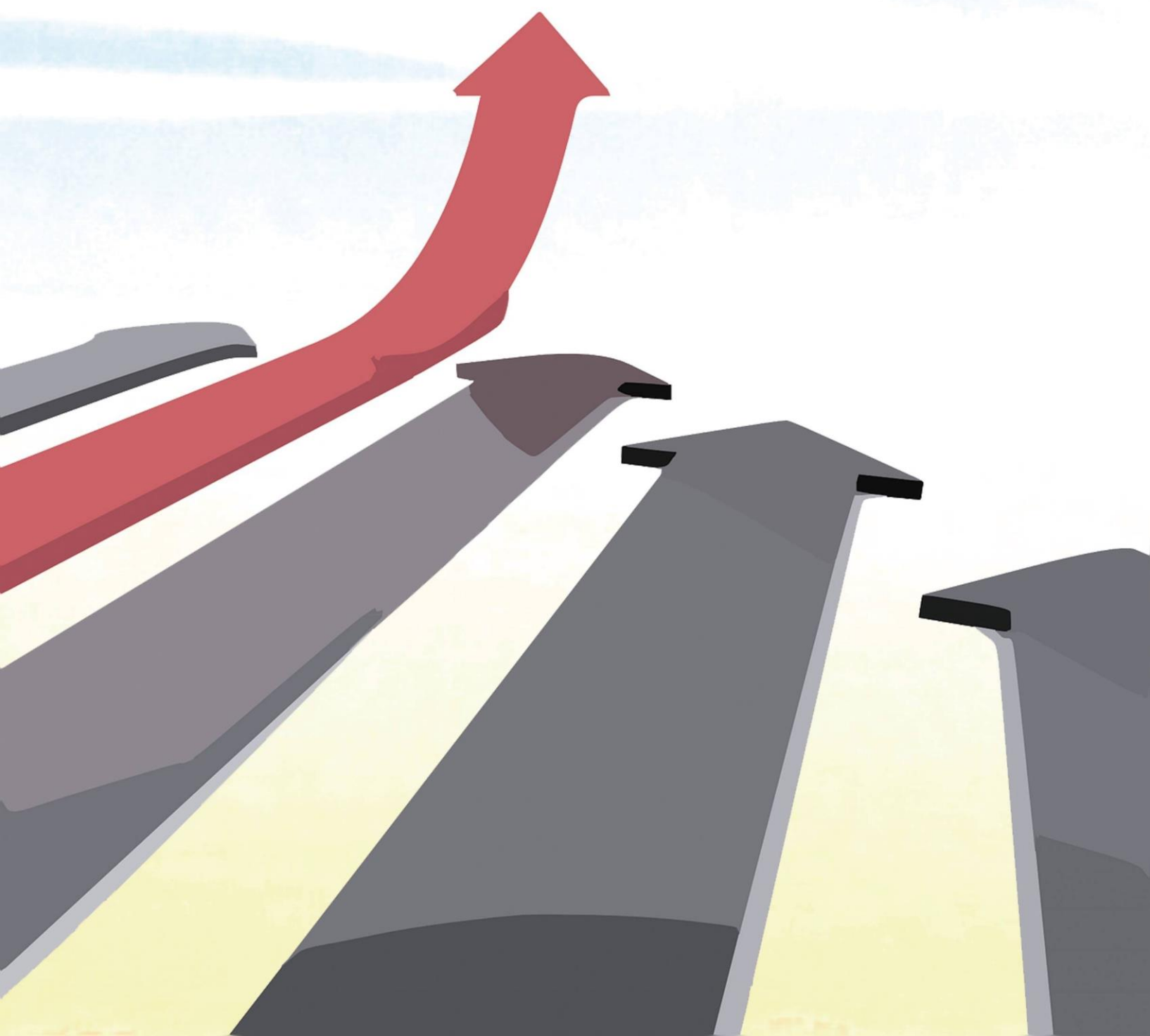# IPAS

Collection of Cases

IPAS (Intellectual Property Acceleration Program) Operation Guide

-Key Points of the Intellectual Property Support Program for Startup Supporters!-

特許庁
JAPAN PATENT OFFICE

With the release of the English version of "IPAS Operation Guide"

  This handbook is the English translation of a guidebook that summarizes the operational know-how of the Intellectual Property Acceleration Program for Startups (IPAS) for early-stage startups implemented by the Japan Patent Office.

