

NATIONAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OFFICE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2025/26

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science, technology
& innovation

Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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What is NIPMO?

Innovation is a continuous journey of progress, (lots of) setbacks, development and refinement, moving from research and development to (hopefully) commercialisation and impact. Government, academia and private sector each play essential, interconnected roles in funding and managing different stages of this innovation cycle.

The National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) was established under the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 2008 (the IPR Act), to ensure that intellectual property (IP) arising from publicly funded research and development is managed effectively and contributes to national development.

NIPMO was set up to implement the IPR Act to ensure compliance with the legislation, strengthen institutional capacity for technology transfer, and manage funding mechanisms that support the protection and commercialisation of publicly funded IP.

Our Vision: A South Africa where IP from publicly funded R&D, supported through effective regulation and strategic collaboration, fuels innovation, inclusive growth and sustainable socio-economic transformation.

Our Mission: To ensure the effective identification, protection and utilisation of IP emanating from publicly funded R&D, aligned with the IPR Act, while building capacity, raising awareness and enabling partnerships to unlock South Africa's innovation potential for economic and social development.

NIPMO is both a regulator and an enabler. Its three directorates oversee strategic support, funding administration and legislative compliance.

The **Advisory and Support Services Directorate** helps institutions establish and sustain Offices of Technology Transfer (OTTs). These offices play a critical role in managing institutional IP, facilitating commercialisation and engaging with industry. Key focus areas include capacity-building initiatives, technology transfer activities and IP awareness programmes, all aiming at ensuring that institutions maximise the impact of their research outputs.

Financial resources are essential to support IP management and commercialisation efforts. The **Funds and Incentives Management Directorate** administers the IP Fund and the OTT Support Fund. The IP Fund assists institutions in covering part of the costs related to IP protection and maintenance. The OTT Support Fund provides financial

assistance for technology transfer activities, capacity-building initiatives, operational costs and salaries for OTT professionals, enabling institutions to develop and sustain expertise in IP management and technology transfer.

Compliance with the IPR Act and the safeguarding of national interests fall under the responsibility of NIPMO's **Regulatory and Compliance Directorate**. Legislative requirements, IP transactions, and institutional adherence to regulatory obligations are monitored to ensure transparency and alignment with public interest. Oversight of publicly funded IP helps strengthen South Africa's innovation ecosystem and ensures accountability.

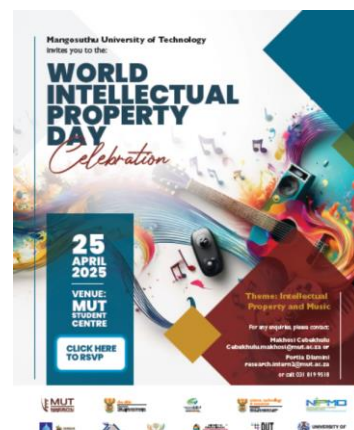
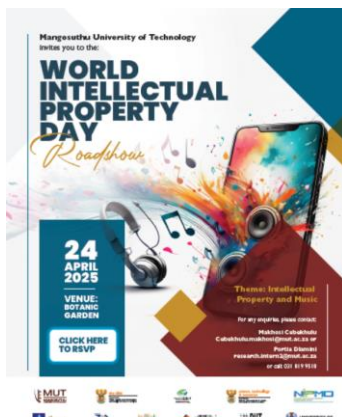
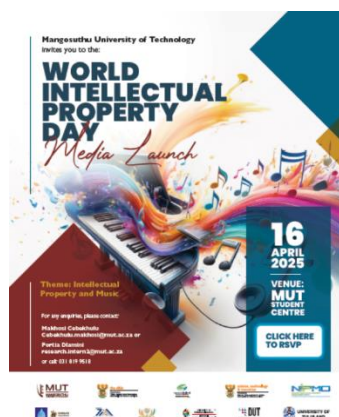
As South Africa continues to strengthen its knowledge economy, NIPMO plays a pivotal role in the innovation cycle. The mission is to ensure that publicly funded IP is managed responsibly, effectively utilised or commercialised, and (where possible) leveraged for the national benefit.

Important deadlines

Subject	Deadline	Contact	Reference
IP7 Form biannual reporting	30 April 2025 <i>(April 2025 reporting container on KIM)</i> 31 October 2025 <i>(Oct. 2025 reporting container on KIM)</i>	Reports should be submitted on the KIM System. Queries: support@seabegroup.co.za Cc: Ntanganedzeni Muanalo Ntanganedzeni.muanalo@nipmo.org.za and Naomi Ngoasheng Naomi.Ngoasheng@nipmo.org.za	Practice Note 5.2 of 2021
OTT Support Fund applications	Owing to existing funding commitments and financial constraints, the call for new applications to the OTT Support Fund has been postponed to a date to be communicated.		
IP Fund applications	Electronic submissions due on 23:55 on Monday, 30 June 2025 Physical copies must reach NIPMO by Friday, 4 July 2025	Submit (email or WeTransfer) to Mantwa Tshabalala Mantwa.Tshabalala@nipmo.org.za and Paballo Masite Paballo.Masite@nipmo.org.za NIPMO, Building 22, CSIR (Scientia) Campus, Meiring Naudé Road, Brummeria, Pretoria	Guideline 2.9 of 2025: Operation of the IP Fund

MUT World Intellectual Property Day celebrations 2025

Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) is holding three World Intellectual Property Day events, a media launch on 16 April, a roadshow on 24 April and a general celebration on 25 April. The theme for this year's World IP Day is "Intellectual Property and Music".



Register for the events using the following links:

16 April:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSceXByki6afubLAeCAItfpGgECgTHnGy-IYy2illywmh8r9Yg/viewform>

24 April:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSewmYd4BEYQHTi1C_h8UgcHMo1iAUt2LfD80M8Zw2gpakU4dA/viewform

25 April:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfarKD8yD-eBqeeRK-JBNvg6QYqIUWbPkLhn3oo1lr3mhlHg/viewform?pli=1>

Streamlining processes through an improved KIM System

For years, institutions have found it a challenge to submit applications and reports using NIPMO's Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) System, so we are proud to introduce a significant upgrade to the system. This transformation is designed to streamline compliance, enhance funding accessibility, and deliver an intuitive digital experience tailored to institutional needs.

The revamped KIM System is designed to provide a smoother digital experience, offering institutions a more intuitive way to submit IP-related information, track funding applications and meet reporting requirements.

