



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**

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## 1. Introduction

This guide is intended to provide beneficiaries with instruction on how to activate their IPA4SME support services. It provides step-by-step directions on how each support service should be activated and managed by the beneficiaries. For more information please refer to the IPA4SME website ([www.ipa4sme.eu](http://www.ipa4sme.eu)), the Rules for Implementation (available here), or contact the Coordination Centre at [calls@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:calls@ipa4sme.eu).

## 2. General conditions

In this section the common conditions of IPA4SME support are presented. These 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.

### 2.1 EMS

All support services will be managed through the IPA4SME Electronic Submission System (EMS). Beneficiaries can access their services by logging into EMS (<https://ipa4sme.ems-carsa.com/login>) and visiting the "My projects" section under the "My area" menu. Here beneficiaries will find information regarding the support services they have been awarded as well as be able to upload the required documentation for service activation and reimbursement.

### 2.2 Impact and Satisfaction Surveys

IPA4SME support service beneficiaries will be asked to participate in a series of surveys as part of their award. These surveys are designed to effectively monitor the impact of the IPA4SME project, as well as to continuously improve the service provided by the Coordination Centre. These surveys are an essential part of the IPA4SME project. The first survey, the "IPA4SME Self-assessment" will be **required for all beneficiaries** meaning that their support services cannot be activated until they have completed the survey. Beneficiaries who are awarded multiple support services **will only be asked to respond to each survey once**.

The surveys which IPA4SME beneficiaries will be asked to respond to before and after the completion of their support services are presented in the following table:



Support Service	Surveys and Timeframe			
	Prior to Service Activation	2-3 months after Service Completion	12 Months After Service Activation	+36 Months After Service Activation <sup>1</sup>
Service 1	<b>IPA4SME Self-assessment</b>	Post-service IP Response Questionnaire	IPA4SME Impact Questionnaire	Long-term IPA4SME Impact Questionnaire
Service 2				
Service 3				

**TABLE 1: IPA4SME IMPACT AND SATISFACTION SURVEYS**

- **IPA4SME Self-assessment:** 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)
- **Post-service IP Response Questionnaire:** This form, 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.
- **IPA4SME Impact Survey:** This survey will be delivered to IPA4SME beneficiaries 12 months after the activation of their support service. It is designed to measure the impact that the support provided through IPA4SME had on the beneficiaries' IP management and protection strategies.
- **Long-term IPA4SME Impact Questionnaire:** Beneficiaries will be contacted by EUIPO after the IPA4SME project has ended to respond to a long-term impact assessment. This questionnaire will gauge the impact of the IPA4SME support on beneficiaries 3 or more years after the activation of their support service.

### 2.3 Financial ID form

For support services 2 and 3 beneficiaries will be required to upload a signed Financial Identification form. The form is available here:

<sup>1</sup> Beneficiaries may be contacted by the EUIPO for this survey after the IPA4SME project has finished.

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/financial-identification\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/financial-identification_en)

Instructions for completing the Financial Identification form are available here:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/about\\_the\\_european\\_commission/eu\\_budget/instruction-fiche-2019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/about_the_european_commission/eu_budget/instruction-fiche-2019_en.pdf)

Beneficiaries will only be required to upload their Financial Identification form once during the project unless there are changes to their information. In this case, beneficiaries should contact the Coordination Centre directly at [calls@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:calls@ipa4sme.eu).



