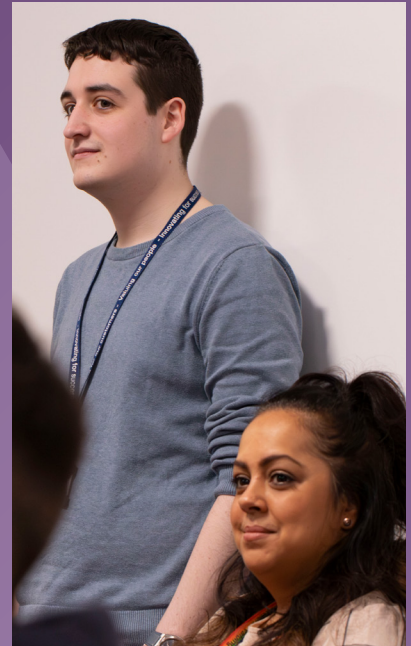
The IPO's interventions are designed to support business, research institutions, government, and educators to develop critical skills in how they manage and use their IP assets. We work to integrate IP into strategic thinking and decision making by improving understanding of and access to the IP system. Our approach seeks to develop IP capability by breaking down barriers and supporting an inclusive innovation ecosystem.

We provide free digital guides and tools for innovators and creators through our IP-support website. We are developing our approach to IP education and skills to better address the needs of both individuals and organisations. This will include how we help SMEs to easily access reliable, up-to-date information and apply IP knowledge to realise value from their IP assets.



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Pillar:

Our policy:

Supporting innovation and the economy

The Intellectual Property Office is responsible for ensuring an effective IP framework exists to protect businesses, individuals, and creators, and that their intellectual property rights are respected and enforced.

This year, we will focus on aligning our policy work with the government's missions. Our work in policy is designed to support UK economic growth, whether through boosting trade, ensuring a stable and well-understood regulatory environment that provides confidence for business, or facilitating collaboration and investment in IP-rich sectors.

Our policy work is vital to the UK's innovation ecosystem. We continue to develop and advance our policy, underpinned by evidence from research and evaluation, to encourage innovation and creativity in the UK.

We also promote and protect the international IP framework and support UK businesses to trade internationally. We continue to work closely with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to contribute to the government's programme of negotiating free trade agreements to promote the UK's interests internationally.

Our IP attaché network offers support and guidance to UK businesses on local IP matters and works with overseas governments and in-country partners to improve the IP environment for businesses seeking to trade overseas.

Through our work in international and multilateral fora, we promote an effective, balanced global IP system to support the UK government priorities and maximise our impact globally.

Artificial Intelligence and intellectual property

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other critical technologies continue to develop at a rapid pace, and we must make sure our IP system adapts.

Our world leading creative industries and AI sector are essential to driving economic growth and delivering the government's plan for change. Currently, uncertainty about how copyright law applies to AI is holding back both sectors from reaching their full potential.

Earlier this year, a consultation was launched on how the government can deliver a copyright and AI framework that rewards human creativity, incentivises innovation and provides the legal certainty.

We will work with DCMS and DSIT to develop practical measures which progress the government's priorities on copyright and AI, driving growth in both our world-leading creative industries and rapidly growing AI sector.



Working in partnership to ensure intellectual property rights are respected and enforced

Through our counter-infringement strategy, we are building a better understanding of the full threat and intelligence picture of IP infringement across the UK, whilst strengthening our relationships with partners in the UK and internationally.

Our intelligence capabilities are improving as we work towards establishing a Centre of Excellence for the development and analysis of intelligence on enforcement of IP rights. Working in partnership, we aim to bring together the bigger picture on IP enforcement and enable all parties, including industry, to use their resources effectively.

We continue to work with industry to increase awareness of the risks posed by counterfeit and illicit goods. Through our self-storage partnership project, known as Tick Box, more than 50% of all UK self-storage facilities have signed up to its code of practice. This year, we aim to expand the scheme further across the UK to deter counterfeiters from using these facilities. In recent years, the initiative has led to the seizure of around £30 million pounds worth of counterfeit and illicit goods.