Here's a glimpse of what OTT staff and other stakeholders can look forward to.

- **A new NIPMO website**

For too long, the lack of an accessible online platform has made it difficult for stakeholders to find crucial information and resources. That's changing! The brand-new NIPMO website will serve as a central hub for everything you need, from the latest updates and resources to direct access to the upgraded KIM System. This streamlined digital gateway will ensure that institutions find the support and guidance they need with just a few clicks.

- **Fully functional funding management**

In the past, sending funding applications through KIM has been frustrating and time-consuming. The upgraded system should fully support the seamless submission, adjudication and tracking of funding requests. Institutions should be able to link IP Fund claims with relevant disclosure (IP7) and IP numbers, submit and manage OTT Support Fund applications with ease, and benefit from new contract management tools that enable them to upload and track biannual and annual reports linked to OTT Support Fund deliverables. These upgrades will ensure a structured, efficient and transparent funding application process that empowers institutions to focus on innovation rather than paperwork.

- **Smarter user management and access controls**

Managing user access to the KIM System has historically been a challenge. The new system puts control back into the hands of the directors of OTTs, who will be able to grant full or partial access to staff members and seamlessly revoke access when staff members leave an institution. This change will enhance security, improve efficiency and allow institutions to manage their teams with confidence.

- **Reduced administrative burden for reporting**

We understand that reporting requirements, especially for the South African National Survey of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer at Publicly Funded Research Institutions (IP and TT Survey), can be an administrative burden. That is why the new KIM System will integrate key survey questions and data fields directly into the platform. Institutions will be able to track and update OTT staffing, IP portfolios and quantitative reporting fields in real time. The institution will be able to review and authorise the release of IP and TT Survey-related data. With these improvements, institutions will spend less time on paperwork and more time driving innovation forward.

- **Interactive dashboard and real-time insights**

The new interactive dashboard will provide institutions with real-time data and insights on their IP activities, funding applications and compliance metrics. This data-driven approach will empower institutions to track progress effectively and report on key deliverables.

- **A secure, centralised document repository**

Institutions will have secure centralised access to all submitted documents, acknowledgement letters and other official correspondence sent, ensuring that records of IP transactions and funding applications are easily accessible when needed.

Training and support for a smooth transition

We know that change, even when positive, requires adjustment. To ensure that institutions benefit fully from the upgraded KIM System, NIPMO will roll out a structured onboarding programme through an appointed service provider. This will include –

- live training sessions for OTT personnel to get hands-on experience with the new system;
- step-by-step user guides and tutorials to provide ongoing support;
- a dedicated support channel for queries and troubleshooting, ensuring that no institution is left behind.

The enhanced KIM System represents a significant step forward in ensuring compliance with the IPR Act, while also making institutional reporting and funding access more efficient.

As we roll out the system, we look forward to continuing our engagement with institutions to ensure that the KIM System meets their needs.

Knowledge and Information Management System ACCESS AND QUERIES	
Log in at http://www.kim.nipmo.org.za/	Send questions about the KIM System to Support@seabegroup.co.za
To change or update user details, please send a request to Thabang Jase Thabang.Jase@nipmo.org.za and Jetane Charsley Jetane.Charsley@nipmo.org.za	If you do not receive a response from the KIM support team within 48 hours , please forward the query email to Naomi Ngoasheng Naomi.Ngoasheng@nipmo.org.za and Ntanganedzeni Muanalo Ntanganedzeni.Muanalo@nipmo.org.za

INVITATION

WIPO-SOUTH AFRICA SUMMER SCHOOL ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

24 November to 5 December 2025
Mangosuthu University of Technology and online



The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Summer School provides an opportunity for students and young professionals to acquire deeper knowledge of intellectual property (IP) domains and of the role and functions of WIPO.

The programme consists of lectures, case studies, simulation exercises and group discussions on selected IP topics, with an orientation towards the interface between IP and other disciplines.

The summer school is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students and young professionals from any field of study or discipline. The programme is designed for candidates who are already familiar with IP.

To be selected for the programme, you are required to have successfully completed the WIPO Distance Learning Course on Intellectual Property Management (DL 450). Access to this online course will be made available upon submission of your application to attend the summer school.

To apply, click [here](#) to submit a motivation (maximum 300 words) setting out your reasons for applying and what you hope to gain from the summer school. A recent CV and an identification document, such as a passport or national ID, must also be submitted.

This year, participation will be free of charge.

Registration is open from 3 February to 16 May 2025. Selected applicants will be notified two weeks after the registration deadline.

A certificate of participation is awarded to participants who successfully complete the programme requirements.

For more information, contact the summer school administrator at summerschool.southafrica@wipo.int.



Click on the link below to apply. If you do not have an account, you need to register. Then go to WIPO courses, select SA Summer School, and upload your CV and motivation.

https://welc.wipo.int/acc/index.jsf?page=wssCatalog.xhtml&lang=en&cc=WSSZA_2025#plus_WSSZA_2025

Important reporting obligations

Institutions that receive funding from the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) Support Fund are obliged to submit reports twice a year so that NIPMO can monitor the use of allocated funding. Reporting is not a choice, but a legal requirement in terms of the agreement under which funding is transferred to an institution.

However, NIPMO is receiving incomplete and late reports, which hampers its ability to provide financial support to OTTs.

Purpose of the OTT Support Fund

The OTT Support Fund was established to assist OTTs in public research and higher education institutions to translate the outcomes of publicly funded research and development into real-world impact.

Implemented in accordance with NIPMO Guideline 7, the OTT Support Fund provides financial assistance to institutions over one to three-year funding cycles. Funding agreements are concluded between the institution and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), and outline deliverables across four distinct funding categories, namely –

- the establishment and/or maintenance of an OTT (contribution to OTT staff salaries);
- OTT operational activities;
- capacity development of OTT personnel;
- technology transfer activities.

Reporting obligations

Institutions are required to submit a mid-year report and an annual progress report to enable NIPMO to monitor the effective use of allocated funding and budget accurately for future commitments. The reports must detail the current status of agreed activities, progress against milestones, notable achievements, challenges encountered and mitigation plans implemented to address challenges, and must be accompanied by a financial expenditure report.