## 3. Service 1: IP pre-diagnostic services

### 3.1 Service 1 workflow

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

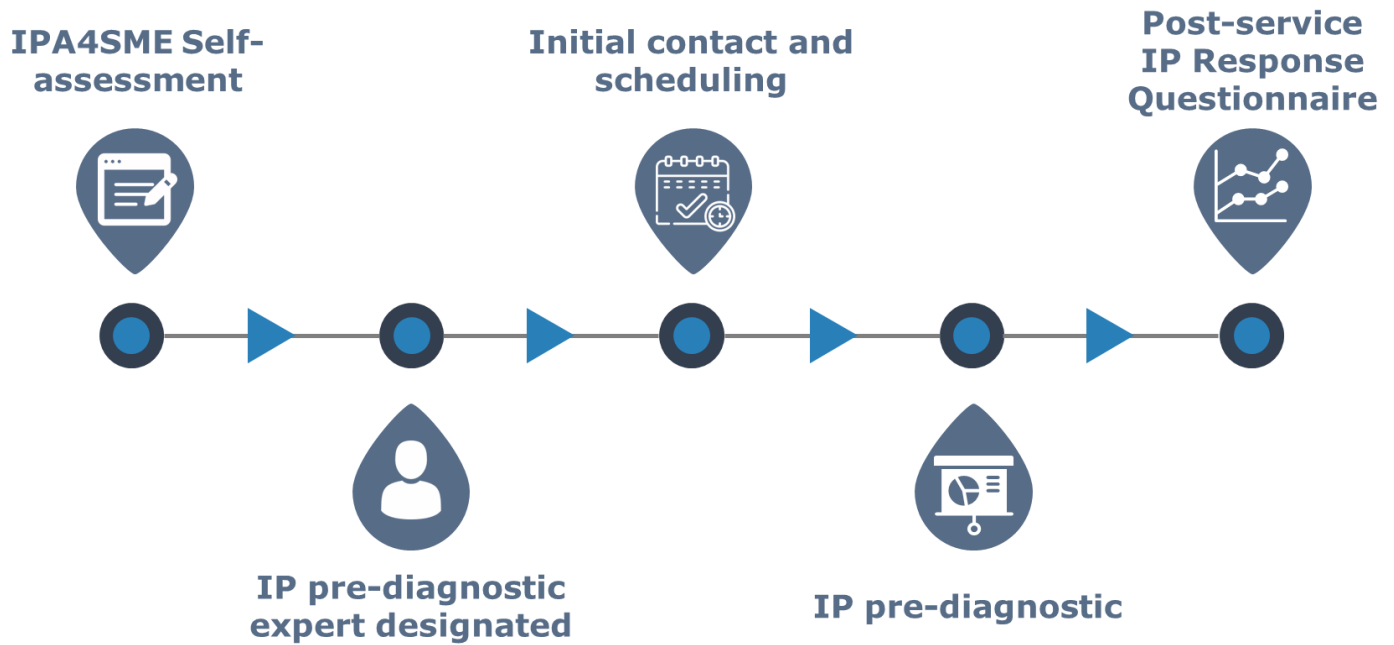


FIGURE 1: SERVICE 1 WORKFLOW

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.
2. **Designation of IP pre-diagnostic expert:** Once the IP response questionnaire 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, Germany, the Netherlands** and **Spain** will be assigned an expert by their national IP office.
  - *Select expert from list:* The Coordination Centre will provide beneficiaries in **Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia** and **Sweden** with a list of qualified experts in their country to select from.
3. **Initial contact and scheduling:** Once the beneficiary has been assigned or chosen 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 visit the beneficiary and conduct an in-depth interview which should last between 2 and 4 hours.
  - *Final results:* The expert will deliver the results of the complete analysis in a report and explain the suggestions to the beneficiary either in person or via video/teleconference.
5. **Confirmation of Service:** Upon completion of the service the beneficiary will be asked to respond to a follow-up questionnaire, which will include questions regarding their overall satisfaction with the IP pre-diagnostic service. At the end of the survey the beneficiary will upload a signed declaration confirming that the service was delivered to them to EMS.
6. **Post-service IP Response Questionnaire:** The impact of the IP Pre-diagnostic service will be measure through the Post-service IP Response Questionnaire. This survey will be delivered to the beneficiaries 2-3 months after the service completion.

## 3.2 Timeframe

The IP pre-diagnostic service should be completed within **4 months** of date of communication of the support service award.