We are also expanding our national coverage through our IP crime co-ordinators, who are embedded in regional Trading Standards services across the UK to help detect, disrupt, and prosecute IP crime and associated criminality.

We will continue to develop consumer awareness and understanding of the risks associated with IP crime, and the consequences of buying counterfeit goods or pirated content, through our targeted awareness campaigns.





Supporting Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to prosper and grow

The IPO has a crucial role in supporting SMEs to drive innovation, compete globally, and contribute to the UK's economic growth. Representing more than 99% of UK businesses and employing millions, they introduce new products, open new markets, and create local jobs that strengthen communities.

There are already many ways we support SMEs across the IPO through information, guidance, and support to understand the benefits of IP protection. We are working on better ways to empower SMEs to make informed IP decisions and boost their ability to manage their IP effectively for growth.

In 2024, we launched our new financial support scheme, IP Advance, supporting high-growth potential innovative SMEs identify, manage, and commercialise their IP. This year, we will integrate this scheme and our wider support offer into innovation and business growth programmes across the UK to expand our reach and maximise our impact.

Through our continued engagement with industry, we are exploring ways to help innovative SMEs to leverage their IP assets to access and secure finance. We will be publishing our first IP finance annual report this year to increase visibility of this important issue to a broader audience across industry and academia.



Helping UK business to navigate the Standard Essential Patents ecosystem

Standard Essential Patents (SEPs) are of growing importance to the UK economy, but we recognise it is often a complex environment for businesses to navigate. We want to help UK businesses, particularly SMEs, to understand the ecosystem and Fair Reasonable and Non-Discriminatory (FRAND) licensing.

In response, we have focussed on non-regulatory measures, including the introduction of the SEPs Resource Hub to be a 'one stop shop' for guidance and enhancing our engagement with other IP offices and Standard Development Organisations. We are now in the process of considering how regulatory measures could address issues around transparency of pricing and essentiality as well as the efficiency of dispute resolution.



Creating a UK designs framework that is fit for the future

Great design helps UK products stand out, demonstrate quality, and find consumers in a competitive global marketplace. Our wide-ranging review of the UK's designs framework aims to make sure it is fit for the future and gives the UK a competitive edge.

Following our call for views in 2022, we set out areas for further consideration and future consultation in the government response. We want the framework to support all rights holders and meet the needs of its users in an increasingly digital future. We will engage further with them through consultation in 2025 as part of the next stage of the process.

Great design helps UK products stand out, demonstrate quality, and find consumers in a competitive global marketplace.

Pillar:

Our organisation: High-performing, with skilled people connected by shared purpose

A skilled, empowered and engaged workforce is essential to delivering our strategy. Over the last year, we have developed our strategic workforce plan, leadership and management strategy, approach to stakeholder engagement and started to embed our future culture.

These will help us to build on our strengths, adapt where we know we can do better and become a consistently high-performing organisation, equipped with the skills, capabilities, and resilience to meet the challenges of the future.

Improvements to our governance and planning are also helping us to adapt to the changing needs of the organisation. We are focused on making the long-term decisions that provide value for money, benefit our customers, and increase our efficiency and capabilities as an organisation.

Embedding a culture that helps us deliver our strategy

We believe that having a culture where we are adaptable, accountable, and connected is critical to delivering our strategy. We are focussed on creating the right conditions and support teams and individuals to bring this culture to life. As we deliver this corporate plan, the decisions and changes we make over the coming year present important opportunities to align how we do things at the IPO with this culture.

Managing our reputation is important to us, ensuring stakeholders trust and have confidence in the role we perform. We will engage with our stakeholders to improve strategy, policy, and services. We will closely monitor our performance throughout the year with regular reputation surveys.

Enabling impactful leadership and management

Our leaders and managers have a particular responsibility to role model the culture we need and ensure everyone at the IPO has a positive, healthy experiences of work.

Through our leadership and management strategy, we have set out expectations and aspirations for our leaders and managers as well as the core skills and qualities that we will support them to develop.

