



Intellectual
Property
Office

The Patent Office Innovation and Growth Report

2025/26



The Patent Office Innovation and Growth Report 2025/26

For the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 21 of the Intellectual Property Act 2014

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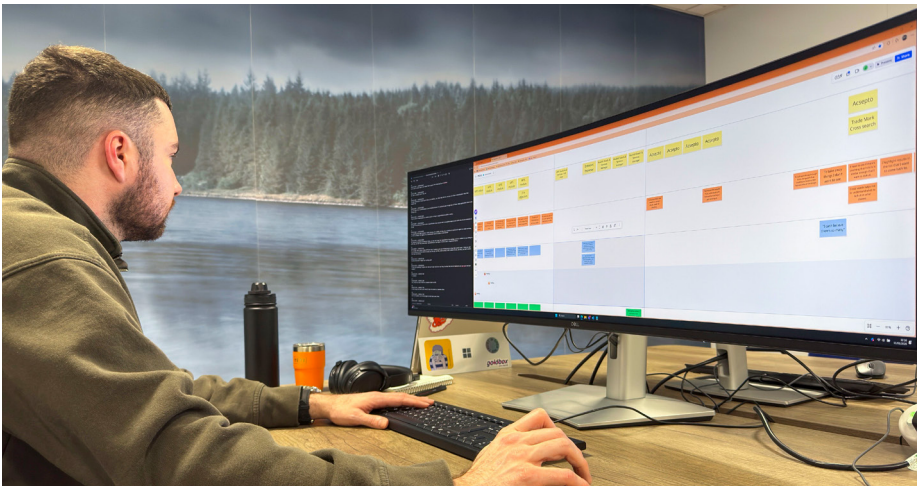
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Introduction

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has a statutory duty under section 21 of the Intellectual Property (IP) Act 2014 to lay before Parliament an annual report on how its activities have contributed to the promotion of innovation and economic growth in the UK. The Intellectual Property Office is an operating name of the Patent Office; this report therefore refers to the IPO throughout while fulfilling the statutory reporting duty placed on the Patent Office.

This report sets out how the IPO supports growth. It enables businesses, creators and innovators to protect and commercialise their ideas, while maintaining the trusted intellectual property (IP) system that underpins investment, trade and innovation.

The role of the IPO

The IPO is an executive agency and trading fund of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Our mission is to help people grow the UK economy by providing an IP system that encourages investment in creativity and innovation.

We examine and grant IP rights, maintain trusted national registers, help resolve disputes, shape policy and promote the UK's interests overseas. 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. By providing legal certainty and trusted services, the IPO helps businesses move with greater confidence from ideas to commercial value. The IP system underpins all sectors identified in the UK's Industrial Strategy. It enables these sectors to protect and develop ideas, supporting productivity, investment and growth across the UK.

Our contribution to innovation and growth in 2025/2026

IP services as an engine for innovation and growth

High-quality, accessible IP services enable businesses to secure rights and bring ideas to market. Delivered at scale, these services form a core part of the UK's economic infrastructure. They support businesses to secure rights, manage risk and move more confidently from an idea to market.

Demand for IP rights increased across all categories in 2025 to 2026. Patent applications rose to 25,144 (up 31.0%), the highest level in more than a decade, while trade mark filings reached a record 212,547 (up 19.6%). Design applications also increased to 82,780 (up by 7.1%). Growth was driven primarily by UK filings, indicating strong domestic demand for IP protection.

During 2025 to 2026, the IPO prepared for launch of the One IPO patents service on 1 April 2026. When fully implemented, the One IPO system will simplify how businesses secure and manage all their UK intellectual property rights from a single authenticated account. Simpler, more reliable services reduce friction and support faster commercialisation.

Customer satisfaction ratings remained strong, averaging 87% from more than 7,000 responses. We also published quality-of-service measures externally for the second year, achieving 93% or more across patents, trade marks and designs during 2025 to 2026. High-quality and reliable services reduce uncertainty and support confidence to invest in new products, services and markets.