  IPAS has supported 104 companies over the past six years, and has achieved 94 business alliances and three companies have exited after support. The handbook was originally created to disseminate the startup support knowledge gained from this project to startup supporters. Two years after the original publication, multiple projects modeled on IPAS have been created by public organizations such as local governments, indicating that the IPAS project has been particularly successful in providing support. In this context, with the cooperation and agreement between WIPO and the JPO, the JPO will strengthen WIPO's support for small and medium-sized enterprises and startups in developing countries and is now releasing a translation.

  The key points of IPAS are as follows: a team of three people (a business expert, an IP expert, and an associate mentor) is formed to help make an IP strategy that corresponds to the business strategy; the knowledge-sharing program trains experts; a booklet of supported cases is published; a demo day event is held to publicize startups; and content with tips for support is disseminated.

  We are pleased that IPAS's now-how can connect the ambition to support startups across the seas. We are very interested to see how IPAS support will impact the startup ecosystem in developing countries and what kind of companies will emerge to drive society in the future.

  We would also be honored if this handbook is helpful to anyone who supports startups. We would appreciate your feedback on the IPAS program as you continue to provide support.

<div align="right">May 2024, Japan Patent Office</div>

With the release of "IPAS (Intellectual Property Acceleration Program) Operation Guide"

In 2018, the JPO started the Intellectual Property Acceleration Program for Startups (IPAS) to support the development of IP strategies for startups. Over the past four years, we have received more than 380 applications and supported 60 companies in developing their IP strategies.

Developing an IP strategy is critical for startups built on innovative technologies and ideas. However, there are challenges such as "we are aware of the importance of intellectual property but do not know what to do" or "we have specific IP issues but have put them on the back burner due to lack of resources, etc." IPAS has been initiated to work with such startups to jointly develop an IP strategy.

In order to develop a precise IP strategy, it is first necessary to have a well-developed business strategy. This is because IP strategy changes with business strategy, and building an IP strategy around the wrong business strategy may result in the wrong IP strategy. For this reason, IPAS sends a team of business experts and IP experts to the startup to first diagnose the business model and then follow the procedure to develop an IP strategy accordingly. (Reference: IPAS Collection of Cases 2020 "Fundamentals of Intellectual Property Mentoring as Seen through IPAS")

Also, the development of an IP strategy needs to be addressed at an early stage when starting a company. Delays in responding to IP issues may result in the inability to develop the business as expected, as patents held by other companies may limit the strategic options available to the company. For this reason, IPAS has mostly supported seed/early-stage startups.

If you look around the world, there are not a lot of startup support programs for IP strategy development. For this reason, the JPO has prepared this booklet to introduce the operation of IPAS, which has been developed through trial and error over the past four years, to those who wish to plan and operate intellectual property support programs and other programs for experts, etc.

However, IPAS is only a model, and the methods presented may not be applicable everywhere or without modification. We hope that the contents of this booklet will be useful, even in part, as a reference when planning your own business, and that it will be an opportunity for you to become interested in the planning and operation of startup support.

