



# IPA4SME

*Your path towards IP valorisation*

## **Boosting the use of Intellectual Property with an action specifically designed for Innovative European SMEs – IPA4SME**

### **Guide for Beneficiaries – 8rd cut-off date**

Version March 2021

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## 1. Introduction

This guide is intended to provide beneficiaries with instructions on how to proceed in order to benefit the most from IP pre-diagnostic service in an easy and efficient way. It provides step-by-step directions on how the support service should be activated and managed by the beneficiaries.

## 2. Service 1: IP pre-diagnostic service – Discover your value

The Service offered to SMEs is focused on providing comprehensive IP Pre-diagnostic Services to booster SMEs' IP capabilities and competencies free of charge.

An IP Pre-diagnostic service to which a SME can apply for is the perfect opportunity to count on a qualified expert in the field of IP and Business Strategy in order to identify both the advantages and potential opportunities of using intellectual property for further development of the SME business.

Moreover, an IP Pre-diagnostic service provides SMEs the opportunity to identify their main limitations and areas of development to strengthen their competencies in the field of IP and foster their business competitiveness.

### 2.1 Service 1 workflow

The steps involved in activating and receiving the IP pre-diagnostic support service are the following:



**FIGURE 1: SERVICE 1 WORKFLOW**

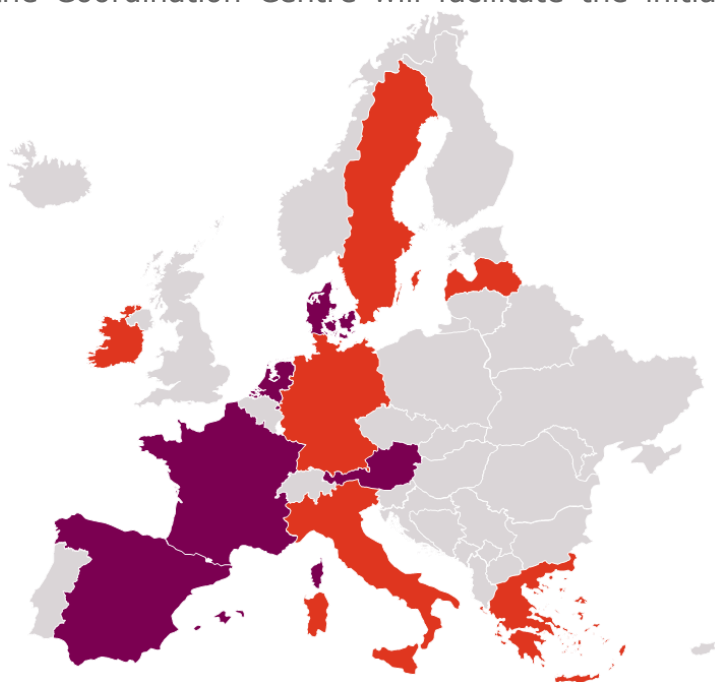


1. **IPA4SME Self-Assessment:** The beneficiary should complete the exercise following the communication of the support award. The IP pre-diagnostic cannot begin until the beneficiary's survey results have been provided to the designated expert.

This exercise will help us to gain a general understanding of the knowledge level of beneficiaries regarding IP management and protection strategies. The results will remain completely anonymous with the exception of Service 1 beneficiaries whose surveys will be shared with their designated IP pre-diagnostic expert (contained in the award letter).

2. **Designation of IP pre-diagnostic expert:** Once the IPA4SME Self-Assessment has been completed by the beneficiary the Coordination Centre will facilitate the initial contact between the beneficiary and the designated expert. This process will differ slightly depending on the beneficiaries country of registration:

- **Expert assigned by national IP Office:** Beneficiaries in **Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Spain** will be assigned an expert by their national IP office.
- **Expert assigned by Coordination Centre:** The Coordination Centre will assign beneficiaries in **Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia and Sweden** a qualified experts in their country to select from.



**FIGURE 2 : DESIGNATION ACCORDING TO THE BENEFICIARIES COUNTRY**

3. **Initial contact and scheduling:** Once the beneficiary has been assigned an expert the two parties will begin communication and agree on a schedule for the implementation of the service. Upon reaching an agreement regarding the starting date of the service, the Coordination Centre will share the beneficiary's IP pre-diagnostic survey responses with the expert.
4. **IP pre-diagnostic:** The IP pre-diagnostic service will consist of the following main steps:
  - **Initial analysis:** The expert will analyse the competitive environment of the beneficiary and their survey responses to gain an initial understanding of the beneficiary's IP situation.



- *Visit and interview:* The expert will conduct together with the beneficiaries an in-depth interview which should last between 2 and 4 hours. The interview can be conducted in person or via video/teleconference.
- *Final results:* The expert will deliver the results of the complete analysis in a confidential report and explain the suggestions to the beneficiary either in person or via video/teleconference.