## 4. Service 2: Partial reimbursement of European Patent Office (EPO) fees

### 4.1 Service 2 workflow

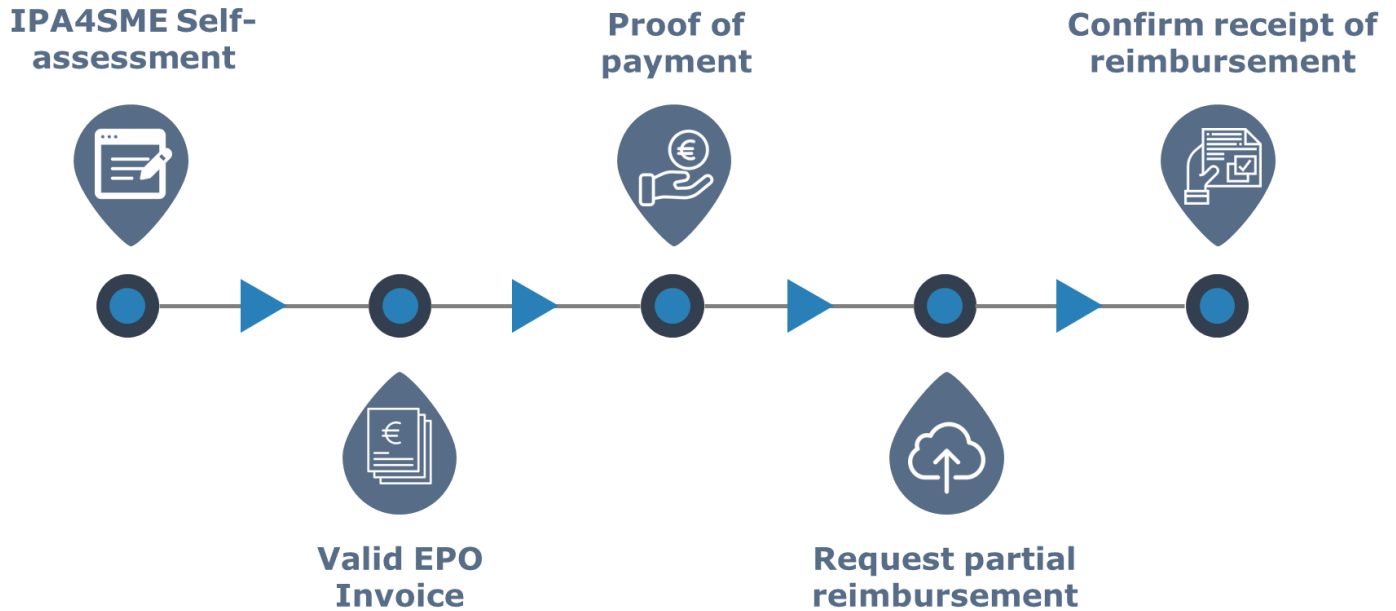


FIGURE 2: SERVICE 2 WORKFLOW

### 4.2 Step-by-step process

The steps involved in activating and receiving the reimbursement for Service 2 are the following:

1. **IPA4SME Self-Assessment:** The beneficiary should complete the form as soon as possible following the communication of the support award. The support service cannot be activated otherwise.
2. **Valid EPO invoice:** Beneficiaries can only be reimbursed once they have one or more valid invoices from the EPO. A valid invoice for Support Service 2 will be one issued by the EPO to the beneficiary, after the date of communication of IPA4SME support, for one of following services<sup>2</sup>:

Code	Description
001	Filing fee - EP direct - not online
001	Filing fee - EP direct - online
002	Fee for a European search - Applications filed on/after 01.07.2005
005	Designation fee - For all contracting States designated for applications filed on/after 01.04.2009

<sup>2</sup> More information on specific EPO fees is available on the EPO website: <https://my.epoline.org/portal/classic/epoline.Scheduleoffees>

006	Examination fee - For applications filed on/after 01.07.2005
007	Fee for grant and printing (not more than 35 pages) or fee for grant including fee for publication
033	Renewal fee for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year

TABLE 2: ELIGIBLE EPO FEES

3. **Proof of payment:** Beneficiaries must provide proof that the EPO invoice has been paid before partial reimbursement can occur. The receipt of payment from the EPO should clearly indicate the service or services which have been paid and the date of payment, which must be after the date of communication of IPA4SME support.
4. **Request partial reimbursement:** To request partial reimbursement beneficiaries simply need to upload one or more valid EPO invoices and proofs of payment to EMS. Documents may be uploaded in a single PDF or ZIP file. **Service 2 reimbursements are limited to 2 requests.** For this reason, beneficiaries may submit as many invoices and proofs of payment as they have available for each request. Once beneficiaries have made a second request for reimbursement they will not be able to make additional requests even if they have not reached the maximum reimbursement amount.
5. **Confirmation of reimbursement:** Once the reimbursement has been received the beneficiary will need to upload a signed confirmation, using the model provided in the "Support Documentation" section of EMS. The model will be made available automatically each time the beneficiary makes a reimbursement request.