March 2022, Japan Patent Office

Table of Contents
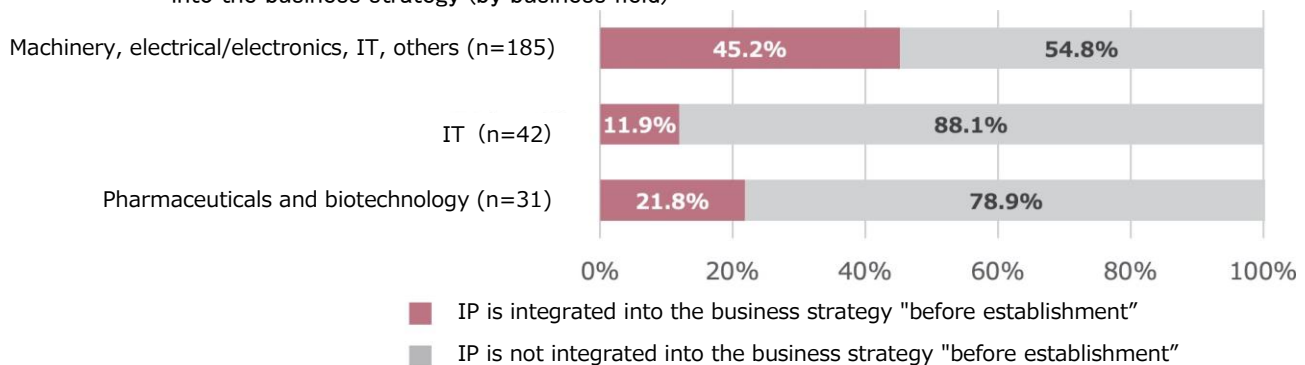
1. History of startup support at the JPO

Why do we provide "IP support" to startups?

In fiscal year 2017, the JPO conducted a survey on the challenges facing startups and how to support them, which led to the launch of the IPAS and IP BASE projects described in this handbook. The survey *1 highlighted two challenges.

Startups are too slow to become "aware" of an IP strategy.
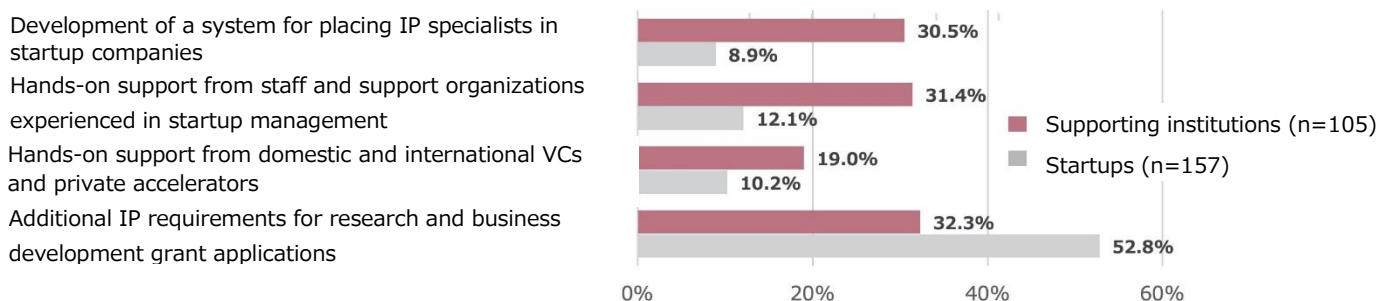
Timing to become "aware" of IP

Positioning of intellectual property in the business strategy based on the timing of integration of IP into the business strategy (by business field)

Machinery, electrical/electronics, IT, others (n=185): 45.2% / 54.8%
IT (n=42): 11.9% / 88.1%
Pharmaceuticals and biotechnology (n=31): 21.8% / 78.9%

■ IP is integrated into the business strategy "before establishment"

■ IP is not integrated into the business strategy "before establishment"

(Source: Japan Patent Office, "Intellectual Property Challenges Faced by Startups and the Ideal Form of Support Measures")

There are gaps between the needs of startups and the support measures

Comparison of the needs of startups and the support measures of the support institutions

Development of a system for placing IP specialists in startup companies: 30.5% / 8.9%

Hands-on support from staff and support organizations experienced in startup management: 31.4% / 12.1%

Hands-on support from domestic and international VCs and private accelerators: 19.0% / 10.2%

Additional IP requirements for research and business development grant applications: 32.3% / 52.8%

■ Supporting institutions (n=105)
■ Startups (n=157)

(Source: Excerpts from the JPO's "Intellectual Property Challenges Faced by Startups and the Ideal Form of Support Measures")

*1: Fiscal 2017 JPO Industrial Property Rights System Issues Study Research Report "Study Research Report on Intellectual Property Challenges Faced by Startups and the Ideal Form of Support Measures"

A mismatch between the goal of support and the content of support was suggested, and matching the goal of support and the content of support to the level of interest in intellectual property was suggested as a solution to this problem. That is, startups are divided into levels in terms of interest in intellectual property and maturity of response. For startups that are not interested in intellectual property, support is provided to promote awareness of intellectual property through a gentle and broad connection (=weak tie) through the formation of a startup community, and for startups that are interested in intellectual property but not yet ready to take action, support is provided through a strong connection (=strong tie) as in individual consulting.