In recent years, NIPMO has observed recurring delays in report submissions and, in many cases, financial statements have either not been signed or not been submitted at all. This affects NIPMO's projected financial spending, often leading to the amendment or rollover of funding commitments. Failure to adhere to agreed outcomes may result in the withholding of tranche payments or, in some cases, the return of unspent funds to the

DSTI due to non-performance. Institutions therefore need to strengthen internal financial planning and adhere to all reporting deadlines.

Amendment of agreements

To promote sound financial management, the DSTI has implemented a 90% spending rule. This means that where multiple tranches are disbursed over the term of the agreement, institutions must demonstrate that at least 90% of the preceding tranche has been spent before the next tranche can be released.

This rule serves as a control measure to ensure that project funds are used according to agreed timelines and deliverables, but some institutions find it a challenge. A review of OTT Support Fund agreements since 2011 shows that approximately 17% of agreements have required extensions owing to delayed spending. These delays are often attributed to difficulties in recruiting suitable OTT personnel, unanticipated resignations or unforeseen delays in the implementation of technology transfer projects.

Where the next scheduled tranche cannot be disbursed because an institution has not spent 90% of the previous tranche, it is necessary to amend the agreement with the institution for the financial year in which the tranche was due. To request an amendment, institutions must inform NIPMO of the reasons for the delay in spending, and what will be done to address underspending. A revised budget must be submitted if any agreed activity is no longer relevant and needs to be replaced by an alternative within the scope of the OTT Support Fund.

The DSTI allows an agreement to be amended (using an addendum) only twice. Although it is possible to reinstate an expired agreement, this should be a last resort. Requests for amendments or extensions to agreements should be submitted to NIPMO at least six months before the agreement's expiry date, to allow sufficient time for NIPMO to consider and engage on them. If the request is appropriate, NIPMO will recommend it to the DSTI's Finance component for consideration and then to the Director-General for approval. Upon approval, the Department's Legal Services will prepare an addendum for signature by the delegated representatives of both parties.

Agreement statistics and assigned contract managers

According to NIPMO records, 10 OTT Support Fund agreements will expire in 2025, six in 2026 and 13 in 2027. Late requests for extensions (or amendments) will not be considered and the agreements will conclude as scheduled.

Institutions are encouraged to engage with their allocated NIPMO team members as early as possible if they encounter any problems.

Entity	Contact person	Copy
Agricultural Research Council	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
Central University of Technology	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
Council for Geoscience	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
Mintek	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
Council for Scientific and Industrial Research	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
Durban University of Technology	Jetane Charsley	Thabang Jase Elmary Buis
Human Sciences Research Council	Paballo Masite	Lindiwe Mashimbye Mantwa Tshabalala
Mangosuthu University of Technology	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
National Health Laboratory Service	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
National Research Foundation	Paballo Masite	Lindiwe Mashimbye Mantwa Tshabalala
Nelson Mandela University	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
North-West University	Mantwa Tshabalala	Paballo Masite Lindiwe Mashimbye
Rhodes University	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
Sol Plaatje University	Paballo Masite	Lindiwe Mashimbye Mantwa Tshabalala
South African Medical Research Council	Paballo Masite	Lindiwe Mashimbye Mantwa Tshabalala
South African Nuclear Energy Corporation	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
Stellenbosch University	Jetane Charsley	Thabang Jase Elmary Buis
Tshwane University of Technology	Jetane Charsley	Thabang Jase Elmary Buis

Entity	Contact person	Copy
University of Cape Town	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
University of Fort Hare	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
University of Johannesburg	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
University of KwaZulu-Natal	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
University of Limpopo	Lindiwe Mashimbye	Paballo Masite Mantwa Tshabalala
University of Mpumalanga	Jetane Charsley	Thabang Jase Elmary Buis
University of Pretoria	Mantwa Tshabalala	Paballo Masite Lindiwe Mashimbye
University of South Africa	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
University of the Free State	Paballo Masite	Lindiwe Mashimbye Mantwa Tshabalala
University of the Western Cape	Mantwa Tshabalala	Paballo Masite Lindiwe Mashimbye
University of the Witwatersrand	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
University of Venda	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
University of Zululand	Elmary Buis	Thabang Jase Nodumo Maluleke
Vaal University of Technology	Mantwa Tshabalala	Paballo Masite Lindiwe Mashimbye
Walter Sisulu University	Thabang Jase	Elmary Buis Nodumo Maluleke
Water Research Commission	Mantwa Tshabalala	Paballo Masite Lindiwe Mashimbye

NIPMO remains committed to supporting existing grant holders and will continue to work closely with institutions to ensure the successful implementation of approved activities and the long-term sustainability of technology transfer efforts.

Jonker Sailplanes wins NSTF SMME Innovation Award



A glider in motion. Credit: Tjoppie Malan (14 years old)

Since 2019, the DSTI, through NIPMO, has proudly sponsored the Innovation through an SMME Award in partnership with the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF). On 11 July 2024, at the NSTF-South32 Awards Gala Dinner, this prestigious recognition was awarded to Jonker Sailplanes for their advancements in sailplane design and manufacturing.

From a team of three engineers and three technicians, Jonker Sailplanes has grown into a world-class company, employing over 150 people, including 16 qualified engineers. Approximately 90% of its workforce was originally from Ikageng township near Potchefstroom. They have been trained and are now specialised technicians performing safety-critical tasks regulated by US and European aviation authorities.

The success story is a powerful example of innovation, skills development and global competitiveness. This South African company is not only competing on the global stage, but also setting new industry standards highlighting the critical role small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) play in driving economic growth, job creation and technological advancement.



Minister Ndimande presents the award

Expanding technology and innovation support centres in South Africa

South Africa's innovation ecosystem continues to gain momentum, driven in part by the expanding footprint of the Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs). This strategic initiative, jointly championed by NIPMO, the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), is strengthening access to technological information while empowering local innovators to harness IP for inclusive economic growth.

Launched in 2014, the TISC programme was designed to build institutional IP capacity, enhance the capabilities of OTTs, and support innovation-led growth among SMMEs. By offering access to locally based, high-quality services – ranging from patent information searches to IP management guidance – TISCs are equipping researchers, entrepreneurs and innovation stakeholders with the tools they need to create, protect and commercialise intellectual assets.

As of 2024, the national TISC network has grown to encompass 27 host institutions, which have memoranda of agreement with NIPMO and the CIPC, South Africa's designated focal points to WIPO. These hosts span a diverse range of organisations, including public research institutions, higher education institutions, innovation agencies and private sector collaborators.