### 4.3 Timeframe

Service 2 beneficiaries must activate their support service **within 4 months of date of communication of the award**. To activate the support, beneficiaries have 2 options:

- *Initial payment request:* The service can be activated with the first request for reimbursement by presenting at least 1 valid invoice and proof of payment.
- *Proof of application:* Beneficiaries can also activate the service by sending an official proof of patent application from the EPO to [calls@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:calls@ipa4sme.eu).

Once activated, **beneficiaries will have until the end of the IPA4SME project to make their second request for reimbursement**. If a beneficiary does not activate their Service 2 award within 4 months, the support will be cancelled. Beneficiaries who have had a support service cancelled may reapply to the IPA4SME open call without penalisation.

In the event that a beneficiary has been awarded both Service 2 and 3 from the same cut-off date, **the activation of either of the support services will automatically extend the time for the activation of the other service by an additional 4 months**.

Beneficiaries are requested to inform the Coordination Centre ([calls@ipa4sme.eu](mailto:calls@ipa4sme.eu)) in case they decide to stop pursuing the application process. It will not affect the fees already reimbursed, but it will allow for the remaining budget to be reused for other requests.



## 5. Service 3: Partial reimbursement of IP attorney fees

### 5.1 Service 3 workflow

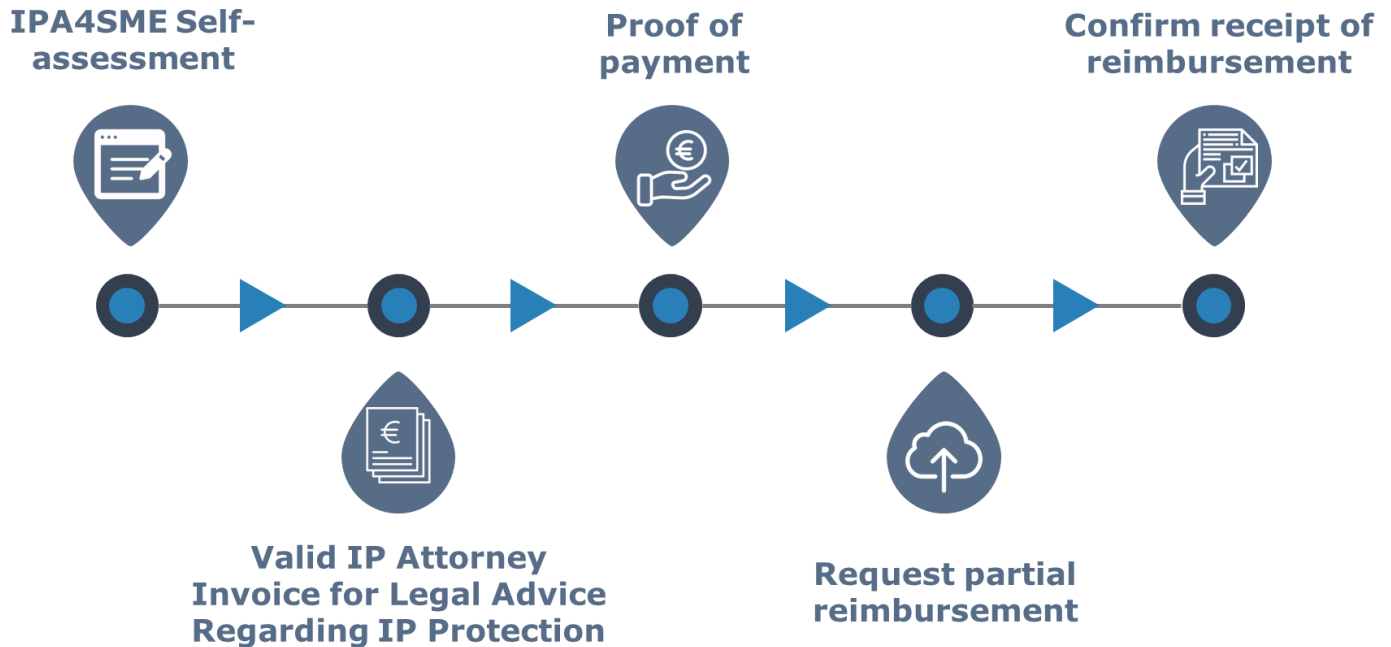


FIGURE 3: SERVICE 3 WORKFLOW

### 5.2 Step-by-step process

The steps involved in activating and receiving the reimbursement for Service 3 are the following:

