



Patenting Blockchain

One-day conference

4 December 2018

European Patent Office, The Hague



President's foreword



As the EPO looks to the future, a number of issues stand out that require our attention. Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of those subjects and led us to hold a groundbreaking event on AI and patents earlier this year.

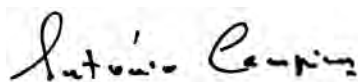
Now, in our next major conference on potentially revolutionary technologies, the EPO is turning its attention to another subject that is attracting the interest of many involved in patents: blockchain.

As blockchain technology is applied in an increasing number of technical areas, more and more inventions involving its use are proving to be patentable. But to truly capitalise on these opportunities, we have to have a comprehensive understanding of various related issues, such as the fields of application, searching and examining blockchain, the current blockchain landscape, links to other new developments such as AI, and the associated challenges and opportunities that this new technology brings to patenting.

In this conference we've lined up our leading experts as well as speakers from other public institutions and private enterprises to help evaluate these various considerations. Among the issues being discussed, we'll also be taking an in-depth look at how the EPO deals with blockchain patent applications. By arming all those attending with a firm understanding of how the technology is patented at the EPO, we're aiming to equip you with the knowledge that can help applicants achieve IP protection more efficiently.

Finally, this conference is a unique opportunity to connect with a whole spectrum of professionals closely involved with blockchain and patents. The EPO's expert examiners are also attending from across our sites to further ensure a harmonised approach and I encourage you to liaise with them during this conference to obtain more valuable insights. By developing our dialogue further, we can ensure that new technologies can have a truly positive impact on the patent landscape, our businesses, our economy and our society.

I wish you all a very enjoyable conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "António Campinos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

António Campinos
President, European Patent Office

Tuesday, 4 December 2018

07.30 Registration & light breakfast

Event moderator:

Grant Philpott (Chief Operating Officer ICT, EPO)

09.00 Welcome address

António Campinos (President of the EPO)

09.15 Keynote with Q&A

Blockchain technology and fields of application

Keynote speakers:

Marieke Flament and Claire Wells (Circle, UK)

Presentation with Q&A

Rising to the challenge of searching blockchain and establishing its patent landscape

Speakers:

Georg Weber (Director in ICT, EPO)

Yann Ménière (Chief Economist, EPO)

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Panel discussion 1

Possible future impact of blockchain, such as smart contracts and links to artificial intelligence

Chair:

James Nurton (writer on IP law, business and policy, UK)

Panellists:

Marieke Flament (Circle, UK)

Benoît Abeloos (DG CONNECT, European Commission)

Jon Wright (Sterne Kessler, US)

Erich Spangenberg (IPwe, FR)

12.00 **Panel discussion 2**
IP landscape of blockchain

Chair:

Michael Fröhlich

(Director European and International Legal Affairs, PCT, EPO)

Panellists:

Mirko Boehm (Open Invention Network, DE)

Benjamin Bai (Ant Financial Services Group/Alipay, CN)

Klaus Haft (Hoyng Rokh Monegier, DE)

Richard Bennett (SSM Patent Attorneys, DE)

13.00 **Wrap-up of the morning session**
Grant Philpott (Chief Operating Officer ICT, EPO)

13.15 Lunch

14.30 **Presentation with Q&A**
How does the EPO deal with blockchain patent applications and what do we hear from our applicants?

Speaker:

Koen Lievens (Director in ICT, EPO)

Presentation with Q&A
How does the CNIPA (China National Intellectual Property Administration) deal with blockchain patent applications?

Speaker:

Wang Xinyi (expert patent examiner, CNIPA)

15.30 Coffee

16.00 **Panel discussion 3**
Global evolution of blockchain-related patents

Chair:

Heli Pihlajamaa (Director Patent Law, EPO)

Panellists:

Wang Xinyi (expert patent examiner, CNIPA)

Nobuyuki Taniguchi (Nakamura & Partners, JP)

Gabriele Mohsler (Ericsson, SE)

Claire Wells (Circle, UK)

17.00 **Closing words**
Alberto Casado (Vice-President Patent Granting Process, EPO)

17.15 Drinks

Speakers' profiles



António Campinos

President, EPO

António Campinos took up office as President of the European Patent Office (EPO) on 1 July. With a strong record of 20 years of executive leadership experience in the intellectual property (IP) field, the Portuguese national was elected President in October 2017 by the Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation, the EPO's legislative body, for a five-year term. He has an extensive IP background and has dedicated his professional career to the protection of IP.