The UK intellectual property framework continues to perform strongly internationally, ranking second in the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce's 2026 International IP Index¹](https://www.uschamber.com/assets/documents/2026-IP-Index-Report.pdf), joint first as the [World Trademark Review IP Office Innovation Ranking²](https://www.worldtrademarkreview.com/article/euipo-and-ukipo-ranked-most-innovative-offices-in-the-world); and the UK ranked 6th in the [WIPO Global Innovation Index 2025³](https://www.wipo.int/gii-ranking/en/united-kingdom/section/economy-profile), performing highly on knowledge, technology and creative outputs compared to high income countries.

Rankings provide external recognition of the strength of the UK's IP framework and recognise the UK's attractiveness as a place to innovate and invest.

1 <https://www.uschamber.com/assets/documents/2026-IP-Index-Report.pdf>

2 <https://www.worldtrademarkreview.com/article/euipo-and-ukipo-ranked-most-innovative-offices-in-the-world>

3 <https://www.wipo.int/gii-ranking/en/united-kingdom/section/economy-profile>

Unlocking the value of our data to support economic growth

The IPO's trusted IP registers provide transparency and certainty, supporting investment, licensing and collaboration. They also generate valuable data that helps businesses identify opportunities, monitor rights and make informed decisions. This is particularly important for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which account for more than 99% of UK businesses.

During 2025 to 2026, we continued to develop One IPO Search to improve access to IP data. Around 39,500 users completed more than 153,000 searches across the patents register and journal. Service performance remained strong, providing reliable access to this information.

Helping businesses use IP to grow

With [UK business investment in research and development exceeding £55 billion⁴](#) in 2024, a robust IP system is critical to securing value from innovation. By supporting businesses to protect and use their ideas, the IPO helps convert investment in research and creativity into productivity and growth.

We reinforced our digital guidance offer, including the Get IP and Use IP tools, helping businesses navigate the system and use intellectual property more strategically.

We supported more than 340 SMEs through the IP Audit scheme, providing funded access to professional advice. This support helps businesses strengthen their commercial position, improve access to finance and turn innovation into economic value.

As part of the UK's Industrial Strategy, we worked in partnership across government and industry to explore measures to improve lending to high-growth and innovative businesses. This work aims to improve access to finance, supporting business scale-up and wider economic growth.

Our outreach activity engaged more than 3,000 people through more than 65 events, while training and guidance helped businesses and advisers better understand how IP can support investment, growth and market entry.

IP crime and infringement is a threat to consumers, businesses and economic growth. In 2025 to 2026, we toughened our counter-infringement approach by enhancing our intelligence capabilities, partnerships and enforcement activity to protect the value of UK innovation and creativity.

4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-enterprise-research-and-development-uk-2024>

The following activities helped to protect consumers and businesses; promoting confidence in markets:

- participation in the voluntary 'tick-box' scheme for the self-storage sector increased by 12% to 242 businesses covering 1,128 premises, supporting enforcement action that led to the seizure of counterfeit goods.
- progress in establishing the IP Crime Centre of Excellence improved access to law enforcement systems, tools and training and strengthened operational collaboration.
- we completed a public consultation on extending powers under the Proceeds of Crime Act, supporting work to strengthen the tools available to tackle the proceeds of IP crime.
- we delivered high-profile consumer campaigns to raise awareness of the harms of IP crime, improving understanding of counterfeit risks and supporting informed purchasing decisions. Activity achieved strong reach and recognition, including 623 media placements in a single day and several award-winning campaigns.

An IP framework that encourages innovation and creativity

Our policy, legislative and international work supports a stable, well-functioning IP framework that enables innovation and growth.

Legislative changes

The intellectual property legislation passed during 2025 to 2026 supported innovation and economic growth by improving consistency, supporting the IPO's financial sustainability and ensuring compliance with international agreements.

The legislation passed was:

- [The Trade Mark \(Isle of Man\) \(Amendment\) Order in Council 2025⁵](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2025/679/made) aligned Isle of Man trade mark legislation more closely with current UK standards, improving consistency and reducing complexity for businesses operating across jurisdictions.
- [The Intellectual Property Fees \(Miscellaneous Amendments, Revocation and Transitional Provisions\) Rules 2026⁶](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/183/contents/made) introduced fee changes from 1 April 2026 to support the financial sustainability of IPO services, helping maintain reliable rights-granting services while remaining cost-effective for users.
- [The Copyright and Performances \(Application to Other Countries\) \(Amendment\) Order 2026⁷](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/103/made) ensures compliance with the UK-India trade agreement by extending relevant copyright protections to Indian nationals and broadcasting organisations when the agreement enters into force. This supports market access, trade certainty and protection for creators and businesses.