2. How to support startups

How do we provide "IP support" to startups?

The JPO has been providing startup support that combines the two types of support for these two challenges. One is a gentle, broad connection through the formation of a startup community, and the other is the support of a strong connection through individual consulting.

Building a community for startup support through the IP BASE

● We operate an IP portal site (IP BASE site), where we disseminate useful information, hold public seminars, organize workshops for members, participate in external events, and distribute videos, etc. We create a "place" of gentle connections.

Dissemination of information through websites

Transmission of information through video

Recognition of startup companies, etc. for outstanding IP activities

Speaking at events

Individualized support program for startup entrepreneurs through the IPAS project

● We support startups by forming an IP mentoring team consisting of business experts such as management consultants and venture capitalists, and IP experts such as patent attorneys and lawyers(attorneys in particular) with startup support experience.

Overview

Five-month startup mentoring

Startups

M&A   IPO

IPAS

Pre-Seed

Seed/Early

Growth   Valuation   Expansion

400 IP /Business Experts

1. Support: IP Mentoring

IP Mentoring Team

2. Educate: Knowledge-sharing

Business mentors: Venture Capitalists/ Business Consultants

IP mentors: Lawyers/ Patent attorneys

Associate mentors: Experts in startup challenges

Objectives:
1. Support IP development strategies for startups
2. Educate mentors
3. Disseminate knowledge

3. Dissemination Publish case studies

The JPO supports the expansion of the base of startups interested in intellectual property, the development of experts, and the creation of successful startups through the IP BASE and IPAS partnerships.
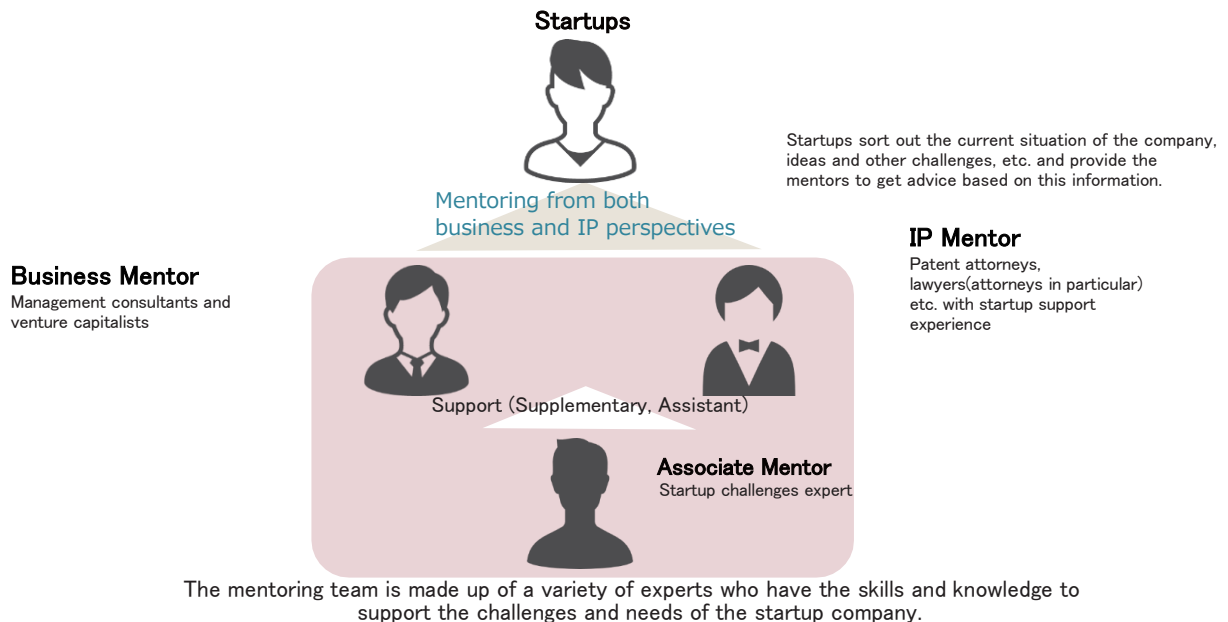
3. What is IPAS?

