Search Matters 2018

Event for patent search professionals

23-25 April 2018
The Hague, The Netherlands
Foreword

As Vice-President Patent Granting Process, I am delighted to welcome you to Search Matters 2018. Over the last 30 years, Search Matters has been the event at which the EPO shows its patent search strategies and techniques to searchers and patent information professionals. It offers a unique behind-the-scenes look at the Office. In this year’s edition we will continue to share with you the knowledge and expertise of our patent examiners and information specialists. The programme kicks off with at-the-desk sessions, held on the day before the main event, which provide a unique opportunity to experience at first-hand how an EPO examiner performs a search in a field of your choice. The two days of the main event include not only highlights and must-see interactive workshops known from previous events, but also many new workshops. The challenge and complexity of searching emerging technologies are covered by several workshops and lectures, with a particular focus on the Internet of Things and interdisciplinary technologies. The topics of search strategy and the use of classification systems, especially the Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC), are dealt with in several interactive workshops. Espacenet and internet searching take centre stage in a number of hands-on computer workshops. For the first time, the information provided for the workshops during registration has been supplemented with additional data such as the intended audience (beginner or advanced) and the technical content. We hope that this has helped you to make your choice of workshops and that your expectations will be met during the conference. Your feedback is always welcome, since it helps us better understand your needs and offer a high-quality event. Last but not least, there will be plenty of time to network with fellow search professionals and our EPO experts. I hope you will enjoy this event.

Alberto Casado
Vice-President Directorate-General 1 Patent Granting Process
Conference centre

1st floor

2nd floor
Monday, 23 April 2018

At-the-desk sessions

13.45 - 17.00 Individual at-the-desk sessions with EPO examiners

17.30 - 20.00 Networking event in the Rijswijk Museum
For participants attending the at-the-desk sessions
Tuesday, 24 April 2018

Moderator  Marta Seisdedos, EPO examiner and assistant to Vice-President
Directorate-General 1 Patent Granting Process

08.15  Registration and coffee
Foyer

09.15  Opening speech
Karin Seegert COO Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO

09.30  Lecture 1 (plenary)
Searching patents effectively using free patent databases
Nigel Clarke, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO
Björn Jürgens, Senior Analyst, CITPIA patent information centre,
Innovation and Development Agency of Andalusia (IDEA)

10.30  Coffee break
Foyer

11.00  Workshop session 1

12.15  Lunch break
Foyer

13.15  Workshop session 2

14.30  Coffee break
Foyer

15.00  Workshop session 3

16.15  Break
16.30  Lecture 2 (plenary)
Alice in “How to search – I wonder” - land
Sytse de Jonge, EPO Director, Automation/Search Tools and Information Management
Anne-Cécile Derrien, EPO examiner, Health, Biotechnology and Chemistry
Petra van de Wetering, EPO examiner, Health, Biotechnology and Chemistry

17.30  Networking event
EPO canteen

21.30  End of day 1
Wednesday, 25 April 2018

Moderator  Marta Seisdedos, EPO examiner and assistant to Vice-President
Directorate-General 1 Patent Granting Process

08.00 Coffee
Foyer

09.00 Welcome
Marta Seisdedos, EPO examiner and assistant to Vice-President
Directorate-General 1 Patent Granting Process

09.15 Key lecture: Industry 4.0
Francesco Zaccà, Principal Director Operations, Information and
Communications Technology, EPO

10.15 Break

10.30 Workshop session 4

11.45 Coffee break
Foyer

12.15 Workshop session 5

13.30 Lunch break
Foyer

14.30 Workshop session 6

15.45 Coffee break
Foyer
16.15  Lecture 4 (plenary)
Jiu jitsu and patent searching – how to get a black belt
Nigel Clarke, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO

17.15  Closing remarks
Auditorium

17.30  End of event

You can find a list of all the workshops on the last two pages of this programme
Lecture 1
Searching patents effectively using free patent databases

Free patent search systems have evolved considerably over the last decade, with many of them now offering functionalities and features which were previously only available from commercial providers. In this presentation you will get a comprehensive and updated overview of the most important patent search platforms available for use free of charge. Their strengths and weaknesses will be discussed, and the special and unique features of each database will be shown using real-life examples.

**Nigel Clarke**, GB, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO Vienna. PhD in neutron science. After a career in R&D, he joined the EPO in The Hague as a patent examiner, going on to become an IT project manager. Moved to international co-operation at the EPO in Vienna, as co-ordinator of the PATLIB programme. This was followed by research into the patent information market. For many years responsible for Espacenet and the EP Register, he is now in charge of the EPO’s patent information research projects. He has many years’ experience of presenting patent information to the user community worldwide.
Björn Jürgens, DE, is a senior analyst at the CITPIA patent information centre of the Innovation and Development Agency of Andalusia (IDEA), a major public institution dedicated to fostering innovation and R&D for SMEs in southern Spain. He has worked for more than ten years in the field of patent analytics and competitive intelligence and has extensive practical experience in patent searching and using patent databases on a daily basis. He holds a degree in information and knowledge management from the University of Applied Sciences Darmstadt (Germany), a master’s degree in information science from the University of Granada (Spain), and a PhD in the field of bibliometric patent analysis.
Lecture 2
Alice in "How to search – I wonder" - land

Many moons ago, a little girl called Alice set about exploring a world unknown to her. While running after a rabbit, Alice discovered that her search did not take her along a straight path, that she had to keep re-calibrating and adapting her strategy accordingly, and that each time she did this the world around her changed, bringing with it both pleasant and unpleasant surprises.

Maybe Alice’s story is not unlike what goes on in patent searchers’ minds. In fact, the EPO’s Enlarged Board of Appeal referred to Alice’s novel in its decision G 3/08, quoting the passage “Tigers eat meat. Meat is a word. Therefore tigers eat words” to illustrate how easy it is to confuse names or descriptions and the things they refer to. Isn’t this a problem for everyone who carries out a literature search?

During this talk we will explore some further similarities between Alice’s search in Wonderland and a literature (or patent) search. We won’t be discussing examiner tools, search strategies, or even search efficiency or quality, but we will be looking at the patent searcher/examiner mindset.

There is a lot to learn from Alice’s story about thought processes and decision-making. This interactive presentation aims to entertain and be instructive. Prompted by the words of Alice’s creator, the writer Lewis Carroll, you will be encouraged to review your own thought patterns and ways of processing problems.
Sytse de Jonge, NL, Director, Automation/Search Tools and Information Management, EPO The Hague. Graduated in materials science from the Technological University of Delft (NL) in 1989. Joined the EPO as an examiner in the field of multi-layered products (B32) in 1990. Chaired the EPO drafting committee for search and examination training materials. Became director of a group of examiners working mainly in the fields of biomaterials and galenics in 2008. For several years was the EPO DG 1 director in charge of Search Matters. Became a director in Automation Support in 2017 and is involved with the eDossier project.

