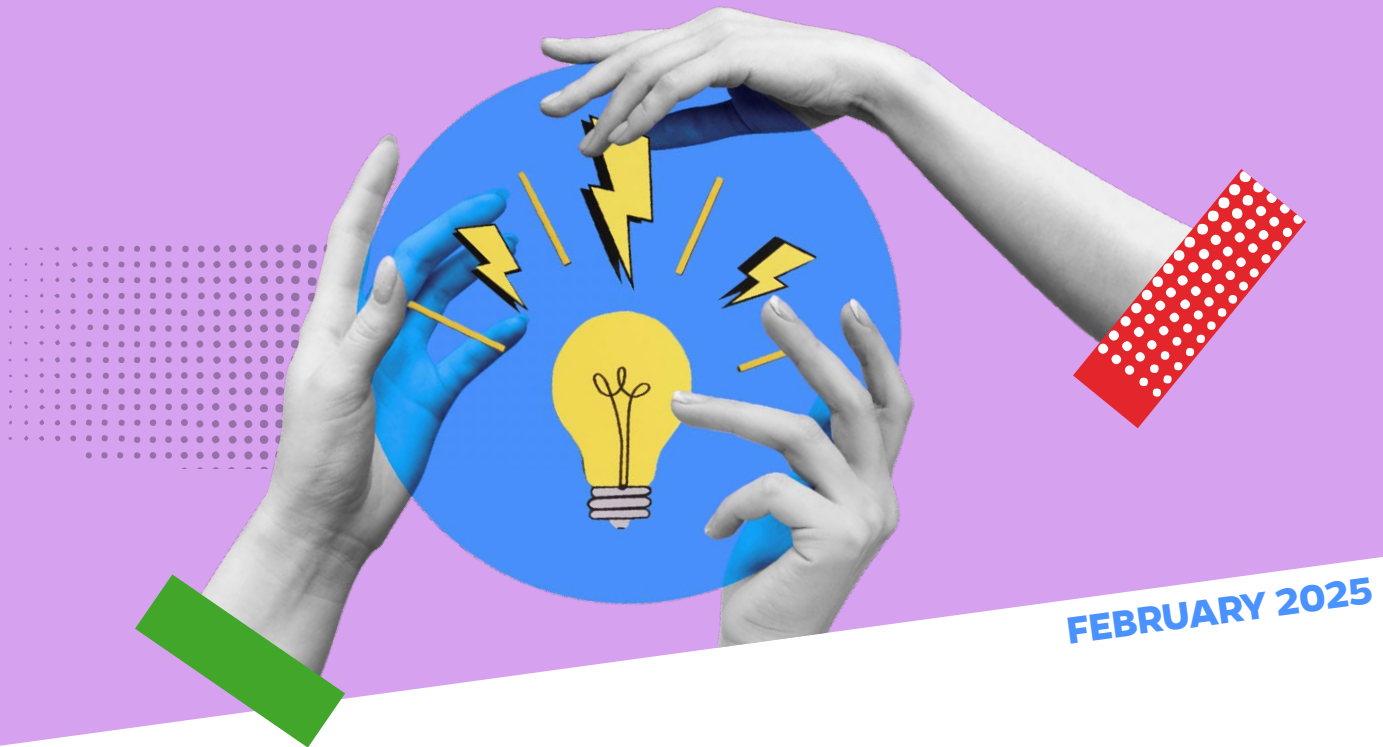


The **i**NTERPATENT newsletter



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ENHANCED POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY THE ITALIAN 'KNOWLEDGE SHARE 2.0' PLATFORM

In our [March 2024 issue](#), we reported about **'Knowledge Share 2.0'**, the digital platform managed by the Italian Patent and Trademark Office, the University of Politecnico di Torino and the Italian association NETVAL.

'Knowledge Share 2.0' provides a powerful overview of the most recent industrial innovation by Italian universities, start-up and spin-off companies as well as important public research bodies, scientific hospitalisation and care institutes, foundations and agencies.

This platform 'Knowledge Share 2.0' allows, on one hand, research teams to make known their innovations and, on the other hand, companies and investors to identify projects to invest in.

'Knowledge Share 2.0' is divided in three main sections, namely IP rights, Start-ups, and the recently added **Open Innovation Wall**, where companies can publish their technological challenges, with the aim of promoting and strengthening interactions between the academic world and companies.

As far as IP rights are concerned, in the past it was only possible to search for patents, but now the search possibilities have been expanded to cover software and plant varieties.

A brief description of the main features and advantages of the software/plant variety is available, along with an indication as to whether the IP right owner is looking for industrial partners, licensees or other forms of investment.

'Knowledge Share 2.0' can be accessed in English or Italian by large and SME companies from all over the world.

Once the project of interest has been identified, companies can contact the IP right owners to develop mutually beneficial exploitation strategies and to this aim it might be helpful to resort to the counseling of IP experts in drafting the relevant agreements.

For any information or assistance in this respect, please contact us at email@interpatent.com.