IP Acceleration program for Startups

IPAS is a project to create a team of business and IP experts to help diagnose and develop appropriate business models for startups, and a product strategy, etc., and to develop an IP strategy.

❶ Creation of an IP strategy that is appropriate for the business

For startups that build businesses based on innovative technologies and ideas, the technologies and ideas themselves are assets. Therefore, it is important to develop an "IP strategy" to establish policies and systems such as acquiring rights, accumulating know-how, obtaining licenses, etc.
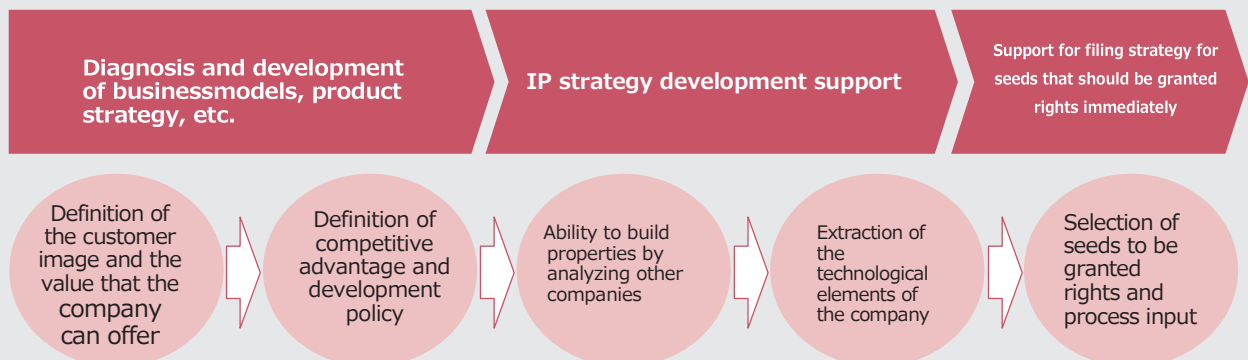
However, the early stages of a company require a great deal of effort, often resulting in a lack of resources for IP strategy and rights acquisition, and core technologies and ideas are not adequately protected.

Startups

Startups sort out the current situation of the company, ideas and other challenges, etc. and provide the mentors to get advice based on this information.

Mentoring from both business and IP perspectives

IP Mentor
Patent attorneys, lawyers(attorneys in particular) etc. with startup support experience

Business Mentor
Management consultants and venture capitalists

Support (Supplementary, Assistant)

Associate Mentor
Startup challenges expert

The mentoring team is made up of a variety of experts who have the skills and knowledge to support the challenges and needs of the startup company.

