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EUIPO SME Fund 2026: Protect Your Intellectual Property with EU Funding

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Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often delay or avoid protecting their intellectual property due to cost considerations. Recognising this challenge, the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) has relaunched the Ideas Powered for Business – SME Fund 2026, offering financial support to help SMEs protect their trademarks, designs and patents.

The SME Fund operates through a voucher-based reimbursement system, enabling eligible businesses to recover a substantial portion of official IP-related fees and making IP protection more accessible across the European Union.

A. What Does the SME Fund 2026 Cover?

The SME Fund 2026 provides financial assistance for a wide range of intellectual property activities, including trademarks, designs, patents and plant variety rights. The support is structured through different vouchers, each with specific reimbursement rates and caps.

Trademarks and Designs

Eligible SMEs can receive up to 75% reimbursement of official fees for trademark and design registrations at national, regional and EU level. This includes application, examination, registration, publication and additional class fees. The maximum funding available for trademarks and designs is up to €700 per business.



Patents

For patents, the fund offers:

- **75% reimbursement** of fees for national patent applications and state-of-the-art search reports, up to €1,000; and
- 75% reimbursement of European Patent Office (EPO) filing and search fees, plus 50% reimbursement of legal drafting and filing costs, up to a combined maximum of €2,500.

Plant Variety Protection

The fund also supports plant variety rights, offering 75% reimbursement of online application and examination fees before the Community Plant Variety Office, up to €1,500.

IP Scan Services

For SMEs seeking strategic guidance, the SME Fund provides up to 90% reimbursement for IP Scan services, which help businesses identify, manage and develop their intellectual property assets effectively.

B. Who Is Eligible?

Eligibility is based on the EU definition of SMEs under Recommendation 2003/361/EC, taking into account staff headcount, annual turnover and balance sheet totals.

- Micro enterprises: fewer than 10 employees and turnover/balance sheet up to €2 million
- Small enterprises: fewer than 50 employees and turnover/balance sheet up to €10 million
- Medium-sized enterprises: fewer than 250 employees, turnover up to €50 million, and balance sheet total up to €43 million

It is important to note that where a business is part of a wider group, group-level data may need to be taken into account. In addition, enterprises do not qualify if 25% or more of their capital or voting rights are controlled by public bodies.

C. Application Period for SME Fund 2026

- Applications open: 2 February 2026
- Applications close: 4–5 December 2026 (or earlier if the allocated budget is exhausted)

As the fund operates on a first-come, first-served basis, early application is strongly recommended.

D. Why the SME Fund Matters

The SME Fund 2026 aims to promote equal access to intellectual property protection across the EU. By reducing the financial burden associated with IP registrations, the programme enables SMEs to safeguard their brands, innovations and competitive advantage in increasingly crowded markets.

For many businesses, this funding can be the difference between leaving valuable IP unprotected and securing enforceable rights that support long-term growth and investment.

E. How We Can Assist You

At **Andria Papageorgiou Law Firm**, we support businesses and entrepreneurs in protecting, managing and maximising the value of their intellectual property. Our team provides end-to-end assistance in relation to the EUIPO SME Fund, including eligibility assessment, strategic advice on trademarks, designs and patents, preparation and submission of applications, and coordination of filings to ensure optimal use of the available funding.

We combine legal expertise with a practical, business-focused approach, guiding clients through each stage of the process while ensuring compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements. Whether you are seeking to protect a new brand, expand your IP portfolio or optimise your existing rights, we are here to help you navigate the process efficiently and with confidence.

Feel free to [contact us](#) for further professional assistance.

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