Prior to his appointment as President of the EPO, he was the Executive Director of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) in Alicante, Spain, from 2010 until June 2018. He joined the Portuguese IP Office, INPI, in 2000 as Trademark Director and in 2005 was elected its President. From 2005 to 2007 he headed the Portuguese delegation on the Administrative Board of the EUIPO, and was Chairman of this board from 2008 to 2010. In parallel (from 2005 to 2010) he was head of the Portuguese delegation on the Administrative Council of the EPO, Chairman of the Working Group on Industrial Property at the Council of the European Union during the Portuguese presidency (July to December 2007), Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Legal Development of the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks and Head of the Portuguese delegation at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) General Assembly.



Alberto Casado

Vice-President Patent Granting Process, EPO

Alberto Casado has been a vice-president of the EPO since 2012. Prior to this he was Director General of the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office (SPTO) from 2008 to 2012, a special projects co-ordinator at the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) from 2004 to 2008, Vice President of OHIM (Trade Marks and Designs) from 1994 to 2004 and Deputy Director General and Director of the Legal and International Relations Department of the SPTO from 1987 to 1994. He was also Chairman ad interim of the EPO's Administrative Council from 2010 to 2011. He has been a professor of the University Robert Schumann, Strasbourg, France, since 2005, a member of the Advisory Council of the McCarthy Center for Intellectual Property and Technology Law, University of San Francisco, USA, since 2001 and a professor and member of the Academic Board for the Magister Lucentinus (a post-graduate specialisation course) at the University of Alicante since 1994. He is the author of a number of lecture papers, articles and books.



Grant Philpott

Chief Operating Officer ICT, EPO

Grant Philpott is the EPO's Chief Operating Officer for patenting in the ICT area, with responsibility for approximately 2 000 highly qualified patent examiners, managers and administrative staff. During his 28 years at the EPO he has worked across a range of technical fields encompassing mechanics, industrial chemistry and ICT, as a member of the committee responsible for organising the European qualifying examination for patent attorneys, in the EPO's Controlling Office and on several automation projects. Previous managerial positions include Principal Director of the computers and telecoms operational areas and Director of the EPO's semiconductor patenting directorate in Munich.



Benoît Abeloos

DG CONNECT, European Commission

Benoît Abeloos is an ICT engineer with an MBA and Senior Policy Officer in the Digital Innovation and Blockchain unit of DG CONNECT. He is part of the Blockchain and FinTech team, where he leads standardisation, interoperability and infrastructure aspects and is actively contributing to the EU's blockchain strategy. He chairs the Interoperability and Standardisation Work Stream of the EU FinTech Task Force. He is a member of ISO Technical Committee 307 on blockchain and distributed ledger technologies, where he coordinates the Commission's engagement. Previously, he worked as Policy Officer at the Health and Wellbeing Unit of DG CONNECT, where he was in charge of interoperability and standardisation and of the large-scale epSOS pilot project. Before joining the Commission, Benoît held different executive positions at ICT startups, at Amadeus, the technology partner of the travel industry, and at Proximus, the Belgian telecommunications provider.



Benjamin Bai

Ant Financial Services Group/Alipay, CN

Benjamin Bai is Vice President and Chief IP Counsel of the Ant Financial Services Group, which operates Alipay, the world's largest online and mobile payments platform. He is a leading IP practitioner who previously specialised in global patent litigation in jurisdictions spanning from the United States to Asia. Before joining Ant Financial, he spent 20 years at the world's leading law firms in the United States and China and focused on high-stake technology litigation and IP licensing in China, with a particular emphasis on patent and trade secret litigation. From 2014 to 2015, he led a team of lawyers and obtained four landmark preliminary injunctions in patent cases in China. He obtained his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Texas, School of Law, and his PhD in chemistry from Rice University. He obtained his Bachelor of Science from the University of Science and Technology of China.