EUIPO SME FUND 2025



Beginning 3 February 2025 and ending 5 December 2025, the SME Fund is again open for vouchers that provide access to partial reimbursement of expenses incurred in protecting intellectual property rights.

Thus, for the fifth consecutive year, the European Commission's initiative called “**Ideas Powered for Business SME Fund**” implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to provide financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the EU and Ukraine for the protection of their intellectual property rights is being repeated, representing a joint effort by the EUIPO, the European Commission and EU national IP offices in response to the challenges faced by European SMEs in the context of post-pandemic recovery and the current situation in Ukraine.

The action specifically aims to assist European SMEs in maximizing the value of their IP assets by providing them with financial support for IP-related expenses. With such financial support, the intention is to prevent SMEs under financial pressure from reducing their investments in their IP assets and/or the protection of such assets.

Financial support will be provided in the form of vouchers:

- **Voucher 1: IP Scan (pre-diagnostic services) and IP Scan Enforcement** (the amounts set for each beneficiary vary among the EU Member States. This voucher cannot be used for Italy, as the Italian Patent and Trade Mark Office does not provide these services)
- **Voucher 2: Trade Marks and Designs**
- **Voucher 3: Patents**
- **Voucher 4: Plant Varieties**

All vouchers have a cap and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Speaking of Vouchers 2, 3 and 4, with a total budget of 18 million euros (17.1 million euros for trade marks and designs and 900.000 euros for patents and plant varieties) for the current year, **they alone will enable small and medium-sized enterprises to save up to 5,700 euros each on investments in industrial property.**

Timetable

Call submission period: **from 03/02/2025 to 05/12/2025.**

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) based in one of the EU Member States or in Ukraine (territories under effective Ukrainian control at the time the voucher application is submitted). Beneficiaries must submit a self-declaration that they have not received and will not receive funding from other national or EU programs for the same activities or part of such activities.

VOUCHER 2 – Trade Marks and Designs

Up to **700 euro** per beneficiary for:

- **the protection of trade marks and designs within the EU (at national, regional and EU level)**
This voucher is applicable to trade marks and designs filed directly and electronically (where possible) at the EUIPO or the national IP offices of the Member States. In accordance with the European Commission's principle of co-financing programs, eligible EU SMEs can claim a 75% reimbursement of fees paid to obtain trade mark, design and model protection in the EU (including application, class, examination, registration, publication and deferment of publication fees). This reimbursement also extends to IP fees similar to those for trade marks under current law (e.g., logo protection under Portuguese law is included);
- **the protection of trade marks and designs outside the EU**

To support the growth of EU SMEs on a more international scale, eligible fees for WIPO International trade marks and designs can be reimbursed up to 50%. This activity aims to expand the support currently offered to EU SMEs by accompanying them in the process of internationalization while boosting their innovation and competitiveness on a global scale.

Reimbursable fees are those charged for applications (including base fees, designation fees, and subsequent designation fees) under the:

- **the International Trade Mark System (Madrid System);**
- **the International Design System (The Hague System).**

Reimbursement is available for designation fees for international trade marks and/or designs, including EU Member States and/or EUIPO, but not for handling fees charged by the offices of origin for international trade mark and/or design applications.

VOUCHER 3 - Patents

Up to **3.500 euro** per beneficiary, for:

1. **fees** charged by IP offices of EU Member States for the registration of **national patents**, including filing fees, prior art search and examination fees, publication and grant fees;
- 2a. **fees** related to **European patents**, including both filing and search fees;
- 2b. **attorney fees** (consulting) for drafting and filing a **new European patent application**.

Any SME that meets the eligibility requirements can apply for a 75% reimbursement for fees under item 1, up to a maximum of 1,000 euro, a 75%

reimbursement for fees under item 2a, up to a maximum of 1,000 euro, and a 50% reimbursement for fees under item 2b, up to a maximum of 1,500 euro.

SMEs can apply both for a patent voucher for the purpose of national patent protection and a separate voucher for European patent protection, but not in the same voucher application.

VOUCHER 4 - Plant Varieties

Up to **1,500 euro** per beneficiary for

- obtaining a 75% reimbursement of **online filing and examination fees payable to the CPVO** in respect of Community plant variety right applications.

How to Apply

Vouchers are not retroactive; **any costs for activities performed before receiving the voucher cannot be reimbursed**. Applicants should use the online application form (eForm) available on the Ideas Powered for business SME FUND initiative webpage at the following address:

<https://euipo.europa.eu/sme-fund-2025/user/login?destination=/sme-fund-2025/>

As part of our full-range IP services, we at Interpatent are available to provide further information and guidance to SMEs in navigating through the EUIPO SME Fund 2025.

NEW EU REGULATION ON THE PROTECTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS FOR CRAFT AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS



Here we would like to take a closer look at an increasingly relevant topic for businesses manufacturing unique, traditional and authentic goods: the protection of **Geographical Indications (GIs) for craft and industrial products** in the European Union.

First of all, it is worth recalling what is meant by Geographical Indication (GI).