IPAS supports both IP and business strategies. This is based on the idea that IP strategy cannot exist independently of business strategy and must be linked to an appropriate business model. For this reason, mentoring often involves diagnosing and discussing business strategy, and then helping to develop an IP strategy in accordance with that strategy.
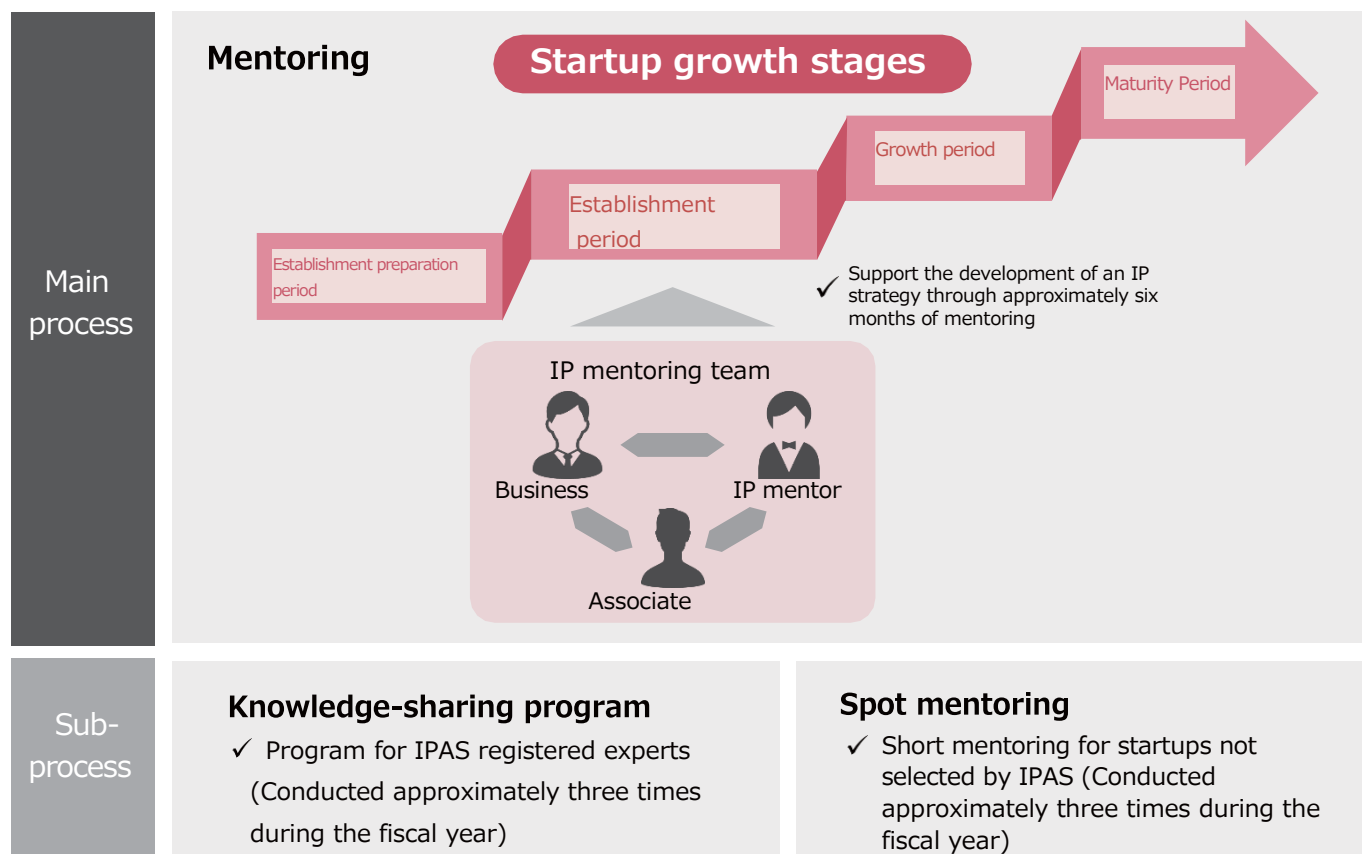
Point!