The 2024/25 financial year marked a period of significant expansion, with 10 new memoranda of agreement concluded and several additional institutions expressing formal interest in joining the network. This wave of engagement reflects growing recognition of the value TISCs offer in enabling knowledge-driven development and fostering a more equitable innovation landscape.

Capacity building remains a cornerstone of the TISC programme. Over the past decade, more than 600 participants have enrolled in WIPO-sponsored distance learning courses in IP, while over 500 stakeholders have benefited from national workshops hosted by NIPMO on behalf of WIPO. These workshops have become vital platforms for peer learning, knowledge exchange and strengthening institutional IP ecosystems.

A highlight of the current reporting period was the TISC National Workshop held in Cape Town in March 2025. This interactive two-day event brought together representatives from TISC host institutions, OTT professionals and SMME stakeholders to explore the practical realities of IP support services in the South African context. The programme focused on peer-to-peer engagement, collaborative problem-solving, and the sharing of institutional experiences, challenges and success stories. Participants discussed

strategies for improving service delivery, enhancing internal IP processes, and strengthening the reach and relevance of TISCs in their communities.

The workshop also served as a valuable platform to reconnect the growing TISC network, stimulate discussion on emerging support needs, and reaffirm the commitment of host institutions to advancing innovation through improved access to IP-related services.

Looking ahead, NIPMO anticipates an even stronger collaboration with the CIPC to strengthen the national coordination of the TISC programme. As the network expands and diversifies, deeper cooperation between the two WIPO focal points will be essential to ensure consistency, enhance service delivery, and align efforts to reach underserved communities and innovators.

With a solid foundation, robust partnerships, and growing interest from new host institutions, the TISC initiative is well-positioned to play a catalytic role in deepening South Africa's innovation capacity, ensuring that IP continues to serve as a driver of sustainable, inclusive development.

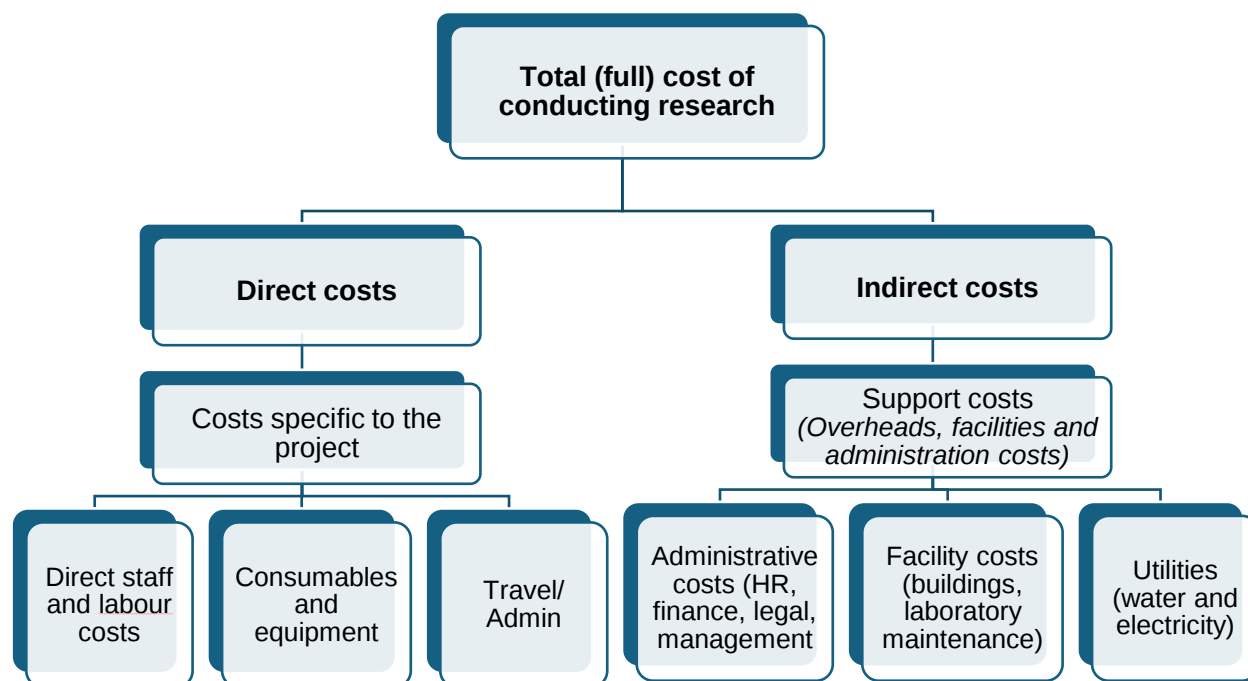
Understanding the full cost principle in the IPR Act

As South Africa advances its innovation agenda, understanding the financial underpinnings of publicly funded research has become increasingly important. A central aspect of this is the principle of **full cost**, an approach that shows the true cost of undertaking research and development (R&D) projects, particularly those involving private partners. This is not a policy preference from NIPMO, but a legal requirement under the IPR Act.

Full cost refers to all direct and indirect expenses incurred in conducting R&D, as defined by international financial reporting standards. Direct costs such as salaries, equipment and materials are usually relatively easy to identify and allocate to a research project. In contrast, indirect costs, including administrative support, IT infrastructure and utilities, are difficult to allocate to individual projects but are essential for the day-to-day functioning of research institutions.

As it is not practical for an institution to determine the exact indirect cost for each research project, institutions apply an indirect cost recovery rate (ICRR) approved by NIPMO, which is a percentage-based estimate of indirect costs. This practice supports transparency, financial sustainability and consistency across institutions. Full cost, however, should not be confused with pricing, which may include margins or

contingencies. Pricing falls outside NIPMO's mandate, whereas full cost relates to determining the value of the resources required to undertake research.



Section 15(4)(a) of the IPR Act provides that R&D fully funded by a private entity, where both direct and indirect costs are covered, is not considered publicly financed and therefore the provisions of the IPR Act do not apply. This provides a clear distinction between research that is completely privately funded and projects that are supported by public funds. If full cost is not met, the research outputs remain within the scope of the IPR Act. Full costing is not intended as a means to avoid the application of the IPR Act, but rather serves to bring transparency to research agreements and accountability in how funding is managed. Once the full cost methodology is approved, DSTI-NIPMO issues the institution with a certificate confirming acceptance of its ICRR. Private funders may request to view this certificate through the institution's office of technology transfer.