Geographical Indications (GIs) protect goods that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

GIs, including **PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)** and **PGI (Protected Geographical**

Indication), are a fundamental tool to enhance the authenticity of agri-food, craft and industrial products against counterfeiting and unauthorised use of local names and traditions. Among the best-known Italian agri-food PDOs and PGIs are Grana Padano (cheese), Parmigiano Reggiano (cheese), Prosciutto di Parma (ham), Gorgonzola (cheese) and Aceto balsamico di Modena (vinegar).

In the agri-food sector, PDOs and PGIs are governed by various EU regulations that provide for a centralised registration system, i.e. a system that allows food producers to apply for the protection of their PDOs and PGIs through a single administrative procedure managed at European level. In practice, there is no longer a need to initiate separate procedures in individual Member States, but rather a centralised system is now available, covering all EU countries and facilitating the registration and protection of Geographical Indications.

Until recently, however, this system was not provided for producers of craft and industrial products, who had to apply for registration in individual EU Member States.

However, thanks to **Regulation (EU) 2023/2411** (approved on 18 October 2023), **as of December 2025**, companies manufacturing craft or industrial products linked to tradition and geographical origin will be able to register their GIs through a centralised procedure managed by the EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office), thus ensuring greater protection and visibility on the market. **A harmonised system is thus introduced for the protection of Geographical Indications (GIs) of craft and industrial products in the European Union.**

This new industrial property right will be valid throughout the European Union, will extend to craft and industrial products the same protection provided for protected geographical indications in the agri-food sector, and will enable the international promotion of local and regional territories and productions.

Products such as natural stones, wooden objects, jewellery, textiles, lace, cutlery, glass, porcelain, hides and skins will benefit from this new regime.

For this to happen, **the products in question must meet the following requirements:**

- they originate from a specific place, region or country;
- a specific quality, reputation or other characteristic is essentially attributable to the geographical origin;

- at least one of the production steps takes place in a defined geographical area.

Who Can Apply for PDO and PGI Registration?

Applications may be submitted by producer groups or producer associations, which must be representative of the geographical area and the production area. Applications may be submitted for both craft and industrial products that meet the requirements of geographical origin and link to the territory.

What Changes with the New Regulation?

- **Centralised registration:** The registration of GIs will no longer be split among different national jurisdictions, but will take place through a single procedure covering all EU Member States. This will ease the process for small and medium-sized enterprises, which often face high costs and administrative complexities in protecting their traditional products.

The standard filing, examination and registration procedure will consist of two steps:

1. Producers will file their applications with the designated competent authorities of the Member States for evaluation at national level and management of the possible procedure of opposition to the relevant registration;
2. The national authorities will then submit successful applications to EUIPO for further evaluation of competence, with a view to final approval or rejection of the application.

- **Single evaluation process:** Once the application is submitted, the EUIPO or competent body will proceed with the evaluation of the product according to the established criteria (geographical origin, link to the territory, production method, etc.). If the application is accepted, the GI will be registered and protected in all EU Member States.

- **Broad territorial coverage:** From December 2025, producers of craft and industrial products linked to local traditions will have a single protection covering the entire European market, which will reduce the risk of counterfeiting and improve competitiveness.

- **Support for SMEs:** The new regulation aims to facilitate the protection of GIs, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, which often represent the heart of European craft and industrial traditions. This will give them access to a high level of legal protection without incurring prohibitive costs.



Benefits for Producers and Consumers

- **Product valorisation:** GIs help to enhance the value of craft and industrial products, giving them an identity linked to territory and tradition. This not only increases their perceived value but also facilitates access to international markets.
- **Uniform protection against counterfeiting:** GI registration makes it possible to protect products from fraudulent imitations and unfair practices, ensuring that only authentic products can use the protected name, and will offer Europe-wide legal protection. In practice, producers will be sure that only authentic and legitimate products can use the protected name throughout the EU.
- **Protection of tradition:** GIs preserve the link between product and territory, helping to keep alive local craft and industrial traditions, which are an integral part of the culture and economy of many regions.

- **Access to new market opportunities:** Thanks to this simplification, companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), will be able to access new markets more easily, benefit from greater visibility and protect their identity in an increasingly competitive global market. Registered products, in fact, will benefit from greater visibility, associated with the PDO or PGI mark, which identifies them as authentic and of high quality.

- **Bureaucratic simplification:** The elimination of the need to handle separate procedures in each EU Member State greatly simplifies the whole registration process for businesses.

The new European Regulation on the protection of GIs therefore marks an important step in the enhancement of traditional craft and industrial products, offering them greater protection and opportunities for growth on international markets. Geographical Indications are not only a guarantee of quality, but also a fundamental tool to protect the culture and economy of our regions.

Our professionals are available for further insights and to assess possible implications of the interference between trade marks and geographical indications – especially in oppositions proceedings – to which we will dedicate a special focus in future issues of our newsletter.

The aim of this newsletter is to keep our Clients and Associates updated about developments in the sector of Intellectual Property in general and our firm in particular. In this way, we wish to provide a broader view of the tools that the field of trade marks, domain names, patents, designs and related rights offers to entrepreneurs to enhance and protect their efforts in researching and developing new solutions and ideas.



Members of FICPI and AIPPI

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