Richard Bennett

SSM Patent Attorneys, DE

Richard Bennett is a partner at SSM Patent Attorneys. His practice focuses on IP law in both prosecution and litigation, and in particular on the fields of computer-implemented inventions, data processing methods and software, digital networks, medical technology, optics, geotechnics, signal processing, mechanical engineering, physical chemistry and semiconductor technology. He also focuses on trade mark law. He studied physics at the Technical University of Munich and geophysics at the Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich. He has been a German patent attorney and European trade mark and design attorney since 2011 and a European patent attorney since 2012. He obtained a Master of Laws in the field of European IP law in 2014 with a thesis on the future unitary patent and the Agreement on a Unified Patent Court. He is member of the German Patent Bar Association's committee for computer-implemented inventions, and currently serving as its chairman.



Mirko Boehm

Open Invention Network, DE

Mirko Boehm is a free and open source software contributor, primarily as a developer and speaker. He has been a contributor to major open source projects like the KDE Desktop since 1997 and spent several years on the KDE e.V. board. He is a visiting lecturer and researcher on free and open source software at the Technical University of Berlin, part of the Free Software Foundation Europe Germany team and a Qt-certified specialist and trainer. The Open Invention Network protects the open source ecosystem by acquiring patents and licensing them royalty-free to all participants. As director for Linux system definition, he is responsible for the technical scope that defines the field of use of the patent non-aggression agreements. As a co-founder of Endocode, he specialises in consulting and mentoring startups and medium to large businesses.



Marieke Flament

Managing Director, Circle, UK

Marieke Flament is Global CMO and EMEA Managing Director at Circle, a world-leading cryptofinance company that has raised USD 246m in funding and has seven million customers globally. At Circle, her mission is to make crypto mainstream and help leverage the power it will bring to society by bringing Circle's products to market and working closely with regulators, governments and industry peers to help shape the future of finance. She joined Circle in April 2016 and has since established Circle in Europe, building up its European operations to four offices, over 60 employees and millions of customers across its product lines. She is an advocate for diversity in finance and technology and, under her leadership, Circle was the first fintech to sign the UK Treasury's Women in Finance Charter and achieve a 50:50 gender split in the sector. She has spent most of her career in tech, leading businesses across Asia and Europe.



Michael Fröhlich

Director of European and International Legal Affairs, PCT, EPO

Michael Fröhlich is a fully qualified German lawyer with a PhD and a post-graduate law degree in IP. At the EPO, he is responsible for implementing the unitary patent package, strengthening the legal framework of the global patent system, including substantive and procedural patent law harmonisation, further developing the European patent system and procedures and practice under the Patent Cooperation Treaty. Prior to joining the EPO, he worked as Senior Director, EU Intellectual Property & Strategy, at BlackBerry. Before working at BlackBerry, he helped to define and represent Nokia's IP rights and standards position. He also worked as the Head of Legal Affairs at the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) and in different functions on the International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AIPPI) Committee on Standards and Patents, the GSMA IPR Working Group and the Licensing Executives Society (LES) Publication Committee.



Klaus Haft

Hoyng Rokh Monegier, DE

Klaus Haft obtained his physics degree in 1997, became an attorney in 2002 and advises on patent infringement litigation cases, subsequent litigation regarding damages as well as licences in the entire area of IP law, particularly in the field of patents. His particular focus is on standards, electronics, software, optics, electrics and general mechanics.

He studied in Würzburg and Munich. He completed his degree thesis in 1997 as a member of the Spin Muon Collaboration at the European Center for Particle Physics, CERN, in Geneva, Switzerland. In parallel with his studies, in 1990 he started to specialise in IP law and, in particular, in patent law. He is a visiting lecturer at Maastricht University, President of the European Patent Lawyers Association (EPLAW) and Secretary of the Licensing Executives Society (LES) Germany.



Koen Lievens

Director in ICT, EPO

Koen Lievens is a director in the EPO's Directorate-General Patent Granting Process. His directorate is in charge of patentability searches and patent granting in the fields of wireless and data switching networks. He also heads a task force at the EPO for clarifying the legal practice and guidelines relating to computer-implemented inventions

(CII). He has a background in ICT and has been a patent examiner for 13 years. Before joining the EPO, he worked as a project manager, product manager and account manager at large organisations in Brussels.