In line with these legislative requirements, institutions must submit their full cost formulae and supporting matrices to NIPMO every two years. These are reviewed by the Full Costing Committee (FCC), a panel of independent experts put together by the NIPMO Advisory Board. In April 2024, four new FCC members were appointed, and in May 2024 Ms Cynthia Nonkululeko Tsita was elected Chairperson.

A technical support workshop hosted in July 2024 brought together finance and technology transfer professionals to discuss the application of the ICRR and related legislative considerations. In response to a national call, 34 institutions submitted full cost

matrix calculations, of which 28 were approved. Some of the remaining institutions' submissions were sent back for refinement before reconsideration by the FCC.

South Africa's application of full costing aligns with global norms. Among South African higher education institutions, the average ICRR has grown from 34% in 2015/16 to 54% in 2024/25. Schedule 1 institutions have moved from 42% to 92% in the same period. The South African average ICRRs are similar to other countries such as the USA, where negotiated indirect cost rates typically range between 50% and 60% (57% at Stanford University and 69% at Harvard Medical School), and Australia, where rates between 40% and 50% are applied to ensure long-term research sustainability. South Africa's upward trajectory reflects greater institutional recognition of the role indirect costs play in maintaining research capacity.

NIPMO remains committed to helping institutions fulfil their legal obligations while respecting institutional autonomy. The current full cost approach balances consistency and flexibility, enabling institutions to apply methodologies suited to their internal financial structures.

Full cost is not intended to restrict the application of the IPR Act, but to provide an accurate reflection of the resources required for research. A clear and consistent costing approach supports effective governance, strengthens contractual certainty and reinforces the sustainability of the national innovation system.



NIPMO with FCC members



Participants at a technical assistance meeting with the FCC

R&D tax incentive: A snapshot for applicants

By Dr Pholoshi Maake, Acting Director: R&D Tax Incentive at the DSTI

The scientific and technological research and development tax incentive (R&D tax incentive) was introduced in 2006 to stimulate private-sector investment in scientific and technological advancements in South Africa. Originally developed through a collaboration between the DSTI (called the Department of Science and Technology at the time), the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the Department of Trade and Industry at the time), the National Treasury and the South African Revenue Service (SARS), the incentive remains a key policy tool to support innovation.

The 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) reaffirmed the government's commitment to increasing R&D investment, with the aim of reaching 1,5% of GDP within the next decade. The R&D tax incentive, which was originally set to end on 30 September 2022, has since been extended following a comprehensive review process that included public consultations, impact evaluations and legislative amendments. In February 2023, the Minister of Finance announced an extension of the incentive until 31 December 2033, along with refinements to section 11D of the Income Tax Act. These amendments, which came into effect on 1 January 2024, aim to simplify the definition of R&D, remove barriers to eligibility, and introduce a grace period for application submissions.

From 1 January 2024, a six-month grace period for claiming eligible expenditure prior to the date of application has been in place. This grace period cannot extend further back than the date stated in the Taxation Laws Amendment Act. However, the incentive remains a pre-approval system, meaning companies must still apply before finalising their claims. The onus is on the applicant to prove that the activities performed or to be performed will fall within the scope of R&D as defined in the Income Tax Act.

The definition of R&D has been refined to align with international best practices, particularly the OECD Frascati Manual. The focus is now on resolving scientific or technological uncertainties, emphasising novelty, creativity, uncertainty and systematic investigative or systematic experimental.

Additionally, section 11D exclusions have been revised. Previously, the development of internal business processes was not eligible unless they were intended for sale or licensing. This restriction has now been removed, ensuring that eligibility is based on the nature of the R&D activity rather than its intended use.

Companies undertaking qualifying scientific and technological R&D in South Africa can receive a 150% tax deduction on eligible R&D operational expenditure. To benefit, companies must obtain pre-approval from the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation.

To qualify, R&D activities must be –

- systematic investigative or experimental processes aimed at discovering new scientific or technological uncertainty;
- not readily deducible by a person skilled in the relevant scientific or technological field;
- focused on creating or developing new or significantly improved products, processes or services;
- applicable to creating or developing one or more multisource pharmaceutical products;
- conducting clinical trials.

The DSTI administers the R&D tax incentive in partnership with SARS and the National Treasury. Applications are evaluated by the R&D Tax Incentive Adjudication and Monitoring Committee, which includes representatives from these entities, supported by external technical experts. The online R&D tax incentive system, launched in October 2022, facilitates the application and reporting process. With the R&D tax incentive extension until 2033 and the latest refinements, the R&D tax incentive remains a vital tool for supporting innovation, productivity and economic growth in South Africa. By reducing the financial burden of R&D, the incentive helps businesses strengthen their technological capabilities, enhance global competitiveness, and contribute to knowledge transfer and skills development.

Download the updated guidelines for applicants from

[https://www.dsti.gov.za/rdtax/images/tax-incentive/Amended RD Tax Incentive Guidelines for Applicants.pdf](https://www.dsti.gov.za/rdtax/images/tax-incentive/Amended_RD_Tax_Incentive_Guidelines_for_Applicants.pdf).

Access the online system at <https://www.dsti.gov.za/rdtax/>.

Email: rndtaxincentive@dsti.gov.za.

Participation in WIPO-WTO Colloquium and IPSA Conference

The WIPO-World Trade Organization (WTO) Colloquium for Intellectual Property Teachers and Researchers in Africa took place from 5 to 8 August 2024 at the University of Cape Town (UCT).

The event provided a platform for African academics to engage with international experts, discuss recent IP law and policy developments, and explore key themes such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, climate change, frontier technologies and traditional knowledge.

Following the colloquium, the second IP Scholars Africa (IPSA) Conference was held on 9 August 2024. Building on the success of the first IPSA Conference in Pretoria in 2018, this event allowed African researchers to present works-in-progress, exchange ideas and receive feedback from peers. The conference featured keynote addresses, panel discussions and interactive sessions with senior scholars and international officials.



Attendees of the WIPO-WTO colloquium for IP teachers © UCT/Cheks Media

The opening panel included Ms Jetane Charsley, Head: NIPMO, who emphasised the role of IP education in driving sustainable development and highlighted NIPMO's initiatives to enhance IP awareness and management in South Africa.

Other key speakers included Mr Sherif Saadallah (WIPO Academy), Prof. Danwood Chirwa (UCT) and Mr Antony Scott Taubman (WTO), who spoke on the importance of innovation, academic collaboration and the need for stronger IP frameworks in Africa. WIPO and WTO provided 20 scholarships, with an additional five supported by the IP Chair at UCT, ensuring broader participation.