Anne-Cécile Derrien, FR, examiner, sector Health, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Obtained a PhD in biomaterials from the University of Rennes 1 (FR) in 2004. Joined the EPO in 2005 as an examiner in the field of biomaterials (A61L) and dentistry (A61K6). Works in both examination and opposition proceedings. Involved in recruitment and coaching of new colleagues. Has been a presenter at Search Matters (problem/solution approach, searching with Espacenet) and Examination Matters (second medical use in the field of biomaterials) for several years.

Petra van de Wetering, NL, examiner, sector Health, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied chemistry at Utrecht University, where she also obtained a PhD in pharmacy. Performed postdoctoral research in the field of biomaterials at ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich. In 2005 joined the EPO, where she works in the field of pharmaceutical formulations. Responsible for classification in this field. Involved in the training of newcomers and more recently in the eDossier project.
Lecture 3
Industry 4.0

The impact of software becoming more advanced creates challenges to the patent systems around the world both in terms of drafting, search and examination as well as in view of alternative protections such as secrecy, open source and patent pooling. This lecture provides recent statistics as well as measures taken by the EPO to face the challenges of computer-implemented inventions.

Francesco Zaccà, IT, Principal Director Operations, Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Leads teams of patent examiners. Is responsible for the patent granting process, from search to final decision on grant or refusal, in various technical fields. In the ICT management team he is responsible for strategic external relations with applicants, international institutions and standardisation bodies. He regularly represents the EPO at conferences, exhibitions and international symposia. He is chair of the internal jury for the European Inventor of the year Award. Has a master’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Pisa.
Lecture 4
Jiu jitsu and patent searching – how to get a black belt

Industry 4.0 (I4.0), the Internet of things (IoT) and the Internet of everything (IoE) are having a significant impact on the sources, number and complexity of inventions submitted to patent offices. As the resultant patent applications inflate the state of the art, it is clear that their impact will extend to patent searching and the patent searcher. In this presentation we will look at the technologies that constitute I4.0, IoT and IoE and how they impact the patent process and the nature of invention. We will also look at how we can turn tables and use some of these technologies to facilitate patent searching. And last but not least, we will consider what effect all of this is having on the working lives of patent searchers.

Nigel S. Clarke, GB, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO Vienna. PhD in neutron science. After a career in R&D, he joined the EPO in The Hague as a patent examiner, going on to become an IT project manager. Moved to international co-operation at the EPO in Vienna, as co-ordinator of the PATLIB programme. This was followed by research into the patent information market. For many years responsible for Espacenet and the EP Register, he is now in charge of the EPO’s patent information research projects. He has many years’ experience of presenting patent information to the user community worldwide.
WS01
Access to Japanese prior art using classification, indexing and citation information

The purpose of this workshop is to explore the added benefits of prior-art retrieval via Japanese FI classes and F-term indexing codes over pure keyword searches and/or international classification (IPC) searches. Strategies are presented for efficient and complete search in Japanese documentation, using publicly available sources and search tools.

The workshop will cover the following topics:
- Underlying “philosophy” of the Japanese FI classification and F-term indexing systems, and their concordance with IPC
- Dynamics of the Japanese FI and F-term systems: amended and new schemes, reorganisation of existing classes/terms, international co-operation
- Finding the most pertinent Japanese classification and indexing codes for your technical field of interest
- Publicly available sources, focusing especially on J-PlatPat
- Access to prior-art citation information retrieved by the JPO and its outsourced search organisations
- Search engines, search syntax, search strategy
- Sample cases

This workshop will be of particular interest to participants who have to perform prior-art searches in Japanese patent and utility model documentation. The material covered is suitable for both beginners and advanced searchers/users of Japanese prior art.

Focus: Asian prior art
Level of knowledge: beginner, advanced, general
Adam Cohen, GB, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO The Hague. Obtained a PhD degree in electrical and information sciences/photonic engineering from Cambridge University. Worked in the optics/fibre optics industry in Japan, Canada and the USA, and on the development of telecom network management in the UK. Joined the EPO in 2003 as an examiner. Gives Japanese classification workshops at internal and external training seminars, manages internal IT projects and is involved in quality control activities and machine translation projects. Coaches new examiners and is an expert on Japanese translation queries. Member of the Asian Patent Expert Group’s committee from 2011 to 2014.

Christoph Wirner, DE, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Studied physics at Munich’s Technical University and conducted research at its Walter Schottky Institute. Completed the EU Science and Technology Fellowship programme at Osaka University, and worked on a future electron devices research project at Fujitsu Laboratories in Japan. Joined the EPO in 1997 as an examiner in semiconductor technology, where he participated in the EPO-JPO bilateral and EPO-JPO-USPTO trilateral examiner exchange programme and promoted the use of the Japanese Fi/F-term classification system. He previously chaired and is currently a member of the Asian Patent Expert Group. He is also a member of the EPO’s Japanese language expert group.
WS02
Searching with C-sets in CPC – an overview

Hands-on computer training

Combination sets (C-sets) provide a mechanism for classifying and searching combined features that are otherwise not easy to find by single symbols and result in more precise and efficient retrieval of information from CPC. C-sets make it possible to classify combinations of features or of different aspects of particular embodiments such as chemical compositions, process steps or product-and-process relationships clearly and unambiguously.

The presentation will cover the main areas where C-sets are used, such as chemistry (organic synthesis, cements, polymers, coatings and adhesives,) mechanics (membranes and separation processes and processes of applying liquids) and electricity and physics (optical elements compositions of connectors).

Specific rules for allocation and field-dependent aspects and the advantages of C-sets over single symbols will be presented in detail.

There will also be a hands-on demonstration of how to search with C-sets on Espacenet.

Focus: **CPC, Espacenet, chemistry, electricity, physics, mechanics**
Level of knowledge: **advanced, field-specific**
**Katerina Theodoridou**, GR, examiner and team manager, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, The Hague. Graduated in chemistry from the Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece and obtained an MBA from Durham University Business School. Joined the EPO in 1987 as an examiner in the field of cement and concrete compositions. Participated as a user representative in the group that defined the functional requirements for C-sets. Has given colleagues training on C-sets and has given presentations on this subject in the context of CPC co-operation.

