



Sérvulo & Associados | Sociedade de Advogados, SP, RL

Update

Intellectual Property

January 2022

New SME Fund

Mariana Costa Pinto | mcp@servulo.com

“watch your business take-off”

On January 10, 2022 the European Union Intellectual Property Office (“EUIPO”) made available a new European Union (EU) Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Support Fund, **the Ideas Powered for business SME fund**, to help these companies protect their Industrial Property Rights, operating as a grant scheme.

This fund consists of a **reimbursement program through the issuance of vouchers** that can be used to partially cover fees for certain selected activities. It is envisaged that two types of voucher will be issued:

- Voucher 1, up to a maximum of EUR 1500, usable for fees relating to trademarks and designs as well as the IP pre-scan service (“IP Scan”);
- Voucher 2, up to a maximum of 750 EUR, usable for national patent fees.

The value of each of the vouchers will be determined under the terms of each proposed application, and reimbursements may vary between 90% (in the case of IP pre-screening services) and 50% (in cases of pre-grant fees for international trademarks and designs through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and national patent application fees).

As a novelty when compared to other EUIPO initiatives, we highlight the fact that this fund includes support for the reimbursement of international model and patent application fees. For Portuguese SMEs, is also the first time that is included in the scope of these supports the pre-diagnostic services of industrial property: “IP Scan”.

The SME Fund has EUR 15 million available for IP pre-screening and trademark or design applications, and EUR 1 million available for patent applications. Grants are available throughout 2022 on a first-come, first-served basis until all available funds have been used.

Applications to this fund, unlike other EUIPO initiatives to help SMEs protect their industrial property rights, are thus not limited to certain time windows but can be submitted during the course of 2022,

specifically between January 10 and December 16, 2022, and should be considered by SMEs wishing to protect their industrial property rights.