Scholars were encouraged to submit their research to the WIPO-WTO Colloquium Papers or the South African Intellectual Property Law Journal, further fostering IP scholarship in Africa.

NIPMO remains committed to supporting IP education and research, ensuring that South Africa continues to play a leading role in shaping the continent's innovation ecosystem.



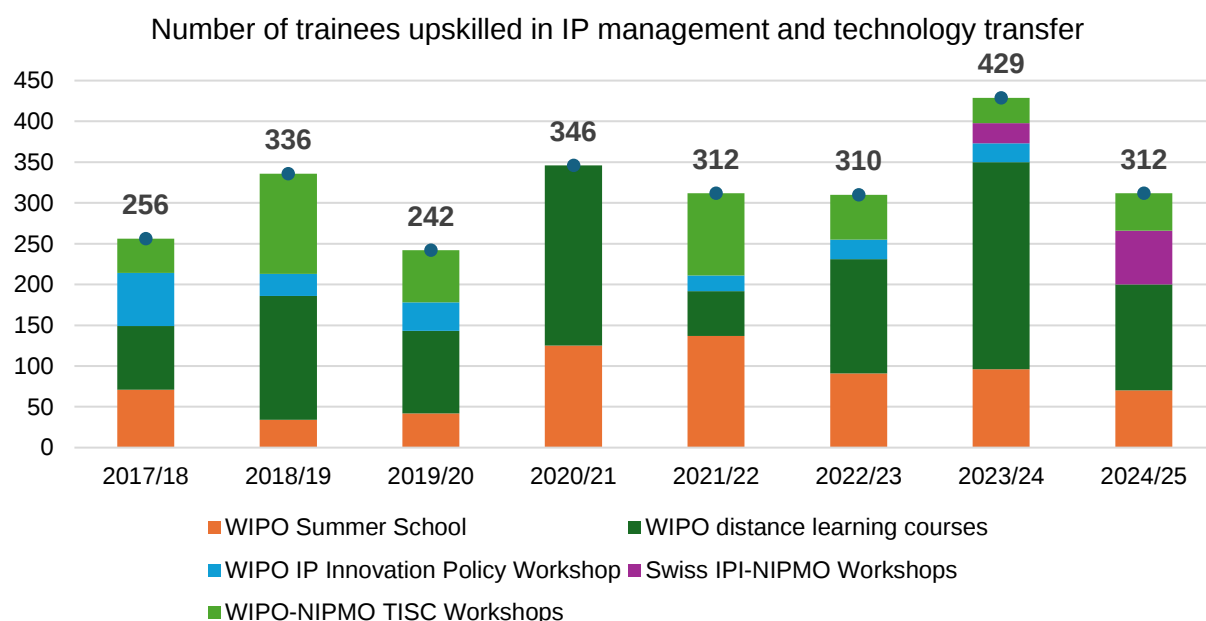
Prof. Danwood Chirwa (UCT), Prof. Michelle Kelly-Louw (UCT), Mr Sherif Saadallah (WIPO), Prof. Jeff Murugan (UCT) and Ms Jetane Charsley (NIPMO) © UCT/Farm Design

Did you know?

Over the past **eight years**, NIPMO has played a key role in developing capacity and enhancing expertise in IP management and technology transfer through certificate training courses.

Here are some numbers:

- **2 543 enrolments** across multiple training interventions (*some individuals enrolled in more than one course*).
- **58%** of participants were **women**.
- Participants from **51 countries**, including **25 African nations**.
- **5 distinct certificate training courses** offered.
- **41 training sessions** hosted and organized.



Reflections on 2024/25 IP training and outreach activities

SMME IP commercialisation workshops

NIPMO, in collaboration with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the Swiss-South African Intellectual Property Project (SSAIP), hosted two Intellectual Property Commercialisation Workshops for SMMEs during the 2024/25 financial year. These workshops, held in the Western Cape (2023), the Eastern Cape (2024) and, most recently, Gauteng (2025), are part of an ongoing national initiative aimed at supporting SMMEs to leverage IP for business growth and societal benefit. In the next financial year, the partners plan to expand the initiative to additional provinces as part of broader efforts to strengthen South Africa's innovation ecosystem and drive economic growth through IP commercialisation.

The Gqeberha workshop, held from 15 to 17 October 2024, brought together 30 entrepreneurs, primarily from the Eastern Cape, for three days of interactive sessions on IP rights, brand development and commercialisation strategies. A new feature introduced in this workshop was a mock pitching session, giving delegates the chance to apply their learning in a practical setting and receive personalised feedback from judges.

Among the participants was Stacey Smith, founder of My African Secret, a cosmetic brand inspired by African natural ingredients. As a returning delegate from the 2023 Western Cape workshop, she shared how IP training had helped her secure trademark protection for her product range and build a strong online brand. Her reflections on overcoming challenges and strategically applying IP knowledge were well received by fellow participants, offering relatable encouragement to emerging entrepreneurs.

The Pretoria workshop, held from 11 to 13 March 2025, welcomed 36 SMMEs from the STI sector. Structured around the same workshop model, it built on earlier successes while reinforcing national efforts to promote innovation as a driver of inclusive development.

The mock pitching session proved particularly popular and impactful. Designed not as a competition but as a developmental platform, it enabled delegates to present their business ideas to a panel of judges who identified participants with strong potential and connected them with tailored mentorship opportunities. One of these identified participants in 2024 was Luvuyo Sume, Managing Director of Prosthetic Engineering Technologies (PET), who returned in 2025 to share the progress he had made and what he had learnt.

PET, co-founded in 2020 in Gqeberha, is regarded as Africa's first manufacturer of prosthetic limb components. Drawing on his expertise as an industrial engineer and personal experience as an amputee, Luvuyo shared how early exposure to IP considerations, including those introduced in the 2024 workshop, helped inform PET's approach to protecting innovations such as the Dura-Comfort Silicone Prosthetic Liner. PET's growth includes registration with the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, a 2023 SAB Foundation Award, and support from TIA and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.



These workshops not only deliver practical IP knowledge, but also create a nurturing environment for peer learning, collaboration, personal growth and meaningful networking opportunities. Participants had an opportunity to interact with industry experts, explore prospective partnerships and gain valuable insights to help them enhance their entrepreneurial journey. As this collaborative effort continues to evolve, NIPMO, TIA and the SSAIP remain committed to cultivating an inclusive innovation ecosystem where SMMEs are equipped to thrive and uplift communities.



