



THE AFRICA IP SME HELPDESK



What is the Africa IP SME Helpdesk?

The Africa IP SME Helpdesk is an EU-funded project set up to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from the European Union (EU) in the process of creating, protecting, utilising, administering and enforcing intellectual property rights (IPR) across Africa, in line with international and European best practice and in support of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The EU and African countries share a common interest of facilitating trade and investment among themselves. African countries offer to EU SMEs a diverse market with a wide spectrum of economic, cultural and geographical features, as well as varying degrees of development of their IP systems. Cooperation between the EU and African countries in the Africa IP SME Helpdesk project will provide a unique opportunity for European SMEs to invest in Africa and, in that process, enable African countries to access global business value chains while, at the same time, contributing to sustainable development and economic growth in Africa.



What is the Africa IP SME Helpdesk's key message and service offering?

Protect before you go!

The Helpdesk helps to protect the EU SMEs' business in Africa by providing information and services related to the protection of their key IP assets in Africa.

The business-oriented confidential advice, training courses, online resources and up-to-date IP news and information are provided free of charge to EU SMEs.





What are key IP assets?

Most EU SMEs have some IP rights, such as:

- **Trade marks** for brands
- **Copyrights** for pictures, music, software or videos
- **Patents** and utility models for innovations
- **Industrial designs** which are the ornamental, aesthetic aspects of a useful article that make that article attractive and appealing, thereby adding commercial value to the article and increasing its marketability
- **Trade secrets** for secret business information.

Because these IP rights are not protected globally, it is crucial for every EU SME to apply the best IP protection strategy for Africa, even before going there.



HOW CAN THE IP SME HELPDESK HELP YOU?

- **Get personalised advice through the helpline.** Our IP experts provide personalised and confidential advice in response to your questions related to protecting your IP in Africa within 3 working days. You can contact the helpline by email: information@euipo.europa.eu, or phone: +34 965 139 810.
- **Join our training events.** Sign up for our training courses in Africa and the EU, as well as our webinars, during which you can learn the tips and tricks of IP protection strategy and enforcement in Africa and put your questions directly to our IP experts. Visit the training calendar on our website.
- **Download materials.** Check our country fact sheets, case studies and other publications on the protection and enforcement of IP rights in Africa, designed especially for EU SMEs. The IP news service keeps up-to-date with all recent developments on the African IP landscape. Visit the IP library on our website.

You can access all our services through our website.

For more information, please contact
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