

Where We File Patents: HBKU’s Global Protection Strategy



Choosing the right jurisdictions for patent filing ensures your innovation is protected where it matters most, in markets with strong commercial potential, active licensing opportunities, or key research partnerships. Our filings are guided by commercialization, and R&D strategies, not just geography. We prioritize countries and regions where your invention can have the greatest impact and where IP rights can be effectively enforced.

Jurisdiction		Key Features
United States (USPTO)	✓	Offers provisional and non-provisional filings
	✓	Utility, design, and plant patents
	🕒	Patent term: 20 years from filing (utility)
Europe (EPO)	✓	Centralized system covering 39 countries via the European Patent Convention (EPC)
	✓	File once, validate in chosen states after grant
	✓	Does not grant an “EU-wide” patent, but a bundle of national patents
PCT (WIPO)	✓	Not a granting system — it is an international application route
	✓	Centralized initial filing, then enter national/regional phases (e.g., USPTO, EPO, KIPO)
	🕒	Gives up to 30 months before committing to specific jurisdictions
	✓	Useful for startups seeking global protection strategy
QATAR (QA)	✓	Offers non-provisional filings
	✓	Utility and industrial design patents
	🕒	Patent term: 20 years from the filing date

*Our filings predominantly cover principal jurisdictions including the United States, the European Patent Office, the PCT system, and Qatar; however, patent applications may also be submitted in additional individual countries to align with the commercialization strategy. [e.g. if there is a licensing agreement or commercial interest from an end user in Japan, our office will file a Utility application in Japan to ensure protection of rights and enforceability within that specific market.]

Timeline

Stage	Description	Estimated Timeframe
Provisional Filing (Optional)	Early placeholder application (no claims)	Valid for 12 months
Non-Provisional Filing	Full patent application with claims	Day 0
Patent Publication	Application is published (usually)	~18 months from filing (earliest priority date)
Examination & Office Actions	Centralized system covering 39 countries via the European Patent Convention (EPC)	1–3 years
Response to Examiner	Patent office reviews and raises objections	Varies per round
Grant (if approved)	Applicant addresses objections	~2–5 years total
Annuity/Maintenance Fees	Patent is issued and rights are enforceable	Paid every year