Eastern Cape workshop, October 2024



Gauteng workshop, March 2025

WIPO-SA Summer School 2024 empowers innovators and strengthens South African IP ecosystem



Adv. Rory Voller (CIPC Commissioner), Ms Jetane Charsley (Head: NIPMO), Prof. Nokuthula Sibiya (DUT DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement), Ms Maria-Stella Ntarmark (WIPO Program Officer), Dr Anette Mienie (Director: Research, MUT) and 2024 WIPO-SA Summer School delegation

The 2024 WIPO-SA Summer School, held from 25 November to 6 December 2024, brought together 70 participants from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe to explore the important role of IP in sustainable development. The event was co-hosted by NIPMO, in partnership with WIPO, the Japan Patent Office, the CIPC, and Mangosuthu University of Technology, and offered a dynamic platform for learning, networking and skills development. The programme featured a series of lectures, case studies and practical sessions to equip participants with knowledge in IP management and technology transfer.

Participants had the opportunity to engage with IP experts, policymakers and industry leaders, fostering networks for future collaborations. A particularly inspiring segment showcased local high school students presenting their innovative projects, offering a glimpse into the creativity and potential of South Africa's next generation of inventors.



Advancing IP education at TVET colleges

From 8 to 10 April 2024, four NIPMO team members (Hlamalani Mashimbwe, Mantwa Tshabalala, Lehlohonolo Mmushi and Sphesihle Thusini) embarked on an IP awareness campaign at Maluti Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in the Free State. They visited Bethlehem, Phuthaditjhaba, Tseki, Riverside and Harrismith. They taught college students about the importance of IP and its relevance to their studies and daily lives. As aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators, it is important that students are aware of IP and IP rights. The initiative was intended to empower the younger generation by teaching them how to safeguard their ideas, inventions and brands effectively.

The team highlighted the paradox outlined by WIPO – despite young people's enthusiastic consumption of IP-based products, there is often a significant gap in their comprehension of IP rights and principles. This is a risk to the protection of their creations.



The team encountered enthusiastic students eager to learn about IP at all four colleges. From Bethlehem to Harrismith, there was a palpable sense of curiosity and determination among the youngsters. Through engaging presentations and discussions, students gained valuable insights into the role of IP in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

Celebrating World IP Day 2024 with partners and stakeholders



Prof. Jeffrey Mphahlele, DVC for Research and Innovation at NWU

Every year on 26 April, South Africa joins the global community to celebrate World IP Day to learn about the role that IP and IP rights play in encouraging innovation and creativity. The celebrations target the public, youth, academics, organised and small businesses, the legal fraternity and government departments involved in the field of IP.

In April and May 2024 NIPMO joined different institutions (higher education and science councils) to celebrate World IP Day. The main event was hosted by North-West University (NWU) in partnership with the DSTI's corporate communication team, NIPMO, the CIPC, TIA, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, the Small Enterprise Development Agency and other local groups and high school learners.

Events were held on 16, 25 and 26 April, starting with a programme launch with partners and the local media at NWU's Potchefstroom campus. This was followed by an event for NWU students at the Mafikeng campus and then celebrations with high school learners, NWU students, researchers, local community groups, entrepreneurs, innovators and IP creators, again at the Potchefstroom campus. All the partners presented their audiences with information on IP, IP rights and the role of IP in the national system of innovation.



World IP Day organising committee: The DSTI-NIPMO, the DTIC, the CIPC and NWU OTT

VUT partners with NIPMO to advance IP and innovation strategies

By Manani Hlongwane, Public Relations Officer, Technology Transfer and Innovation

On 14 November 2024, the Technology Transfer Office at Vaal University of Technology (VUT) hosted a strategic engagement with NIPMO. This collaborative event highlighted VUT's steadfast commitment to fostering innovation and effectively managing IP to address societal challenges and drive progress.

The engagement began with a compelling address by Prof. Khehla Ndlovu, VUT Vice-Chancellor and Principal, who welcomed guests and highlighted the university's dedication to advancing NIPMO's mission. He emphasised the critical role of protecting IP generated with public funds and recognised NIPMO's ongoing support in this regard. Prof. Ndlovu encouraged PhD and master's students to engage with the OTT at VUT, urging them to share their intellectual creations and leverage IP to make a tangible societal impact. If they were able to do this, the university's innovations could extend beyond academic environments to address real-world challenges like poverty and sustainable development.

The Vice-Chancellor stressed that innovation was not only about discovery, but also about creating a dynamic ecosystem in which ideas were nurtured into actionable solutions. He noted that managing and protecting knowledge was crucial for transforming breakthroughs into meaningful contributions to society. He called for collaboration and creativity, emphasising that, while government played a key role, institutions like VUT should actively contribute to an ecosystem that translated research with real-world applications.

Ms Jetane Charsley, Head: NIPMO, addressed the growing importance of IP in a world in which knowledge had become the most valuable resource. She highlighted that managing and protecting IP was essential to tackling both national and global challenges. IP, she explained, had the potential to transform university-generated breakthroughs – whether in advanced technologies or sustainable processes – into solutions that benefited society. Ms Charsley urged VUT to cultivate an environment where researchers recognised the value of their work and were inspired to channel their innovations towards impactful outcomes.

The event also featured a dynamic panel discussion with Dr Speech Nelana, VUT Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and Mr Kgomotso Lekola, founder and CEO of BT Industrial Group. The discussion, moderated by Ms Tumelo Mashabela, explored strategies to transform ideas into actionable initiatives. Mr Lekola spoke passionately about his entrepreneurial

journey, encouraging institutions and funders to offer sustained opportunities to innovators, even in the face of initial setbacks. He also mentioned that many national policies did not favour entrepreneurs. He emphasised that business ventures often endured multiple failures before achieving success, and called for patience and persistence from all stakeholders.

A recurring theme throughout the event was the shared responsibility of institutions, government, and industry to harness the full potential of innovation. IP was presented as more than just a mechanism for protecting ideas; it serves as a bridge between research and societal impact. The discussions underscored the importance of creating a supportive ecosystem that enables ideas to evolve into transformative solutions, ensuring that the knowledge generated within academia contributes meaningfully to national and global progress.