**Mark Plehiers**, BE, examiner, Classification Board Member, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Obtained a PhD in the field of organic synthesis of natural compounds from the Free University of Brussels (ULB) in 1995; then joined a postgraduate ULB project on the development of antifouling biocides and coatings. In 2001 he worked in R&D as an inventor in the development of resins for the coating industry (SigmaKalon, BE and NL) before joining the EPO in 2008 to work as an examiner in the field of polyacrylates. Currently a member of its Classification Board and a trainer giving various workshops on search and classification in polymers.
**WS03**

**Freedom-to-operate searches using EPO tools**

In order to minimise the risks of infringing patent rights, freedom-to-operate searches should lead to a detailed identification of the relevant patent rights, right holders and businesses associated with a particular product and/or technical field. However, given the steadily growing number of patent publications worldwide, not only increasingly complex searching strategies but also an in-depth knowledge of IPC and CPC classifications are required to achieve this. In addition, identifying the current legal status of relevant patents can sometimes prove to be a time-consuming and challenging exercise.

In turn, skilful use of the patent-searching and analytical tools provided by the EPO can be crucial for well-informed decisions about parties’ patent-related business activities.

This workshop, based on a simple example (simple mechanical system), focuses on some of the search and patent analytics tools provided by the EPO that can be used when conducting freedom-to-operate searches, including Espacenet, INPADOC, Global Patent Index and PATSTAT.

**Focus:** Espacenet, CPC, search strategy
**Level of knowledge:** beginner, general

**Patrick Le Gonidec**, FR, administrator Electronic Publication and Dissemination, EPO Vienna. Has a master’s in structural geology and in computer science. He has been working in patent information at the EPO since 2002, currently as a product manager for the following patent information products: European Publication Server, Global Dossier, Global Patent Index, EP full-text search and EP Bulletin search. He has taken part in several training and co-operation activities.
Andrey Afanasiev, LV, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO The Hague. Studied mechanical engineering and automotive engineering (MSc) at Riga Technical University and intellectual property law (LL.M) at the University of Edinburgh. Worked for several years as a production manager in construction materials manufacturing. In 2009, he joined the EPO, where he deals with patent applications in various technical areas such as beds of engines, supports, machine frames, power transmission belts and chains, as well as safety devices in general.

Frédéric Cavallo, FR, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO The Hague. Joined the EPO in 2009 and works in a variety of areas including search, examination, opposition, coaching and tutoring. He worked as an examiner in the field of control systems for hybrid vehicles before moving to the field of vehicle suspension arrangements. He holds a Master of Science from the Engineering School of La Rochelle, France, and a Master of Laws in intellectual property law from the University of Edinburgh, UK. Before joining the EPO, he worked for almost ten years as an embedded-software engineer, control engineer and project manager, mainly in the automotive industry.
WS04
Searching cross-technology inventions

Creativity means thinking outside the box, combining seemingly far-fetched concepts and ideas. To facilitate document search, however, patent offices and scientific sites organise documents according to technical field classes. But what if you are interested in a cross-technology invention not fitting into any “box”? The seminar proposes how to tackle this challenge.

We will discuss:
– How to find and combine relevant classes
– Clever combination of keywords and classes
– Advanced search in scientific sites and Google
– Finding synonyms, relevant authors and inventors

Focus: search strategy, internet search, CPC
Level of knowledge: beginner, general

Anna Kajzar, PL, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Has a PhD in biophysics and worked at a research institute (Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany) as a scientist before joining the EPO as a patent examiner in radiation therapy. At the EPO, she searches and examines patent applications, as well as acting in opposition proceedings, in the fields of particle and light therapy and surgery.
WS05  
**Searching functional features: how to build comprehensive queries**

**Hands-on computer training**

This workshop looks at the best way to search inventions based on functional features rather than structural elements. It also suggests how to efficiently retrieve relevant prior art when the target technology is more functionally than structurally defined, as, for example, in multi-use devices, programmable elements or substances with equivalent effects. In such cases, a search based on structural features is complemented by a functional and conceptual approach, giving a solid representation to the technical scope of the invention, its intended use or uses and the expected technical advantages.

The workshop examines how the functional approach differs from the structural one, and presents some recommendations on their use during the search process, focusing especially on a query builder based on three levels: the systematic description of equivalents, the enumeration of possible embodiments, and result-oriented queries.

After the theoretical input, participants will have a chance to do some practical search exercises using the Espacenet platform. Case studies will be presented in the field of electricity and smart grids, but participants are also encouraged to propose other examples, either spontaneously or prepared in advance, including ones relating to other technical areas such as mechanics, electricity, physics, chemistry or biotechnology.

Focus: **Espacenet**  
Level of knowledge: **advanced, general**
Alessandro Colombo, IT, team manager, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO Munich. Studied electrical engineering at the Politecnico di Milano. Worked for several years as a project manager at major firms in the electrical industry. Joined the EPO in 2003 as an examiner in the field of electrical power distribution and protection and now acts as chairman of examining divisions and a member of opposition divisions. Passed the EQE in 2010. Since 2011, he has been an instructor and coach for new examiners and has given training at various search and examination workshops.
WS06
Searching Markush formulae in organic and inorganic chemistry

Markush formulae are undoubtedly the most efficient way of claiming a generic group of compounds. Indeed, they are necessary if applicants are to be given adequate protection for their invention. However, due to their complex nature, it is not always easy to determine their exact scope. In this workshop we will cover Markush formulae in both organic and inorganic chemistry. An overview will be given of the available databases and search tools. We will discuss the search strategies for several practical cases, focusing especially on non-unity, incomplete search, clarity and support. This workshop will cover the subject of Markush non-unity in detail and so complements the general workshop on non-unity.

Focus: chemistry, non-unity
Level of knowledge: advanced, field-specific
**Miren Langer**, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied pharmacy at the University of Marburg, University of Paris and University of Santiago de Compostela. Obtained a PhD in pharmacology from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. Prior to joining the EPO in The Hague, she worked for three years as a project manager (medical department) in the pharmaceutical industry in Germany. An EPO examiner in the field of second medical use and bioconjugates since 2006, she now also chairs opposition proceedings. Passed the EQE in 2012.

**Thomas Maxisch**, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied physics at the University of Marburg, followed by a PhD in physics at the ETH Lausanne. Spent three years in research in materials science at MIT before joining the EPO in 2006 in the field of batteries and fuel cell technology. Now also working in the technical field of coatings and involved in opposition work and examiner coaching.
WS07: When to stop the search

With the expansion of available databases and search tools, the question “when to stop the search?” is becoming more and more relevant. In the past, a search was finished when the bottom of the pile of correct classification groups was reached. Now, with new search strategies, better tools and a string of procedural changes, how do we define the end of the search? What effect do these changes have on our ability to determine when to stop the search?

We will assess the risk of missing a relevant document at each step of a search following a standard strategy. We will also discuss the EPO’s in-house search stop requirements, general parameters influencing search and the effect of clarity, complexity and wording of the claims on a search.