Step of creation of an IP strategy

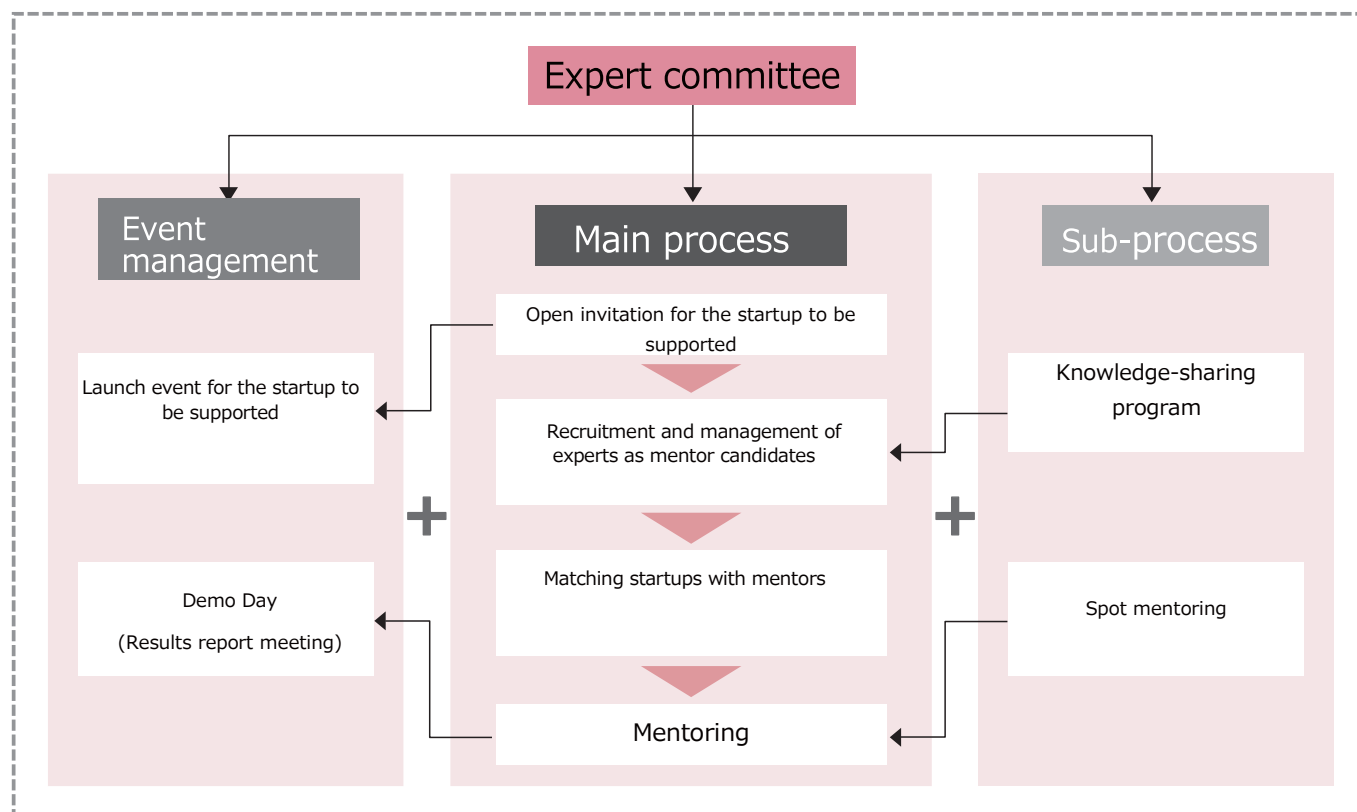| Diagnosis and development of businessmodels, product strategy, etc.	IP strategy development support	Support for filing strategy for seeds that should be granted rights immediately
Definition of the customer image and the value that the company can offer → Definition of competitive advantage and development policy	Ability to build properties by analyzing other companies → Extraction of the technological elements of the company	Selection of seeds to be granted rights and process input

❷ What is IPAS from a planning and management perspective?

In the implementation of the IPAS project, the main participants are **the startups to be supported and the experts who will mentor the startups**. Effectively engaging and aligning these two parties is the key to support.

For reference, the mentoring process of the 2021 project is shown as an example.

Main process	**Mentoring** **Startup growth stages** — Establishment preparation period → Establishment period → Growth period → Maturity Period ✓ Support the development of an IP strategy through approximately six months of mentoring **IP mentoring team** — Business / IP mentor / Associate	
Sub-process	**Knowledge-sharing program** ✓ Program for IPAS registered experts (Conducted approximately three times during the fiscal year)	**Spot mentoring** ✓ Short mentoring for startups not selected by IPAS (Conducted approximately three times during the fiscal year)

Relationships of processes organized from the perspective of planning and management

Expert committee

Event management
- Launch event for the startup to be supported
- Demo Day (Results report meeting)

+

Main process
- Open invitation for the startup to be supported
- Recruitment and management of experts as mentor candidates
- Matching startups with mentors
- Mentoring

+

Sub-process
- Knowledge-sharing program
- Spot mentoring

4. How to use this handbook

This guide is intended to introduce the role of the organizer in managing IPAS projects, and to assist readers in planning and managing IP strategy support programs.

Readers are encouraged to use this handbook as a reference when planning their intended business project.

IPAS project components

Main process

(1) Open invitation for the startup to be supported

Preparation of application forms and creation of selection criteria, as well as open invitation and selection of startups to be supported.

