

Patents and licensing

Our patient-centric approach to intellectual property

Our approach to intellectual property (IP) derives from our broader purpose to reimagine medicine to improve and extend people's lives. We use patents and other IP rights as a means to enable the discovery and development of breakthrough medical innovations, to facilitate their delivery to the patients who need them, and to promote scientific and technological progress for patients and society. The following are some of the industry-leading practices and initiatives that comprise our patient-centered approach to IP.

Our approach to patents in the world's poorest countries

Novartis recognizes the unique socio-economic challenges faced by the world's poorest countries, including challenges that may interfere with the proper functioning of market-based incentives like intellectual property rights. Accordingly, Novartis does not seek or enforce patents in least developed countries (LDCs, as designated by the United Nations), low-income countries (LICs, as designated by the World Bank), or in around 80% of the lower-middle income countries (LMICs, as designated by the World Bank). In the small number of LMICs where we do seek or enforce patents, we aim to limit them to those patent applications covering new molecular entities. In addition, we are committed to granting non-exclusive licenses to qualified third parties for supply of our patented products exclusively to LDCs or to LICs

Facilitating access to patent information

In 2018, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations launched the [Patent Information Initiative for Medicines \(Pat-INFORMED\)](#).

Pat-INFORMED, of which we are a founding member, is a unique public online resource launched to provide basic patent information for medicines of participating companies, and to help members of the global health community that are involved in procurement decisions obtain relevant information about a medicine's patent status. Novartis was the first company to have listed patent information for all of our small-molecule medicines in the Pat-INFORMED database, which goes significantly beyond the program's near-term goal of capturing information for medicines in a more limited set of disease areas. In addition, we continue to drive the industry effort to include patent information for additional medicines.

Sharing our values and our patient-centric approach to IP

Novartis is also a founding member and signatory of the IP Principles for Advancing Cures and Therapies (IP PACT).

Launched in April 2021, the [IP PACT](#) is a public statement of our patient-centric approach to IP that explains some of the ways that we and other signatory companies use, and commit to use, the IP system for the benefit of patients and society.

Consistent with our longstanding company approach to IP described above, the 10 principles cover key themes, including

- how we file and enforce IP with a patient focus;
- how we use IP to advance innovation, collaboration, scientific progress, and public health;
- the importance of generics and biosimilars; and
- how we approach IP in the world's poorest countries.

Expanding access to the patent system

Further, we continue our pro bono efforts in the IP space through the [Inventor Assistance program](#), a WIPO initiative in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. The program, of which we are a founding member, matches inventors and small businesses of limited financial means in developing countries with qualified patent attorneys, who provide pro bono legal assistance. Since the program's launch in 2015, we have supported its implementation in each of its seven participating countries—Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, and South Africa—and aim to help expand it to additional developing countries.

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