Focus: search strategy
Level of knowledge: advanced, general

Günther Aichmayr, AT, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Studied physics at Kepler University in Linz, Austria, and at the Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research in Stuttgart, Germany. After a PhD in solid state physics from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in Spain, he worked for seven years in DRAM development in the semiconductor industry in Germany. Joined the EPO in 2008 as an examiner in search and examination and is now also involved in projects to develop new tools for more efficient prior-art searches.
WS08
Understanding and dealing with lack of unity

A lack of unity often arises at the search stage if the concept linking the claims is found to be anticipated by the prior art. This finding can have severe consequences for the applicant. In this workshop we will review the reasoning given for non-unity objections, pointing out typical mistakes, and discuss when and how a non-unity objection can be challenged or dealt with.

Based on realistic examples, we will further present situations that may trigger a non-unity objection at the search stage. We will show how applicants can guide examiners through the search and avoid excessive non-unity findings.

The workshop will finish with some hands-on examples and an exchange of experiences and suggestions as to how to foster mutual efficiency. Input from the audience is welcome, and the presenters are willing to address any special questions submitted before the event (email to molapinski@epo.org or pmontes@epo.org).

Focus: non-unity
Level of knowledge: beginner, advanced, general
Michael Olapinski, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Studied physics at the University of Konstanz, Germany, with internships at Bell Labs and Stanford University, USA. Obtained a PhD in biophysics from the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich in collaboration with start-up company Nanion Technologies. Joined the EPO in 2008. Directorate expert on lack of unity.

Finding specific patent information on the internet can be a daunting task, just entering a series of keywords in a general search engine is not likely to give you the desired results in an efficient manner. In this workshop we will address the advantages of searching in Google Patents over browsing the internet and see how this tool can be used in a structured approach.

A patent search at the EPO can be divided into different stages. At the first stage, information is harvested from the application and a first draft of a search table produced. Following a pre-search, the search table is completed and strategic decisions are taken. At the main search stage, the search table is used to effectively steer the process. During the later stages, the results are evaluated and the search can be re-focused and finalised.

Together with the participants, we would like to explore how this structured search process followed by EPO examiners can be applied in Google Patents.

Focus: internet search, CPC, Asian prior art, search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Wim van Klompenburg, NL, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied biology at Utrecht University, obtaining a PhD from there after a joint project with the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. Before joining the EPO he worked for two years as researcher on a project of the Dutch Cancer Foundation. At the EPO he worked for eight years as an examiner in biotechnology and for seven years as a team leader in Learning & Development. For three years now, he has been working in the areas of search, examination and opposition in technical chemistry. He is an experienced EPO trainer and facilitator and has represented the EPO at various events such as job fairs and international meetings.

Ian Wetherbee, US, senior software engineer, Tech Lead / Manager, Google Patents. He earned a bachelor's degree with honours in computer engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. As the Technical Lead and Manager of the Google Patents team, he works on everything from interface design to machine learning.
Non-patent literature

On average, one out of five EPO search reports contains a non-patent literature document citation, mainly from academic papers, while more than half of all search reports in chemistry and biotechnology cite non-patent literature. Hence, non-patent literature is essential for assuring the quality of EPO searches.

After a brief introduction to the importance of non-patent literature for our work, we will give a demonstration of a typical non-patent literature search. The new examiner tools (CiteNPL, SearchNPL) will be presented.

In a second part, we will deliver a detailed overview of dedicated internet search engines for academic publications and their possible use (Google Scholar, Scopus, Medline). We will finish with a discussion of additional full-text resources such as e-print servers and open-access journals. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with the presenters on search strategy issues from the point of view of both the EPO examiner and the patent professional. Using the internet to search and retrieve scholarly publications will also be covered.

Focus: NPL, internet search
Level of knowledge: beginner, advanced, general
Lonneke Mulder, NL, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied biology in Utrecht, the Netherlands, followed by a PhD at Sainsbury Laboratory, in Norwich, UK, and two years’ postdoctoral research into the genetics and proteomics of plant-microbe interactions in Toulouse, France. Joined the EPO in The Hague in 2005. Searching in non-patent literature has been a major part of her work as examiner, and she has been involved in several presentations.

Jakob Mauritz, DE, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Studied physics at Leipzig University and St. Petersburg State University. In 2011 he obtained a PhD in chemical engineering from the University of Cambridge, developing optical tools for malaria research and testing physiological hypotheses. Joined the EPO in 2011 as an examiner and works in the fields of sampling, sample preparation, flow cytometry and laboratory automation. He passed the EQE in 2016 and is a member of the EPO’s Russian language expert group.
WS11
Retrieving valuable information from international patent office co-operation

This interactive workshop focuses on retrieving documents and information that have been cited by other intellectual property offices, e.g. IPS, for patent family members or similar applications. This information can, in particular, be helpful in searches done to prepare the filing of an opposition or a new patent application. To this end, the possibilities of the Global Dossier will be explored together with the audience.

We will use practical examples to show the audience what kind of valuable, sometimes hidden, information is available, how it can be retrieved and how it should then be understood. This source of information is of great interest to search professionals as it delivers very close documents for the underlying case and, depending on their actual purpose, allows them, for instance, to fine-tune their search and focus on other key features.

Focus: search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Robert Pötzsch, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied chemistry at Technische Universität Dresden, Germany, and Ecole de Chimie de Rennes, France. After a PhD in hyperbranched polymers for organic electronics at the Leibniz Institute of Polymer Research in Dresden and research stays at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada, and the University of California in Santa Barbara, USA, he joined the EPO in 2013. He works in search, examination and opposition in the technical fields of luminescence, insulators, conductors, flame-retardants, sealants and coolants.

Alan Bacon, GB, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO The Hague. Alan graduated with an M.A. in Chemistry from the University of Oxford, St. Peter’s College, UK, in 1982. In 1985, he obtained a PhD in organic chemistry from the University of Southampton, UK, specialising in the analysis and identification of fruit fly and cockroach pheromones, mainly spiroacetals. He joined the EPO in 1985 as an examiner and has been working in the field of printing ever since. Since 1990, he has been a member of the Classification Board, as well as being involved in recruitment and working as a tutor and trainer of new EPO examiners and as a lecturer with the European Patent Academy. He has also given numerous presentations at Search Matters (most recently on Russian and Indian prior art) and Examination Matters (on third-party observations) and represented the EPO in the USA, Japan, Jakarta, Cairo, Lisbon, Baku and Bishkek.