1. **IPA4SME Self-Assessment:** The beneficiary should complete the exercise as soon as possible following the communication of the support award. The support service cannot be activated if the beneficiary has not completed the survey.
2. **Valid IP attorney invoice:** Beneficiaries can only be reimbursed once they have one or more valid invoices from an **IP Patent Attorney entitled to act before the EPO**. To be considered valid Service 3 reimbursement the invoice must be issued by an IP Patent Attorney who appears on the **EPO list of professional representatives**<sup>3</sup> and be issued after the date of communication of IPA4SME support. To qualify for reimbursement, IP Patent Attorney invoices must include the following information:
  - a. **Name of Patent Attorney** – The name must be the same as in the EPO database.
  - b. **Patent application process** – The invoice must reference the title of invention or IP being protected.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epo.org/applying/online-services/representatives.html>

- c. **EPO patent application number** OR a **statement regarding decision to discontinue patent application process**. A model statement is provided in Annex I of this document.

To facilitate the reimbursement process this information should be included, in English, as part of the Concept or Description field of the invoice. Please use the following model statement:

"Legal advice to support the patent application process "TITLE OF INVENTION/IP", EPO Patent Application Number <EPO APPLICATION NUMBER> provided by <NAME OF PATENT ATTORNEY> to <NAME OF BENEFICIARY > with PIC <PIC NUMBER> from <START DATE> to <END DATE>."

3. **Proof of payment:** Beneficiaries must provide proof that the IP Patent Attorney invoice has been paid before partial reimbursement can occur. Only bank transfer receipts which clearly indicate the name of the beneficiary, the IP patent attorney and the invoice number will be accepted.
4. **Request partial reimbursement:** To request partial reimbursement beneficiaries simply need to upload one or more valid IP Patent Attorney invoices and proofs of payment to EMS. Documents may be uploaded in a single PDF or ZIP file. Service 3 reimbursements are limited to 2 requests. Therefore, beneficiaries should be aware that once they have made a second request for reimbursement they will not be able to make additional requests even if they have not reached the maximum reimbursement amount.
5. **Confirmation of reimbursement:** Once the reimbursement has been received the beneficiary will need to upload a signed confirmation, using the model provided in the "Support Documentation" section of EMS. The model will be made available automatically each time the beneficiary makes a reimbursement request.

### 5.3 Timeframe

Service 3 beneficiaries must activate their support service **within 4 months of date of communication of the award**. To activate the support, beneficiaries must make their first request for reimbursement by presenting at least 1 valid invoice and proof of payment. Once activated, beneficiaries will have until the end of the IPA4SME project to make their second request for reimbursement. If a beneficiary does not activate their Service 3 award within 4 months, the support will be cancelled. Beneficiaries who have had a support service cancelled may reapply to the IPA4SME open call without penalisation.

In the event that a beneficiary has been awarded both Service 2 and 3 from the same cut-off date, **the activation of either of the support services will automatically extend the time for the activation of the other service by an additional 4 months**.



## Annex I: Model Statement of Discontinuation of Patent Application Process

To whom it may concern,

As a result of the advice received by <NAME OF PATENT ATTORNEY<sup>4</sup>>, <NAME OF COMPANY<sup>5</sup>> with <PIC NUMBER> has decided not to continue with the European Patent application for <NAME OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY<sup>6</sup>> property at this time.

The reason for this decision is the following (*Please select all that apply*):

- The decision was made to discontinue the European Patent application process based on feedback received from the EPO.
- The patent attorney consulted does not believe that the invention meets the requirements to be granted a European Patent.
- The patent attorney believes that a European Patent is not the most adequate means of protecting the intellectual property in question. The patent attorney's recommendation is to pursue <NAME OF PROTECTION> protection.

Sincerely,

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Name of legal representative:

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<sup>4</sup> This must be the same name as that which appears on the invoice from the patent attorney

<sup>5</sup> These must be the same as the name and PIC number used for the IPA4SME application

<sup>6</sup> This must be the same as the intellectual property / invention listed on the invoice from the patent attorney

