



Intellectual Property Office of Singapore
Registry of Patents

Circular No. 3/2026: Clarification on Invitation to Amend (ITA) for the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) or Global Patent Prosecution Highway (GPPH) programme

Clarification on Invitation to Amend (ITA) for the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) or Global Patent Prosecution Highway (GPPH) Programme

(Circular No. 3/2026, dated 10 June 2026)

1. This circular provides clarification on how the ITA process is applied to PPH or GPPH applications, based on recent stakeholder feedback. It explains how ITA can expedite examination and confirms that the current ITA practice for PPH or GPPH applications is compliant with the Patents Act 1994 and Patents Rules.

Introduction of the ITA

2. The ITA has been implemented since 29 April 2022 to facilitate the expeditious examination of applications for patents.
3. What an ITA is: An ITA is a notice issued by the Registrar in which an applicant is invited to amend their application to address one or more prescribed matters¹ identified by the Examiner during examination². It is issued in lieu of a written opinion and may be issued, for example, where prescribed matters may be resolved with minor amendments³ or where there has been prior communication between the applicant and the Examiner regarding specific amendments that are needed to advance the application towards grant. The foregoing examples are non-exhaustive, and the Examiner may consider other circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

¹ Rule 2A(1) of the Patents Rules.

² Section 29(7A) of the Patents Act 1994.

³ Annex A, Section 1 Patents, No. 5 of the Patents Circular No. 1/2022.

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4. When it is issued: During examination, if the Examiner is of the opinion that one or more prescribed matters can be resolved by an ITA without a written opinion⁴, the Examiner may request the Registrar of Patents to issue an ITA.
5. What happens next: Upon receipt of an ITA, an applicant has two months after the date of the ITA to respond to the Examiner⁵, failing which the Examiner will issue a written opinion or examination report as applicable⁶. Even after issuing an ITA, the Examiner is not precluded from issuing a written opinion later if other objections arise. However, the Examiner may only do so after the applicant responds to the ITA or the two-month period expires, whichever is applicable.
6. The following sections explain how the ITA process applies to PPH or GPPH applications.

Streamlined process for PPH or GPPH applications with ITA

7. Since 27 September 2023, IPOS has introduced a streamlined process to eliminate the need for the applicant to withdraw and refile Patents Form 11 or 12 to submit amendments with the PPH or GPPH request, as follows:
 - a. The applicant files a request for a search and examination report or an examination report (using Patents Form 11 or 12).
 - b. The applicant subsequently requests accelerated examination under PPH or GPPH, indicating that amendments are required to conform the Singapore claims to the foreign allowable claims in the corresponding application filed with the selected PPH or GPPH office.
 - c. The Registrar verifies with the Examiner that examination has not commenced.
 - d. The Examiner begins examination by assessing whether conforming claims to the foreign allowable claims would resolve one or more prescribed matters.
 - e. If the Examiner determines that one or more prescribed matters can be resolved by ITA without a written opinion, the Examiner may request the Registrar to issue the ITA.
8. IPOS has updated the following to enhance clarity on the process for issuing ITAs for PPH or GPPH applications during examination:
 - a. Information on PPH or GPPH procedures on IPOS' website (<https://www.ipos.gov.sg/about-ip/patents/how-to-register-overview/acceleration-programmes/patent-prosecution-highway/>);

⁴ Section 29(7A) of the Patents Act 1994.

⁵ Section 29(7C) of the Patents Act 1994 and Rule 46AA of the Patents Rules.

⁶ Sections 29(7) and 29(7E) of the Patents Act 1994 and Rule 46(6) of the Patents Rules.

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- b. PPH guidelines on IPOS' website (refer to Notices on filing PPH or GPPH requests to IPOS on <https://www.ipos.gov.sg/about-ip/patents/how-to-register-overview/acceleration-programmes/patent-prosecution-highway/>).
9. IPOS will continue to review and update relevant materials, where appropriate.
10. If you have any enquiries on this Circular, please send an email to ipos_enquiry@ipos.gov.sg.

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