The engagement between VUT and NIPMO exemplified a shared vision for advancing innovation and IP management. By fostering collaboration and nurturing creativity, the university reaffirmed its commitment to leveraging research and innovation to make a tangible difference in society.



Prof. Stephen Khehla Ndlovu, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, and VUT management with panel members: Ms Jetane Charsley (NIPMO), Mr Kgomotso Lekola (BT Industrial Group) and Ms Tumelo Mashabela (Tshaya Mashabela Attorneys)

Intellectual property advocacy and awareness in action

Over the past financial year, NIPMO actively supported IP awareness and advocacy through a series of workshops, panel discussions and strategic engagements. These initiatives reached students, researchers, policymakers and industry leaders, enhancing their understanding of IP management, protection and commercialisation. To highlight the scope and impact of our work, here's a snapshot of some events and collaborations.



NIPMO supported the University of Zululand in celebrating World IP Day on 30 July 2024



Mr Thabang Jase represented NIPMO at South Africa-Sri Lanka bilateral discussions on 31 July 2024



Sol Plaatje University hosted an IP Wise™ workshop on 10 November 2024



NIPMO engaged with researchers and postgraduate students at an IP workshop at the Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure



University of Mpumalanga workshop facilitated by TIA and NIPMO on 7 Oct. 2024



NIPMO participated in the UFH Research Week of Excellence from 11 to 14 November 2024



Science Forum SA panel discussion on "Managing IP in cross-border research collaborations" in December 2024



VUT World IP Day celebration on 16 May 2025



Gauteng Tech Transfer Forum, Nov. 2024



UP World IP Day celebration on 15 May 2024



Maluti TVET College, Tshepe Campus, April 2024



UNISA World IP Day on 22 May 2024



University of Limpopo, World IP Day event



TUT World IP Day on 10 May 2024

NIPMO contact list

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2025 Calendar of Events

April	8	Webinar: Annual IP Forms Refresher Session: What to consider when completing various IP forms
	16	Webinar: IP7 form and IP Fund Training
	16	World IP Day: media launch, Mangosuthu University of Technology Student Centre
	24	World IP Day: Roadshow, Durban Botanical Gardens
	26	World IP Day: Celebrations, MUT Student Centre
May	TBC	Southern African Research and Innovation Association (SARIMA)/NIPMO webinar: Demystifying NIPMO OTT Support Fund proposals and reporting
July	TBC	NSTF Awards (Johannesburg and Cape Town)
Sept.	2 to 5	SARIMA Conference, Stellenbosch, Western Cape
Nov.	25 to 28	Science Forum South Africa, Pretoria
	24 Nov. to 5 Dec.	WIPO SA Summer School on IP Management and Technology Transfer, Mangosuthu University of Technology
Feb.	TBC	SSAIP-NIPMO-TIA: SMME IP commercialisation workshop, North West
Feb./ March	TBC	Technology and Innovation Support Centre workshop



List of NIPMO documents

This list was updated in March 2025. If you need copies of any NIPMO documentation, please email Naomi Aphane (Naomi.Aphane@nipmo.org.za) or Hlamalani Khoza (Hlamalani.Khoza@nipmo.org.za).

Guidelines

No.	Title
1.3 of 2019	Interpretation of the scope of the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (Act 51 of 2008): Setting the scene <i>Latest update published in March 2019</i>
2.9 of 2025	Guidelines for the operation of the Intellectual Property Fund <i>Latest update published in March 2025</i>
3.5 of 2019	Intellectual Property Creator Incentives <i>Latest update published in March 2019</i>
4.2 of 2019	Intellectual Property Ownership <i>Latest update published in October 2019</i>
5.2 of 2021	Guidance for determining the full cost of R&D as per the IPR Act <i>Latest update published in September 2021</i>
6.1 of 2019	Intellectual Property Enforcement Fund Currently withdrawn
7.4 of 2024	Office of Technology Transfer Support Fund <i>Latest update published in March 2024</i>
8.1 of 2021	Intellectual Property Policy: An Easy Guide <i>Latest update published in March 2021</i>

Practice Notes

No.	Title
1 of 2012	Practice Note to Guideline 1 of 2012 <i>Published in December 2012</i>
2.1 of 2017	Dispute Resolution Procedures <i>Published in March 2017</i>
3.1 of 2017	<i>Replaced by Guideline 5</i>

4.2 of 2021	Referral of intellectual property to NIPMO on an IP1 form – <i>How to complete an IP1 form on NIPMO KIM (step by step guide)</i> <i>Latest update published in April 2021</i>
5.2 of 2021	Intellectual property status and commercialisation reports reported to NIPMO on an IP7 form – <i>How to complete an IP7 Form on NIPMO KIM (step-by step-guide)</i> <i>Latest update published in March 2021</i>

Interpretation Notes

No.	Title
1	NIPMO General Compliance Requirements <i>Published in November 2014</i>
2	IP Transaction Approval <i>Latest update published in March 2022</i>
3	Reporting Obligations of an Assignee Currently withdrawn
4	THRIP-funded Research <i>Published in July 2015 – NIPMO team working on updated document</i>
5	Specific Ownership Scenarios <i>Published in July 2015</i>
6	State Rights to IP Developed from Publicly Financed R&D <i>Published in March 2016</i>
7	Are Data IP in terms of IPR Act? <i>Latest update published in August 2018</i>
8	Government Department-funded IP and the Interface with the IPR Act <i>Published in April 2018</i>
9	Intellectual Property Ownership with respect to Technology Innovation Agency Funding Programmes <i>Published in March 2018</i>
10	When Does the IPR Act Apply? <i>Published in October 2018</i>
11	State-Owned Enterprises and the Interface with the IPR Act <i>Published in December 2018</i>
12	Procedure for the Review of Non-commercialised IP at Institutions. <i>Published in November 2019</i>
13	Everything You Need to Know about Full Cost <i>Published in August 2019</i>

14	Clarifying Open Science, Open Innovation and Open Source <i>Published in July 2022</i>
15	Clinical Trials and IP <i>Published in April 2025</i>
16	Benefit-sharing as per the IPR Act <i>Published in April 2025</i>

Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Surveys

South African National Survey of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer at Publicly Funded Research Institutions • First survey: 2008 to 2014 • Second survey: 2014 to 2018	Available on the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation website: https://www.dsti.gov.za/index.php/resource-center/rad-reports/tt-ip-survey
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