It all began with the “Seminar on Search and Documentation Working Methods” Historically, from its inception in 1988, the “Seminar on Search and Documentation Working Methods”, as Search Matters was then known, was a showcase for the expertise of the EPO’s highly qualified staff in using dedicated search tools to access the best data in accordance with well-defined procedures.

It was an exclusive event, the participants being hand-picked and individually invited from among the applicant community, so it became known colloquially within the EPO as the “Seminar for Applicants”. Participants witnessed at first hand the EPO examiners’ high level of skill as they performed searches on applications filed by third parties.

The early days of online search
At the time, all searches were performed in the paper collections kept in The Hague and Berlin, whereas all substantive examination and opposition work took place in Munich. A move away from this strict separation of these work areas started in the early 1990s with the Bringing Examination and Search Together, or BEST, initiative, which saw the search examiners become involved in the examination and opposition work of the substantive examiners, and vice versa. That substantive examiners were able to perform searches was facilitated by, in particular, the development of online search tools and the availability of the database created by the International Patent Documentation Center (INPADOC), which had been founded under an agreement between the World Intellectual Property Organization and the Austrian government on 2 May 1972 and was integrated into the European Patent Organisation less than 20 years later, in 1991. The legal status data in INPADOC is provided by over 40 international patent authorities worldwide and consists of information on events during the lifetime of patent applications and the patents resulting from them.

The first BEST examiners in Munich performed their searches primarily in patent abstract databases. Accessing the full text of European applications was cumbersome and meant having to find the right CD-ROM, upload its contents to a dedicated computer and assess their relevance onscreen, without being able to annotate them. So there was a strong incentive to increase
both the volume of online documentation and improve tools. The examiners also developed new methods of searching that were then showcased in the “Seminar for Applicants”.

**Search Matters opens to the public**

By 2007 the “Seminar for Applicants” had progressed to become “Search Matters – Search and Documentation Working Methods”. At this point the European Patent Academy became involved, bringing in its know-how in organising training events for the public at large. The essence of the “Seminar for Applicants” was retained, but its scope was expanded, while attendance was no longer by invitation only but by open registration, and no longer restricted to applicants as such. Since 2015 Search Matters has been held alternately in The Hague and Munich.

In view of the ever-increasing volume of documentation, Search Matters nowadays is about showing how the public can carry out thorough searches themselves, using the high quality data and tools available to them. This is demonstrated in various complementary forums throughout the conference: plenary lectures on both general and especially topical issues, specialist workshops with a focus on interaction between the group and the presenter and, finally, “at-the-desk” sessions, for which participants have to register separately and where they have the chance to sit with an examiner and discuss search strategies in a technical area of their choice.

**Our participants and prospects for the future**

“More a must-have than a nice-to-have!” is a comment frequently heard from our participants, who come to Search Matters from around 30 different countries, mainly from member states of the European Patent Organisation but even from North America and Asia. The main target groups are patent search specialists and IP officers from commercial organisations. Most attendees are from large firms in industry. Next come employees of SMEs, followed by those working at IP firms and research institutions. Many organisations are regularly represented at Search Matters, sending different experts each year to take this opportunity to learn from the EPO’s examiners.

From 2010 onwards, an ever greater dynamic in the event’s development has been observed and, in the last four years, the number of participants has
increased dramatically. Indeed, both this year and last, registration had to be closed weeks in advance because all the conference places had already been taken.

This increasing interest in Search Matters is down to the continuous efforts made to adapt its programme and focus on the latest search tools and databases and the most effective strategies for searching with them. Search Matters is undoubtedly a win-win event. It is not only the participants who benefit but the examiners too, who, through talking to the audience about their working practices, are able to reach a better understanding of the needs of applicants and other patent information users.

Most importantly, that such success has been achieved over the past 30 years is thanks to the dedication and commitment among interested users and the examiners who are willing to give their “BEST” for high quality and continually raise the standards of search and examination.

The Search Matters organising committee would like to thank everyone who has helped with or otherwise been involved in developing Search Matters over the years for their support.

We look forward to continuing this fruitful co-operation!
WS12
How to identify patent thickets and related patents

Hands-on computer training

Patent thickets are dense webs of overlapping intellectual property rights. Firms that wish to become active in a particular area of technology need to ensure that their products will not infringe existing patents or filed patent applications which might later be granted. This requires an adequate patent search to uncover all interrelated patents and applications. Frequently, interrelated patents and applications are from a single applicant, but often with multiple inventors, or sets of inventors, and concern similar, but not identical subject-matter.

The challenge is to identify such relationships between patents and applications, as distinct from other relationships such as families, citations and divisionals. This workshop presents simple-to-use but effective techniques which anyone can apply, using freely available data, to retrieve such related applications. The techniques are based on the applicant name, inventors and titles. Additional possibilities derive from the application number, priority dates and classes.

These techniques are based on those used at the European Patent Office to find similar applications at the pre-search stage, which have proven their value in widespread systematic use for over a decade. Compared to existing techniques such as patent landscaping the techniques proposed here are simpler to use, quicker and less expensive. Examples from various fields of technology will be presented using Espacenet.

Focus: Espacenet
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Alain Materne, FR, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO Berlin. Holds a degree in electronic engineering from ENSEA in Cergy-Pontoise, France, which he completed with a thesis project at Berlin’s Technical University. He worked in the electronics industry at Wandel & Goltermann in Reutlingen, Germany, prior to joining the EPO in 1988. Develops various ranking scripts in ooRexx for retrieving related files and prior art.

Gershom Sleightholme-Albanis, GB/AU, Senior Expert, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Berlin. Holds a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Melbourne and a doctorate from the University of Cambridge. Worked for several years in the steel industry, at Jaguar Cars and in the British civil service prior to joining the EPO in 1996.

Nigel Clarke, GB, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO Vienna. PhD in neutron science. After a career in R&D, he joined the EPO in The Hague as a patent examiner, going on to become an IT project manager. Moved to international co-operation at the EPO in Vienna, as co-ordinator of the PATLIB programme. This was followed by research into the patent information market. For many years responsible for Espacenet and the EP Register, he is now in charge of the EPO’s patent information research projects. He has many years’ experience of presenting patent information to the user community worldwide.
WS13
Searching chemical inventions by name

Commodity chemicals and drugs in pharmaceutical and agrochemical industry can appear in the prior art under a variety of different names. This workshop will look at ways of finding synonymous names, tools for converting names to structures and the usefulness of alternative identifiers like CAS-Registry numbers, InChl and SMILES codes. Searches with different naming conventions (IUPAC nomenclatures, traditional names, development names, trade names, etc.) and the results they produce in databases like Chemical Abstracts, ChemSpider, Pubchem, Google, Integrity and Reaxys will be illustrated. Examples will be given to show how the different compound identifiers can be useful when searching in the above databases.