**Note:** Regarding the interview's organisation, it is strongly recommended that at least the following persons will attend:

- CEO
- CTO
- IPR responsible (if any)

5. **Satisfaction Survey:** Upon completion of the service the beneficiary will be asked to respond to a Satisfaction Survey, which will include questions regarding their overall satisfaction with the IP pre-diagnostic service.

This form, available and to be filled only online in the following link: <https://www.ipa4sme.eu/form/ipdss-cutoff8> has to be completed exclusively by Service 1 beneficiaries, will cover the same topics as the IPA4SME Self-assessment and will be used to gauge the progress made by Service 1 beneficiaries following their IP pre-diagnostic.

## 2.2 Timeframe

The IP pre-diagnostic service should be completed within **4 months** of date of communication of the support service award (*date of communication is 4nd March 2021 for companies selected in IPA4SME's 8<sup>th</sup> cut-off date*).

## 2.3 Understanding the IP pre-diagnostic service – how to be prepared best

The IP Pre-diagnostic is a service offered to SME with the aim of identifying both the advantages and potential opportunities of using intellectual property for the further development of the SME's business. Thanks to this service, SMEs have the opportunity to identify their main limitations and development areas to strengthen their competencies and capabilities in the field of IP and foster their business competitiveness.

The nature of the IP pre-diagnosis service does not require in-depth discussion of the technical details on a specific innovation project. On the contrary, it is a broad analysis of the IP environment of SMEs, with the aim of:

- Introduce the company to the strategic aspect of intellectual property;
- Give recommendations on which IP-aspects are most important for this specific SME at this moment;

Therefore, the IP Pre-diagnostic service is about every aspect of your IP, such as:



### **Value creation**

- Alignment of IP to business strategy
- Exclusivity
- Licensing out
- Investor Readiness
- Exit
- ...

### **Protection**

- Patents
- Trademarks
- Designs
- Copyright
- Contracts
- Confidentiality
- Know how
- Ownership
- ...

### **Third party rights**

- Database searching
- Monitoring competitors
- Freedom to Operate
- Inspiration
- Information
- Licensing in
- ...

While, the IP Pre-diagnostic service is NOT:

- A freedom-to-operate analysis;
- The filing of IP;
- Assistance with conducting IP litigation;
- Writing of a contract.

During the interview, the below mentioned 4 key aspects of your company could be considered in order to carry out a strengths / weaknesses analysis. This analysis will serve as a basis for recommendations and for the identification of issues worth changing in the corporate's IP setup:

1. Identification of business model and strategy of the company
  - a. Business model employed and business strategy
  - b. Markets and customers addressed
  - c. Available resources and market access
  - d. Marketing and branding strategies
  - e. Relevance of technologies and R&D
2. Identification and analysis of existing IP and IP-relevant intellectual assets
  - a. Domain names
  - b. Trade secrets
  - c. IP in contracts
  - d. Defensive publications, and other soft forms of IP protection
  - e. Trademarks
  - f. Patents
  - g. Designs
  - h. Copyrights
3. Usage of IP searches
  - a. Usefulness and how to conduct a patent search
  - b. Trade mark search



c. Design search

4. IP Management – this section could deal with issues and recommendations on how to perform IP management
  - a. Organisational and governance issues
  - b. Strategy formulation and integration into the business strategy/plan
  - c. IP in communication and marketing (company-internal/external)
  - d. Integration of IP searches into the IP management processes
  - e. Potential sharing of IP
  - f. IP Risks
  - g. Cost/benefit and financing

Please, make sure you have all this information (or related documents) in hand prior to the interview with the expert.

Additionally, in order to assist our expert in carrying out an in-depth analysis, together with the completion of the IPA4SME Self-Assessment, the following additional information may be requested in advanced:

- SME Instrument application;
- Documents relevant for their IP-strategy;
- Names of competitors;
- Countries important for SME;
- IP-related questions they have at the moment;

To conclude: bear in mind that the contents of the IP Pre-diagnostic report, the IP Pre-diagnostic interview and of the IPA4SME self-assessment questionnaire are and will remain confidential.

### 3. Other information

Consult our **[Guide for Beneficiaries](#)** for more information. This include: managing the support service through the IPA4SME Electronic Submission System (EMS), periodically participating in impact and satisfaction surveys, and providing a valid Financial Identification form for those services which involve the reimbursement of fees paid by the beneficiaries.

Also, please consider that the IPA4SME Coordination Centre has put at the disposal of potential applicants the following email accounts for support:

[calls@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:calls@ipa4sme.eu)

Communications with SMEs involved in the submission of applicants, beneficiaries of support actions and technical support queries.

[helpdesk@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:helpdesk@ipa4sme.eu)

General inquiries and communications with the Coordination Centre. This account will be the primary point of contact for SMEs with Centre once the company is a beneficiary.

In case of doubts or uncertainties, do not hesitate to contact us!