This year, we will deliver an enhanced development programme including practise-based learning opportunities and new management resources. We will also provide a feedback tool, based on the skills and qualities, to inform their development and encourage learning from colleagues and stakeholders.



Adopting a skills-based approach to develop our future-ready workforce

We are moving towards a skills-based approach to how we develop, support, and deploy our people. We believe this approach will create a more flexible, agile, and resilient workforce, one that can respond dynamically to emerging priorities and opportunities.

Using our 'Skills for Success' framework, our people can identify the skills they need to thrive in their role today, prepare for future opportunities and have a meaningful career here at the IPO.

By understanding the skills that we currently possess and identifying areas for growth, we can put in place and prepare to have the right capabilities in the right place at the right time. This is a fundamental part of our strategic workforce planning.

We will align our learning pathways and our recruitment and selection approaches to this new framework so we can develop and attract the skills the organisation needs.

Building our organisational capacity

Our strategic workforce plan identifies the range of factors that will influence our size, shape, and capacity of our workforce, now and in the future.

Our commitment to continuous improvement will help us to grow organisational capacity. In our culture we are adaptable, we value ideas and take opportunities to make the IPO better. We will challenge what we do and how we do things across the IPO, to identify efficiencies, reduce duplication and harness the benefits of technology. We are committed to achieving efficiencies worth at least 3.5% of our core operating costs in this period.

We will also define the optimal and proportionate balance between our services, policy, and corporate functions. This aims to support the delivery of our strategy, help us to manage customer demand and to resource and equip our teams to work productively and deliver value.

Delivering an accommodation strategy that serves us now and in the future

We have become a hybrid working organisation in recent years, with the expectation that our people spend part of their time working from one of our offices. We want the time they spend at our offices to be meaningful, productive, and enjoyable; and to create a working environment that promotes our culture.

We will continue to enhance our working environment, in line with the Government Property Agency's workplace design guide. Working closely with our people, we have tested a range of spaces and facilities, which we will implement to suit different activities and our organisation's diverse needs.

While our main office is based in Newport, South Wales, we recognise the value of our continued presence in London. This year, we will move out of our current accommodation in Victoria Street to a new location that will continue to meet our operational needs and support our work across government.

As part of our regular assessment of our current accommodation portfolio, we will consider our longer-term needs. We want to make sure the decisions we take now serve us well in the future including contributing to environmental outcomes.

Financial sustainability

Our financial forecasting has identified some emerging financial pressures that may require an adjustment to our fees. During 2025-26, we will be reviewing our fees to ensure cost pressures are met and we remain self-funded and financially sustainable, in line with our trading fund status. We will continue to monitor our position closely, and we will take the necessary steps to adjust our statutory fees at the right time and under the right circumstances. Following this, we will also consider how our fees might help deliver wider policy initiatives around growth, regulatory burdens, and simplification.

Monitoring and reporting

We monitor and report on our progress against our corporate plan and strategy on a regular basis. This includes monitoring the performance of our service delivery in line with our customer service standards, which we publish externally each month. Plans and targets are in place across the organisation to allow for effective internal monitoring and reporting. Our [Steering Board](#) advises ministers on the strategies, performance and targets set out in our Corporate Plan. Our Annual Report and Accounts concludes our performance and progress against this plan at the end of each year.

Financial resources

The IPO operates as a trading fund and obtains its income from fees for our services rather than government funding. Fees and charges intend to cover our operating costs and are calculated in accordance with *Managing Public Money*. Our investments, such as our transformation programme, are funded from our reserves.

	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Plan
Patents	86,700,000	89,175,000
Trade marks	66,226,000	69,296,000
Designs	8,399,000	7,466,000
Other	542,000	446,000
Total Income	161,867,000	166,383,000
Pay	116,185,000	125,433,000
Non-pay	36,616,000	33,428,000
Depreciation	3,382,000	3,395,000
Interest	-4,009,000	-1,889,000
Dividend	4,893,000	4,805,000
Operating Spend	157,067,000	165,172,000
Non-operating Spend, funded from reserves, includes Transformation Programme & Capital Investment	26,369,000	29,508,000



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INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

