

# DPIIT Startup Recognition and IP Benefits Guide (India)

Complete guide to DPIIT recognition process and all IP-related benefits available to recognised startups

## HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE

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| 1. | This is a working document for dpiit / startup documents — fill in all bracketed fields before use. |
| 2. | Review annually or whenever relevant laws, regulations, or business circumstances change.           |
| 3. | Keep a signed copy on file and ensure the IP Manager has the current version.                       |
| 4. | Template only — not legal advice. Consult a qualified IP advocate for your specific situation.      |

## 1. WHAT IS DPIIT STARTUP RECOGNITION

**1.1 DPIIT Recognition Overview.** The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry recognises eligible startups under the Startup India initiative, entitling them to a wide range of benefits including significant discounts on IP filing fees. Recognition is free, online, and typically processed within 2 working days. The DPIIT Startup Recognition is valid for 10 years from the date of incorporation, subject to annual revenue and age conditions being met.

**1.2 Eligibility Criteria.** To be DPIIT-recognised, an entity must: (a) be a Private Limited Company, LLP, or Registered Partnership; (b) be incorporated less than 10 years ago; (c) have annual turnover not exceeding Rs. 100 crores in any financial year since incorporation; (d) be working on innovation, development, or improvement of products/processes/services or be a scalable business model with high potential for employment generation or wealth creation; and (e) not have been formed by splitting up or reconstructing an existing business.

## 2. IP-RELATED BENEFITS FOR DPIIT-RECOGNISED STARTUPS

**2.1 Patent Filing Benefits.** (a) 80% reduction in all official Patent Office fees — filing, examination, appeal; (b) Fast-track examination under the Startup Fast-Track scheme — expedited processing of patent applications; (c) Patent Facilitation Programme — facilitated access to empanelled patent attorneys at discounted professional fees; (d) Free IP awareness workshops and webinars organised by CGPDTM. Fee comparison: standard complete specification filing fee Rs. 17,500; startup rate Rs. 4,400 — saving Rs. 13,100 per application.

**2.2 Trademark Benefits.** 50% reduction in all trademark filing fees. This applies to: TM application (Form TM-A), opposition (Form TM-O), renewal (Form TM-R), and all other forms. Fee comparison: standard TM application Rs. 9,000 per class; startup rate Rs. 4,500 per class — saving Rs. 4,500 per class per application.

**2.3 Design Registration Benefits.** 50% reduction in design registration fees under the Designs Act 2000. Design registration protects the visual appearance of products and is particularly relevant for product companies, consumer electronics, fashion, and furniture startups.

## 3. HOW TO APPLY FOR DPIIT RECOGNITION

**3.1 Application Process.** Step 1: Register on [startupindia.gov.in](http://startupindia.gov.in). Step 2: Complete the recognition application — provide entity details, incorporation documents, and a brief description of the startup's innovation. Step 3: Upload required documents — Certificate of Incorporation, proof of concept or product description. Step 4: Submit application. Step 5: Recognition is typically granted within 2 working days. The DPIIT Recognition Number is then

used in all IP filing fee payment forms (Form 28 for patents).

**3.2 Maintaining Recognition.** DPIIT recognition continues as long as the startup meets eligibility criteria (age under 10 years, turnover under Rs. 100 crores, no restructuring). There is no annual renewal required — the recognition is valid for the period of eligibility. The startup must update its profile on [startupindia.gov.in](http://startupindia.gov.in) if its details change. Confirm recognition status before each major IP filing to ensure the discounted fee schedule is applied.

**3.3 Additional Startup India IP Initiatives.** Beyond fee reductions: the SIPP (Scheme for Startups' Intellectual Property Protection) funds patent, trademark, and design filings through empanelled facilitators at no cost to the startup for the facilitator's fees — the government reimburses facilitators; the National IPR Policy 2016 provides the strategic framework for IP ecosystem development; CGPDTM's IP awareness outreach programme for startups includes free virtual clinics with patent and trademark examiners.

## MAXIMISING IP STRATEGY AS A DPIIT-RECOGNISED STARTUP

**4.1 SIPP Scheme — Zero-Cost IP Filing.** The Scheme for Startups' Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) goes beyond fee reduction — it provides FREE patent, trademark, and design facilitation through empanelled facilitators. Under SIPP: the facilitator handles the entire filing process; the government reimburses the facilitator's professional fees directly; the startup pays only the official filing fee (already discounted 50–80% as a startup); applications for empanelled facilitators are accepted from IP firms meeting DPIIT's criteria. This means a startup with DPIIT recognition and a good invention can file a patent with total out-of-pocket costs as low as Rs. 1,750 for the provisional. Apply for SIPP facilitation at [startupindia.gov.in](http://startupindia.gov.in) before engaging any external patent attorney.

**4.2 Fast-Track Patent Examination.** DPIIT-recognised startups are eligible for expedited (fast-track) examination under the 'Startup' category in Form 18A. In practice, this has reduced examination waiting times from 3–5 years to 6–18 months at the Indian Patent Office. To use fast-track examination: (a) file Form 18A (Request for Examination by Startup) at the time of filing the complete specification or at any time before ordinary examination begins; (b) pay the reduced examination fee (Rs. 4,000 for startup vs Rs. 20,000 for large entities); and (c) attach the DPIIT recognition certificate. Monitor prosecution actively after filing Form 18A — examiners may issue the FER faster than you expect.