5 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2025/679/made>

6 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/183/contents/made>

7 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/103/made>

Policy development

We reinforced the evidence base for policy decisions, including analysis of more than 11,500 responses to the consultation on AI and copyright. This work supports maintenance of a balanced framework that aims to encourage innovation while protecting rights holders.

We consulted on standard essential patents and designs to better understand how to reduce frictions, improve transparency and ensure the IP framework remains effective in a changing market. We continued to assess the impact of AI-assisted invention on the patents system to ensure legal certainty for innovators using AI in research and development.

This policy work contributes to the IP framework being responsive to technological change while maintaining incentives for investment and creativity.

International IP system

We support UK businesses to operate and grow internationally by strengthening the global IP framework. This includes work to support capability in other IP offices and support stable, predictable systems abroad.

Effective IP protection plays a critical role as businesses expand into overseas markets. Through our network of IP attachés in key markets and engagement with international partners, including the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO), we support UK firms to trade, invest and compete globally.

During 2025 to 2026, the IPO contributed to the IP elements of trade policy and international agreements, including the UK-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, signed in July 2025, and negotiations on enhanced Free Trade Agreements with Switzerland and Türkiye. This work helps create more predictable international IP environments, giving UK businesses, creators and innovators greater confidence to trade, invest and collaborate overseas.

Statistics, research and analysis

The IPO's research, analysis and official statistics continued to strengthen the evidence base for policy and operational decisions, improving understanding of how intellectual property contributes to innovation, investment and economic growth.

During the year, the IPO published regular official statistics on patents, trade marks and designs, including monthly data and the annual [Facts and figures: patents, trade marks, designs and hearings: 2024 - GOV.UK⁸](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/facts-and-figures-patents-trade-marks-designs-and-hearings-2024). These publications provide transparency on demand for registered rights and help businesses, policymakers and researchers understand trends in the use of the IP system.

The IPO also published research on design protection, female participation in inventorship, online copyright infringement, counterfeit goods, customs enforcement and international IP regimes. These reports supported policy development and improved understanding of participation and diversity in innovation. They strengthened the evidence base for counter-infringement activity and informed international engagement and enforcement priorities.

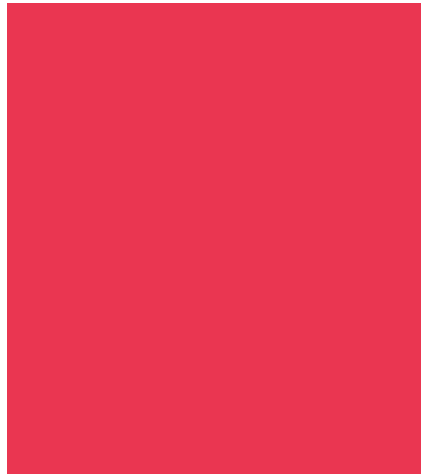
This evidence ensured IPO decisions were data-driven and responsive to changes in technology, markets and user behaviour, supporting an IP system that encourages innovation, protects creativity and contributes to economic growth.

Conclusion

In 2025 to 2026, the IPO supported innovation and economic growth through high-quality services, accessible data, targeted business support and a strong policy and international framework.

Our services help innovators and businesses secure and manage their rights with confidence, while our data enables better decisions, greater market transparency and more effective commercialisation of ideas. Through our business support activities, we helped SMEs and innovators better understand, protect and use their intellectual property to support investment, market entry and growth. Our policy, legislative and international work helped maintain a trusted IP system, giving UK businesses confidence to commercialise innovation and compete globally.

8 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/facts-and-figures-patents-trade-marks-designs-and-hearings-2024>



For further information, contact details and to request a different format, please visit the IPO website:

www.gov.uk/ipo

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