Focus: chemistry, internet search
Level of knowledge: advanced, field-specific

Tim Lange, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied chemistry at the University of Heidelberg, Complutense University of Madrid and Strasbourg’s Louis Pasteur University, and obtained a PhD from ETH Zürich. Prior to joining the EPO he spent ten years in research, working for Aventis, Bayer and finally AstraZeneca. Passed the EQE in 2013 and has been working in search, examination and opposition since 2007.
WS14
An update on the CPC in relation to Asian patent documentation and the challenges in dealing with Chinese patent documentation

The number of national offices classifying in the CPC is growing and now includes major Asian offices like SIPO and KIPO. We will offer an insight into how documents classified by SIPO and KIPO in the CPC can be retrieved via Espacenet. In addition, we will discuss how the CPC and the IPC differ in terms of their coverage of Asian patent documentation. We will demonstrate how to analyse the documentation coverage per technical field and how such an analysis can be helpful in determining an efficient classification-based search strategy.

Chinese patent documentation is growing at an extremely fast rate. The proportion of Chinese publications with a family member in English has decreased dramatically. We will give an update on the coverage of Chinese documentation in Espacenet and discuss the availability of English translations of that documentation. We will also offer some general perspectives on the rapid growth in Chinese patent documentation, together with some specific tips on how to deal with this. The topics discussed will include:

– The existence of groups of technically related but separately filed Chinese utility models and patent applications
– The average size of the full-text content (description + claims) of machine-translated Chinese patent applications and utility models compared to patent applications and utility models filed at the other IP5 offices
– The reliability of abstract-based searching
– Using Global Dossier to access the machine-translated written opinion on Chinese patent applications to better understand the technical content of an application

Focus: Asian prior art, CPC, Espacenet
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Bart Degroote, BE, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Obtained a PhD in physics from the University of Leuven. Prior to joining the EPO, he worked for three years at Imec, a micro- and nanoelectronics research centre. He joined the EPO in 2006 and currently works in the field of printed circuits. He is a member of the Asian Patent Expert Group.
Searching products requiring product-by-process and/or parameter definition

Some kinds of product claims aim at covering a characteristic structure in the micro- or nanometer range, e.g. the specific porous structure of a semi-permeable membrane used for filtration purposes. The ways of describing such scope are limited, and there is no single approach in the prior art. Such products can be defined in terms of performance parameters or structural parameters, including unusual parameters, unusual measuring methods, product-by-process definitions or a mixture of such features.

Since searchers interested in prior-art searches have very limited structural ways of describing the product, to develop their search concept they need to get an insight into the essential manufacturing conditions of the product and the structural and performance features implied by this production method, as well as into the definition and measuring methods of the parameters.

Based on this analysis a threefold search concept can be applied, i.e. a direct search for the parameters claimed, a search for prior art using similar manufacturing conditions and a search for similar effects and problems to be solved.

Focus: chemistry
Level of knowledge: advanced, field-specific
Eveline Lançon, FR/DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Graduated in chemistry from the Ludwig Maximilian University and the Technical University in Munich and has a “mastère spécialisé” in strategy and industrial marketing from EMLyon Business School. Joining the EPO as an examiner in 2005, she is an expert and quality nominee in classification in membrane technology and is experienced in opposition proceedings. She is also an expert in Asian documentation matters and a member of the Asian Patent Expert Group’s committee. She has passed the EQE.

Bernd Goers, DE, team manager, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Graduated in chemical engineering and obtained a PhD at the TU Berlin in the field of industrial waste water treatment technologies. At the EPO since 2002, he is a coach and instructor with the EPO’s Newcomer Academy and has passed the EQE.
WS16
Searching peptides and their functions in medical use claims

Each year, the European Patent Office receives several hundred patent filings relating to peptides and their functional applications in the fields of biotechnology, pharmacology and cosmetics. This workshop will give participants an overview of the patent search tools, databases and strategies available for searching claims for short amino acid sequences and their functions. It will emphasise how to use the relevant patent classification to improve the search results. The use of practical examples will illustrate how an efficient search strategy can be developed in view of the requirements of novelty, inventive step, unity of invention and sufficiency of disclosure laid down in the European Patent Convention.

Focus: biotechnology, chemistry, CPC, internet search
Level of knowledge: advanced, field-specific

Regula von Eggelkraut-Gottanka, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Joined the EPO in 2005 and works in search, examination and opposition in the technical fields of protein-based diagnostics and peptides. Quality nominee for internal quality control of the patent classification of peptides, coach in classification and on-the-job trainer in search and examination. A presenter at Search Matters 2016 and 2017, she has given a number of in-house and external presentations on legal and technical subjects for peers, patent professionals and students. Studied pharmacy at the University of Tübingen, Germany. PhD in the field of pharmaceutical peptide research at ETH Zürich and the University of Leipzig.
Establishing the publication date of internet disclosures

Hands-on computer training

In all technical fields, the potentially most relevant prior art for an invention may have been made available to the public only on the internet, e.g. in a PDF document or on a webpage. A critical task for examiners or professional IP searchers is to establish the date on which such content was made available and the circumstances of its disclosure, as this determines whether the disclosure can be relied upon as prior art pursuant to Article 54(2) EPC or whether its status as such should instead be challenged.

This workshop will, first of all, provide some general guidance on the applicable legal framework governing the standard and burden of proof in EPO practice. Such knowledge is needed to ask the right questions when investigating the date of publication of an internet disclosure. A number of practical methods and computer tools for investigating the publication date of an internet disclosure will then be presented. The relevance of dates provided by internet services such as the Internet Archive or Google will be addressed. Particular attention will be given to those difficult cases where no Internet Archive record is available. During the workshop, participants will have an opportunity to test the discussed techniques on real cases.

Focus: internet search, NPL
Level of knowledge: beginner, advanced, general
Hands-on computer training

A search for prior art should end with the retrieval of the best available prior art documents and, ideally, it should be performed in the shortest time possible. Optimising search efficiency is key to the work of a searcher.

The best tool for a quality and efficient search is a good strategy. The initial criteria for searching the subject-matter must be selected, involving not just the technical tools or databases which will be the most appropriate, but also the precise scope of the search; in other words: “where and what to search”.

The searcher must then select an initial strategy for carrying out the search in the most efficient manner, establishing the main focus of the search. This is the “how to search”.

But once the search starts, this initial main focus must be continuously revised and adapted in an iterative process in view of the intermediate search results obtained and, if necessary, the previous criteria and strategies should be changed on the go, so as to steer the search towards the best prior art in the shortest time possible.

This workshop will show, with the help of examples and a hands-on searching experience, how to optimise the search using such a closed-loop iterative approach, with continuous monitoring of the quality of the search results and a critical review of the initial search criteria.