**4.3 Connecting with the IP Ecosystem Through Startup India.** DPIIT recognition opens access to: (a) IP awareness workshops — CGPDTM and DPIIT organise regular workshops on patent filing, trademark strategy, and copyright for startups; (b) One-on-one IP clinics — virtual sessions with Patent Office examiners and trademark examiners to discuss specific filings informally before formal submission; (c) State-level IP facilitation centres — several states have established IP facilitation centres co-funded by CGPDTM and state governments; (d) CII, FICCI, and NASSCOM IP forums — industry bodies aligned with DPIIT organise sector-specific IP events; and (e) WIPO India office — for access to international IP resources, PCT information, and cross-border licensing facilitation. Engage with this ecosystem proactively — the knowledge and contacts are valuable beyond just the fee savings.

## NATIONAL IPR POLICY AND ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT

**5.1 India's National IPR Policy 2016.** India's National Intellectual Property Rights Policy 2016 (adopted by the Cabinet in May 2016) outlines seven key objectives for IP development in India: IP awareness and outreach; IP generation; legal and legislative framework; administration and management; commercialisation; enforcement and adjudication; and human capital development. For startups, the most relevant initiatives under the NIPR Policy include: the IP Facilitation Centre (IPFC) network supporting MSMEs and startups; the National IP Award scheme recognising outstanding Indian innovators; the MSME Technology Centres with IP support services; and the annual IP awareness campaign (IP Utsav). The NIPR Policy commits India to building a world-class IP ecosystem — monitor DPIIT notifications for new programmes and benefits as the policy is implemented.

**5.2 IP in Government Procurement and Public Sector Contracts.** Startups doing business with the Government of India or state governments should be aware of IP provisions in government contracts. The General Financial Rules (GFR) 2017 and sector-specific procurement guidelines address IP ownership in government-funded projects. Key principle: in projects fully funded by the government, IP may vest in the government; in projects partially funded or where the startup contributes significant IP, ownership of IP may be negotiated. DPIIT-recognised startups have leverage in IP negotiations with government due to their recognised innovation status. Engage legal counsel familiar with government contracting before signing any government project that involves development of new technology.

**5.3 Leveraging DPIIT Recognition for International Recognition.** DPIIT startup recognition has growing international recognition. Some DTAA partner countries and bilateral investment agreement countries give preferential treatment to DPIIT-recognised startups in IP-related matters. DPIIT recognition also facilitates access to: WIPO's WIPO for Startups programme providing discounted PCT and Madrid fees; World Bank and IFC startup programmes; bilateral startup bridge programmes (UK-India, Australia-India, Israel-India Tech Bridges); and participation in international IP exhibitions and licensing fairs. Maintain your DPIIT recognition as an active credential and update your profile on [startupindia.gov.in](http://startupindia.gov.in) regularly.

## IP AUDIT FOR DPIIT RECOGNITION AND ONGOING COMPLIANCE

**6.1 IP Documentation Required for DPIIT Recognition Application.** While DPIIT recognition itself does not require detailed IP documentation, the recognition process asks startups to describe their 'innovative product, service, or process'. A strong IP position strengthens the recognition application: (a) if you have a filed patent application, reference the application number in the recognition form; (b) if you have registered trademarks, include them; (c) if you are relying on a unique business model or process, describe the proprietary elements clearly. The DPIIT recognition process is quick (typically 2 working days) but the description of innovation is reviewed — be specific and accurate.

**6.2 Maintaining Eligibility for IP Benefits.** To continue receiving IP fee discounts as a DPIIT-recognised startup: (a) annual turnover must remain below Rs. 100 crores — above this threshold, startup recognition does not apply; (b) the company must remain incorporated in India; (c) the recognition must not have been revoked for any reason (e.g. misrepresentation in the application); and (d) Form 28 (declaration of startup status) must be attached to each IP filing claiming the discounted fee. The DPIIT does not automatically notify you when eligibility changes — monitor your own eligibility criteria.

**6.3 State Government IP Incentive Schemes.** Many Indian state governments offer additional IP incentives for startups beyond the central government's DPIIT programme: Karnataka — patent filing reimbursement under the Karnataka Startup Policy; Maharashtra — IP assistance under MahaIT and Maharashtra State Innovation Society; Tamil Nadu — patent support under TIDEL Park and Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission (TANSIM); Telangana — IP support through T-Hub and Telangana Innovation Cell; Kerala — IP assistance through Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM). Check your state government's startup portal for current incentive schemes. These benefits can be stacked with central government benefits for additional cost savings.

**6.4 Integrating DPIIT IP Benefits With R&D; Tax Deductions.** DPIIT-recognised startups can combine IP filing benefits with income tax incentives: (a) Section 80IAC of the Income Tax Act 1961 provides 100% deduction of profits for 3 consecutive years within 10 years of incorporation for eligible startups; (b) Scientific research and development expenditure (including patent prosecution costs) can be deducted under Section 35 of the Income Tax Act — eligible companies can claim 100% deduction; (c) weighted deduction for R&D; expenses under Section 35(2AB) is available for companies with an in-house R&D; facility approved by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR). Integrate tax planning with IP strategy to maximise the financial benefit of your innovation investments.