Yann Ménière

Chief Economist, EPO

Yann Ménière joined the EPO as Chief Economist in February 2016. He was previously a professor of economics at MINES ParisTech, and also lectured on the economics of IP at Imperial College London, the Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium) and CEIPI. His research and expertise relate to the economics of innovation, competition and IP.



Gabriele Mohsler

Vice President Patent Development, IPR & Licensing, Ericsson

Gabriele Mohsler is Head of Patent Development at Ericsson, responsible for all patent creation worldwide and in charge of a number of patent units worldwide. Over the years she has held several management positions and was responsible for European litigation at Ericsson for a number of years. She studied electrical engineering at the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH) in Aachen and started her career as a patent attorney trainee with Alcatel. After passing the European qualifying examination, she started working at Ericsson in Germany in 1997. Here she took the German patent attorney exam and started building up the patent department in Germany, which is now one of the key IP right departments at Ericsson. She is an elected member of the board at The German Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (GRUR). She also sits on the Board of women in IP.



James Nurton

Writer on IP law, business and policy, UK

James Nurton is a writer and editor specialising in IP law, business and policy. From January 1996 to October 2017 he worked for Managing Intellectual Property, latterly as managing editor responsible for all the editorial content in *Managing IP* magazine, on managingip.com and on social media and at events. During his time at Managing IP, James launched and developed the global survey of IP firms now known as IP STARS, and the annual Awards Dinners, which he often hosted. He also launched and edited the *INTA Daily News*, *AIPPI Congress News* and *AIPLA Daily Report* newspapers. During the past few years he has also contributed articles to other publications, notably the EUIPO's *Alicante News*, which has published more than 100 "James Nurton Interviews" with European trade mark practitioners. He contributes a monthly briefing on IP and IT law developments to Bloomsbury Professional and has written numerous articles and reports on IP matters.



Heli Pihlajamaa

Director Patent Law, EPO

Heli Pihlajamaa studied law at Helsinki University and at the Max Planck Institute in Munich. She acts as a legal member in opposition cases and advises EPO higher management on policy issues and legal amendments. Her directorate supports EPO policy by developing, strengthening and promoting the EPC, including making proposals for legal changes and checking compliance with patent law-related norms and case law. Before joining the EPO she worked in both the private and public sectors. Heli has written several books and articles on patent law in Finnish.



Erich Spangenberg

IPwe, FR

Erich Spangenberg is the CEO and founder of IPwe, a company using blockchain and artificial intelligence to create the patent asset class. He also founded nXn Partners, a company that is focused on predictive analytics. He was the founder and CEO of IPNav, a company that was one of the pioneers in patent monetisation. He was a Periclean Scholar at Skidmore College, a distinguished graduate in his Master's degree programme at The London School of Economics and earned his Juris Doctor degree at Case Western Reserve University, where he worked on the *Law Review*. After working as a partner at the law firm Jones Day, Erich left the law for investment banking, serving as a Senior Vice President at Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette. From investment banking he went into the corporate world, where he was the president of Smarttalk Teleservices and then of Acclaim Venture Group.



Nobuyuki Taniguchi

Nakamura & Partners, JP

Nobuyuki Taniguchi is a patent attorney and partner in the Electronics & IT section of Nakamura & Partners. He worked for the Japan Patent Office from 1994 to 1999 and from 2001 to 2007 as an examiner of patents related to fax and copying machines, information processing and business-related inventions as well as for the Ministry of International Trade and Industry from 1999 to 2001. He joined Nakamura & Partners in 2007, and since then has been involved in patent prosecution, patent litigation and other IP activities. He is an active member of the Japan Association of Industrial Property Law and the International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AIPPI). He has also served as a chairman of the AIPPI-JAPAN Software Patent Study Group since 2010. Additionally, he has written numerous articles and lectured extensively on the patent protection of software-related inventions.



Claire Wells

Legal & Business Affairs Director for Europe, Circle, UK

Claire Wells is the Legal & Business Affairs Director for Europe at Circle. She joined Circle in April 2017 and has helped grow Circle's business and operations across all product lines, advising on legal, regulatory and business affairs. Claire is an active voice in the industry, working with regulators and industry bodies and speaking at numerous conferences/events, including Money 2020, Blockchain Summit and Fintech Week, to name a few. Prior to joining Circle, Claire was International Counsel at Tilt.com, a San Francisco-based social payments platform, looking after their global market offering. She trained and qualified at international law firm Allen & Overy, specialising in M&A, and also has experience as an in-house legal counsel at Lloyds Bank plc. She holds a Master of Arts from Cambridge University and currently lives in London.