Focus: search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Ricardo Oltra-Garcia, ES, team manager, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO The Hague. Studied mechanical engineering at the Polytechnic University of Madrid and physics at the UNED, also in Madrid. Worked as an engineer for Robert Bosch and John Deere in Spain. Joined the EPO in 2002 where he deals with patents for agricultural machinery. Responsible for CPC classification in A01B and A01C. Additionally, he has been coaching and assessing new patent examiners since 2005 and also chairs opposition proceedings. He was involved with the new classification system (CPC) for his technical area and, as part of the CKT team, gives in-house training courses to other examiners.
WS19
Industry standards as prior art

Technical industry standards are a major driver of innovation in our globally connected world. By ensuring compatibility and interoperability of products from different manufacturers they facilitate formation of larger markets and promote technology dissemination.

This workshop will provide a brief introduction to industry standards and the work of standardisation bodies. It will explain how standards relate to patents and why they are a highly relevant source of prior art. You will learn how to recognise when an invention is likely to be standard relevant.

A demonstration will be given on how examiners search the documentation generated by the standardisation bodies for prior art. You will be shown how they optimise their search strategy by exploiting the characteristics of the documentation and how you can apply their tactics to your search.

The workshop will focus on standards relating to information and communication technology. The demonstration will be based on the documentation generated by the telecommunication standardisation body 3GPP, which defines the technology powering mobile phones and is the standard documentation most frequently cited by the EPO.

Focus: telecommunications, internet of things
Level of knowledge: beginner, general
Pavol Hanus, SK, examiner, sector Information and Communications Technology, EPO The Hague. Prior to joining the EPO as an examiner in 2011, he worked at Munich Technical University, where he supervised an international master’s programme and obtained a PhD for his interdisciplinary research on communications theory applications in genetics. He has experience in giving presentations, workshops and lectures at the university and at international conferences. He received a best presentation award from the International Society for Computational Biology Student Council in 2006 and a best paper and presentation award at the Data Compression Conference in 2009. At the EPO he is involved in examiner training and, as product owner, in a project to develop new search tools for examiners.
WS20
Computational chemistry – searching in a highly interdisciplinary technical field

Science today is becoming more and more interdisciplinary. Defining and solving complex technical problems requires both intellectual input from experts working in different technical fields and the use of a variety of devices or systems. There is a trend in all major branches of science to rely on computational resources to store, retrieve and analyse a vast amount of data gathered from a variety of sources. One of the technical areas where this trend is clearly observable is chemistry. The workshop will explore the field of computational chemistry, including chemoinformatics. The complexity of inventions in this technical field is often reflected in the contents of patent applications, which makes searching the prior art a challenging task. Classification schemes, database resources as well as search strategies in computational chemistry will be presented, based on examples from various industrial areas such as the pharmaceutical, oil and petroleum and automotive industries.

Focus: chemistry, CPC, search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, field-specific
Przemysław Godzina, PL, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Obtained a PhD in organic chemistry from the Polish Academy of Sciences. He designed and developed an automated synthesis of combinatorial libraries of chemically modified oligonucleotides with potential applications in gene therapy and antisense therapy before moving on to postdoctoral work in the field of synthetic gene-transfer vectors at CNRS. Joining the EPO in 2002, he has been working as an examiner in the fields of medical informatics, bioinformatics and chemoinformatics/computational chemistry. He was responsible for introducing bioinformatics into the IPC classification scheme and chemoinformatics into the CPC. He is a member of the EPO’s Classification Board.
**WS21**  
**Search Matters? Yes, search matters ... for your innovation!**

Applicants are not required to search the prior art before filing a patent application with the European Patent Office. However, knowledge of the relevant market and the literature that exists in a field can help you understand the strength or weakness of an invention. A thorough search improves the credibility rating afforded to the patent application by investors and thus the chances of receiving funding. It gives you information about market potential by revealing other ideas. More generally, it can help you to determine whether or not to spend further time and money on an idea.  
In this interactive workshop we will look at three or four real (anonymised) case studies to reveal the importance of a high-quality search. You will discover that a good search really does matter!

**Focus:** search strategy  
**Level of knowledge:** beginner, general
Wolfram Meyer, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Holds a PhD in cellular biology. He has extensive experience in examining patent applications in the field of biotechnology and has participated in numerous opposition proceedings. His analysis for the EPO of how to bring innovation successfully to the market led to findings that have been published in a book on entrepreneurship and in an article entitled “Patents: A Tool to Bring Innovation from the Lab Bench to the Marketplace.”

Hanno Schombacher, DE, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO Munich. Holds a PhD in engineering. He has extensive experience in searching and examining patent applications in the field of vehicle technology, and in opposition proceedings. Passed the EQE in 2007. He is also very involved in knowledge-sharing within the EPO and has given in-house courses for examiners and presentations for the European Patent Academy and at Knowledge Management conferences.
WS22
How to apply examiner search strategies on Espacenet

Hands-on computer training

This workshop is about searching Espacenet for patent applications. A practical example of a search for a pharmaceutical patent application will be demonstrated. Together with the participants, a strategy for this search will be developed. The example will showcase how to use the CPC classification for searching and how to make a search table using this classification. The search will then be performed live in Espacenet. Based on the results the search will be evaluated with the participants. There will be a discussion on how it can be refined and re-focused to arrive at an even better overview of the closest prior art. For this part of the workshop the problem/solution approach will be applied to the search strategy.

Focus: CPC, Espacenet, search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, general

Jörg Konter, DE, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO The Hague. Studied pharmacy at the University of Bonn and obtained a PhD in medicinal chemistry from the University of Jena. Prior to joining the EPO he worked in research for Bayer AG. As part of the Continuous Knowledge Transfer team he gives in-house training courses for fellow examiners.
Searching for a blend of ingredients: efficient strategy

The presentation will give an overview of efficient strategies for searching for a blend of ingredients, in particular in the field of cosmetics. Given the nature and the level of details given for a composition as claimed, the type of its ingredients and its use, it is not always easy to define an efficient strategy for retrieving the best prior-art documents in a reasonable amount of time. Searching everywhere is simply not possible. It is also often difficult to evaluate the level of relevance of documents found: in simple terms, is it “X” or “Y”?

The presentation will give practical examples of searches of cosmetic compositions with CPC classes and abstract databases in combination with full-text search but also with Japanese classification (FT terms) and a database of commercially available consumer products (Mintel GNPD). The general conclusions can be transferred by analogy to any applied chemical field.

Focus: chemistry, CPC, Asian prior art
Level of knowledge: beginner, field-specific

Sylvie Perrone Dunet, CH/IT, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Studied chemistry at the University of Geneva. After a PhD in organometallic chemistry from the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich and a year of postdoctoral research into sugar chemistry at Oxford University, she worked for two years in the industry for Sigma-Aldrich. She joined the EPO as an examiner in search and examination in 2009.
WS24
3D printing: search map and introduction to new classification scheme B29C64

Over the last three years, additive manufacturing has become a very popular technology and is now commonly used by high-tech companies and private individuals. Nowadays, anyone can buy a 3D printer and use it at home. In the near future, our children will use 3D printing the same way as we use 2D printing.

Recent technical developments by companies and universities have generated a plethora of documentation, making it difficult, if not impossible, to find our way. In order to meet that challenge and increase the technology’s visibility, the old B29C67/051 has been moved to B29C64 at IPC and CPC level. The workshop will give an introduction to the new scheme and highlight the most important changes. Using practical examples, the participants will have an opportunity to become acquainted with the new scheme.

As Japanese applicants are particularly active in the additive manufacturing field, a list of relevant F-terms will be presented. Moreover, bearing in mind that 3D printing is a multi-disciplinary technology involving data acquisition, processing and control, as well as material development, participants will be provided with a search map giving an overview of the related fields to help them stay on track. Conducting internet searches on 3D printing platforms and forums will also be discussed.

Focus: CPC, search strategy, Asian prior art
Level of knowledge: advanced, field-specific
Nathalie Pierre, FR, examiner, sector Mobility and Mechatronics, EPO the Hague. Graduated in plastic processing from École des Mines de Douai in France. After a PhD in plastic processing at Lyon’s Claude Bernard University for plastics firm Plastic Omnium, she studied intellectual property at CEIPI, Strasbourg. She joined the EPO in 2001 and works as a patent examiner in search, examination and opposition. She has been involved in several reclassification projects in the field of additive manufacturing (B29C67, B33Y and B29C64).
When the elderly kills the youngest: how old prior art may be relevant for new technology

When most of the prior art in a fast-developing field is only a few years older than the application, old documents, far removed from the technical field or the problem solved by the invention, are sometimes cited against the application, taking the applicant by surprise. After a short introduction to the legal framework for prior art, it will be shown that the wording of the claims and particularly the notion of “essential technical feature” play a tremendous role when defining the search strategy for retrieving relevant prior-art documents. Some techniques useful in retrieving relevant old documents will be discussed. Their impact on the patentability of new products, particularly new environmentally-friendly products from green chemistry processes, will be explored, with emphasis on both incidental disclosure and the notion of inventiveness.

Focus: search strategy
Level of knowledge: beginner, general

Yannick Rouault, FR, examiner, sector Healthcare, Biotechnology and Chemistry, EPO Munich. Graduated in material science (Strasbourg), PhD in Polymer Science (Paris), followed by postdoctoral research into theory and computer simulation at the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research in Mainz. Has worked at private and public research centres in Germany and Belgium. Development of search and examination tools at the EPO. Teaches and gives lectures for examiners and IP departments.
Info stands

Patent information

Visit the Patent Information stand to find out more about:
- Espacenet
- Patent Translate
- CPC browser
- Common Citation Document
- European Patent Register
- Register Alert
- Federated Register
- Global Dossier
- Global Patent Index
- Publication Server

Nigel S. Clarke, GB, PI Research Manager, Promotion, Patent Information, EPO Vienna. PhD in neutron science. After a career in R&D, he joined the EPO in The Hague as a patent examiner, going on to become an IT project manager. Moved to international co-operation at the EPO in Vienna, as co-ordinator of the PATLIB programme. This was followed by research into the patent information market. For many years responsible for Espacenet and the EP Register, he is now in charge of the EPO’s patent information research projects. He has many years’ experience of presenting patent information to the user community worldwide.
Updates to the Guidelines for Examination – 2017 edition

The procedures for search and examination of patent applications continue to evolve. New tools, international collaboration and the drive for greater quality and efficiency bring greater harmonisation to streamlined and higher-quality procedures. Every year in November, a revised version of the Guidelines for Examination in the EPO is published electronically on the EPO website. These Guidelines describe the very latest EPO procedures for the patent grant process. The poster provides an overview of the main changes in the 2017 edition of the Guidelines.

Pia Björk, SE, Senior content expert, IP Programme/European Patent Academy, EPO Munich. Joined the EPO in 1989 and worked for 17 years as examiner in the fields of metallurgy and general mechanics. Between 2007 and 2017 she was operational director in the cluster of Pure and Applied Organic Chemistry in directorates dealing with cosmetics and then later pharma (medical use and biopharmacy). She has also been a cluster representative in the EPO’s Patent Law and Procedures group.
Access to documentation from Asia ... better and easier than you imagined!

The EPO is committed to delivering high-quality patents which have maximum legal certainty. One of the stringent quality measures it has introduced is a thorough follow-up of Asian documentation consultations with the goal of reaching almost complete Asian documentation coverage, providing fit-for-purpose machine translation from Asian languages into English and investing in tools and training for examiners for time-efficient and comprehensive searching in Asian documentation. As far as possible, advances in Asian documentation coverage, machine translation and search tools are made available to the user community. Espacenet (www.epo.org/espacenet) offers free access to patent documents, including Asian documentation. Common Citation Document provides single-point access to citation data. Global Dossier allows users to examine the file wrapper from China, Japan and Korea. Patent Translate provides machine translations of Asian languages, and CPC classification codes are increasingly being allocated to documents from Korea and China. The poster will help applicants get an overview of how to best access Asian documentation:
– Coverage of Asian documentation and Asian citations in Espacenet
– Global Dossier: access to file wrappers from Asia
– Machine translation of documents from Asia
– CPC classification search in Asian documents

Christoph Wirner, DE, examiner, Applied Physics, EPO The Hague. Studied physics at Munich’s Technical University and conducted research at its Walter Schottky Institute. Completed the EU Science and Technology Fellowship programme at Osaka University, and worked on a future electron devices research project at Fujitsu Laboratories in Japan. Joined the EPO in 1997 as an examiner in semiconductor technology, where he participated in the EPO-JPO bilateral and EPO-JPO-USPTO trilateral examiner exchange programme and promoted the use of the Japanese Fi/F-term classification system. He previously chaired and is currently a member of the Asian Patent Expert Group. He is also a member of the EPO’s Japanese language expert group.
The Organising Committee Search Matters 2018

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Alexandra Pinna, project assistant
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Venue
European Patent Office (EPO)
Conference centre
Patentlaan 3-9
Entrance via Van Bentemlaan 16
2288 EE Rijswijk
The Netherlands

Organised by
European Patent Academy
European Patent Office
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