Jon Wright

Sterne Kessler, US

Jon Wright is a director in Sterne Kessler's Trial & Appellate and Electronics Practice groups. He co-chairs the firm's appellate practice and its patent office litigation practice. Jon focuses primarily on contested proceedings before the USPTO's Patent Trial and Appeal Board and on appeals of those cases to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. He is a recognised leader in inter partes review practice where there is co-pending district court litigation or a United States International Trade Commission investigation. He is familiar with the challenges faced by both patent owners and petitioners in these complex proceedings and often works closely with trial counsel as part of an inter-disciplinary team.



Wang Xinyi

Expert patent examiner, CNIPA

Wang Xinyi is an experienced patent examiner at the Chinese Patent Office (CNIPA). She studied communication and information systems at the Beijing Institute of Technology and graduated with a PhD in electronic engineering. She joined the CNIPA in 2008, specialising in the technical area of digital signal processing and wireless network communication. She is a regular trainer/instructor for internal and external courses on prior-art search and substantive examination. She is also responsible for research projects on patent analysis in this area, and providing analysis reports for enterprises and government.



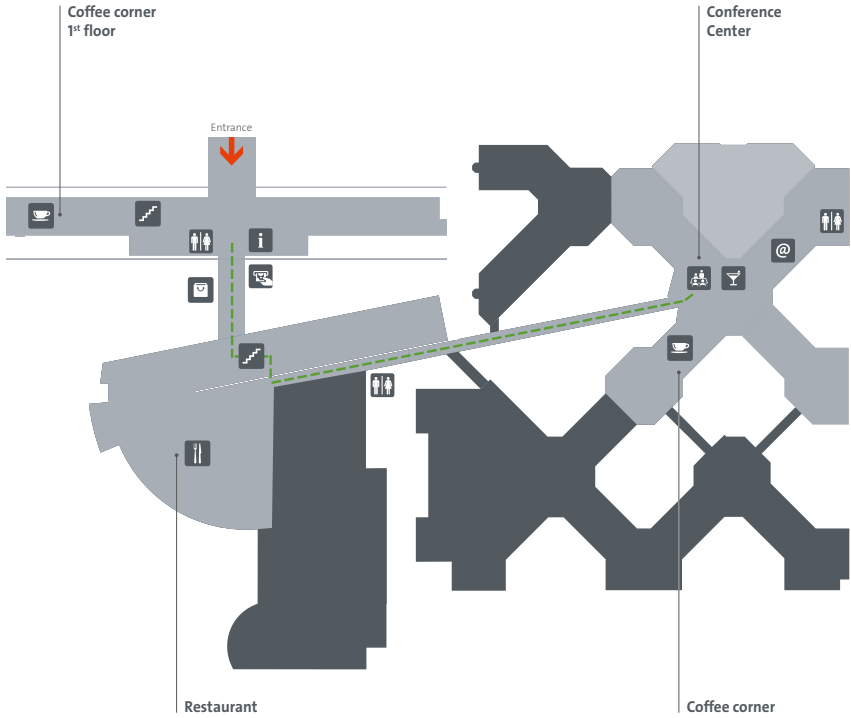
Georg Weber

Director in ICT, EPO

Georg Weber began his career at the EPO as an examiner in the technical fields of food chemistry, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics as well as agriculture, mining and general process engineering. In 2003 he became head of a department for biomedical engineering. Since 2005 he has been a director in the ICT field and followed the patent filing trends in this fast-growing area over more than a decade.

EPO The Hague

Orientation map



 Entrance

 Route to Conference Center

 Reception/Information Desk/Scanning check

 Toilets

 Meeting area

 PC room/printing facilities

 Coffee corner

 Restaurant

 Foyer Conference Center

 Commercial Area

 ATM

Venue

European Patent Office
Patentlaan 2
2288 EE Rijswijk
The Netherlands

Organised by

European Patent Office
blockchain2018@epo.org

Event microsite

epo.org/blockchain2018