(2) Recruitment and management of experts to serve as mentor candidates

Preparation of application forms and open invitation and management of experts as mentor candidates.

(3) Matching startups with mentors

Match the needs of selected startups with the skills of mentor candidates.

(4) Mentoring

Support the smooth mentoring process.
Arrangement of patent searches in support of the development of an IP strategy.

Event management

Launch event for the startup to be supported

Announcement of the selected startups.

Demo Day (Results report meeting)

Aim to widely publicize the results of the mentoring program, raise awareness of the project's purpose, and expand the project's scope.

Sub-process

Knowledge-sharing program

Share business and IP knowledge with experts in the form of seminars and group discussions.

Spot mentoring

Provide spot mentoring of two hours per session for startups not selected for the program.

Overall

Expert committee

Receive advice on the project as a whole from a broad and professional perspective, including advice on the selection of the companies to be supported and the support plans.

5.1.1 Open invitation for the startup to be supported

The open invitation to the startup to be supported is an important factor in determining the success or failure of the project. The eligibility criteria and the selection system will need to be determined on the basis of the purpose of the project.

IPAS strives to improve the format of the application form and presentation review each year to ensure that appropriate selections are made. We are also committed to publicizing the program so that startups needing help know about the program.

Flow from open invitation to selection

Application guidelines
- The purpose of the project is established, and support goals and content are specified. It is important to properly communicate the applicant's responsibilities, such as scheduling and application materials, as well as the benefits of applying.
- It should be clearly stated how the organizer will manage the application information provided.

Preparation of the application form
The application form consists of the following.

- Basic information (company size, capital, shareholder composition, etc.)
- Business model/target market
- Company's technology and IP status/challenges it faces
- If there is any other expert support available
- The role of participants in mentoring within the company
- Active participation in mentoring

Recruitment and advertising
- It is important that the application is noticeable to startups. In addition to having a dedicated website, press releases, advertising to startup-related associations, and holding orientation sessions for applicants are also effective.

Selection
- Since a startup's commitment to participation is important for mentoring,
  IPAS also conducts a presentation review.In order to efficiently identify the current status and support needs of startups, we have prepared a presentation guide and format that incorporates frequently asked questions in advance.

Preparation, points of attention

Other information to be collected
- Each year, applicants are asked to indicate how they found out about recruitment. Because the startup community changes so quickly, effective advertising methods can change constantly.
- IPAS obtains approval to provide information to the Japan Patent Office and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.
- If other support projects are available, it is also helpful to provide information.

Response to inquiries
- Inquiries about the business content and the eligibility criteria are often asked.
- The process will run smoothly if the application guide includes frequently asked inquiries and if eligibility criteria are established during the planning phase.

Advertising media
- Not only advertising through press releases or the startup community, but also advertising through the venture capital and IP expert communities can be effective.

Presentation guide and presentation format
- Some startups have never made a presentation specifically related to intellectual property. The prepared presentation format includes detailed examples. It is important for them to be able to easily identify the current status of intellectual property and support needs.

08

5.1.2 Recruitment and management of experts to serve as mentor candidates

This is a matching process to find experts who can address startup challenges. IPAS has approximately 400 experts registered as mentor candidates to address a wide range of challenges. In order to find an expert who is suitable for the startup challenges among them, it is important to compare these challenges with the expert's registration information.

Registration and management flow of expert human resources

Organization of startup challenges
- Each expert has their own area of expertise. The area of expertise needs to be matched with corresponding startup challenges. The startup challenges and the technical fields are subdivided.

Preparation of the registration form
- A registration form is prepared so that subdivided items are registered according to the challenges of the startup. It is important to make entry easy, for example by using pull-down menus and checkboxes.

Recruitment and advertising
- In addition to advertising in expert communities, word-of-mouth and recommendations from experts can also help to facilitate the registration process.
- IPAS accepts applications throughout the year, with consideration given to a mentor for the following year and beyond.

Registration maintenance and information update
- In order to keep registrants interested in the project and to keep them registered, it is also important to hold knowledge-sharing programs and to ask them to update their information.

Example of items

Point!

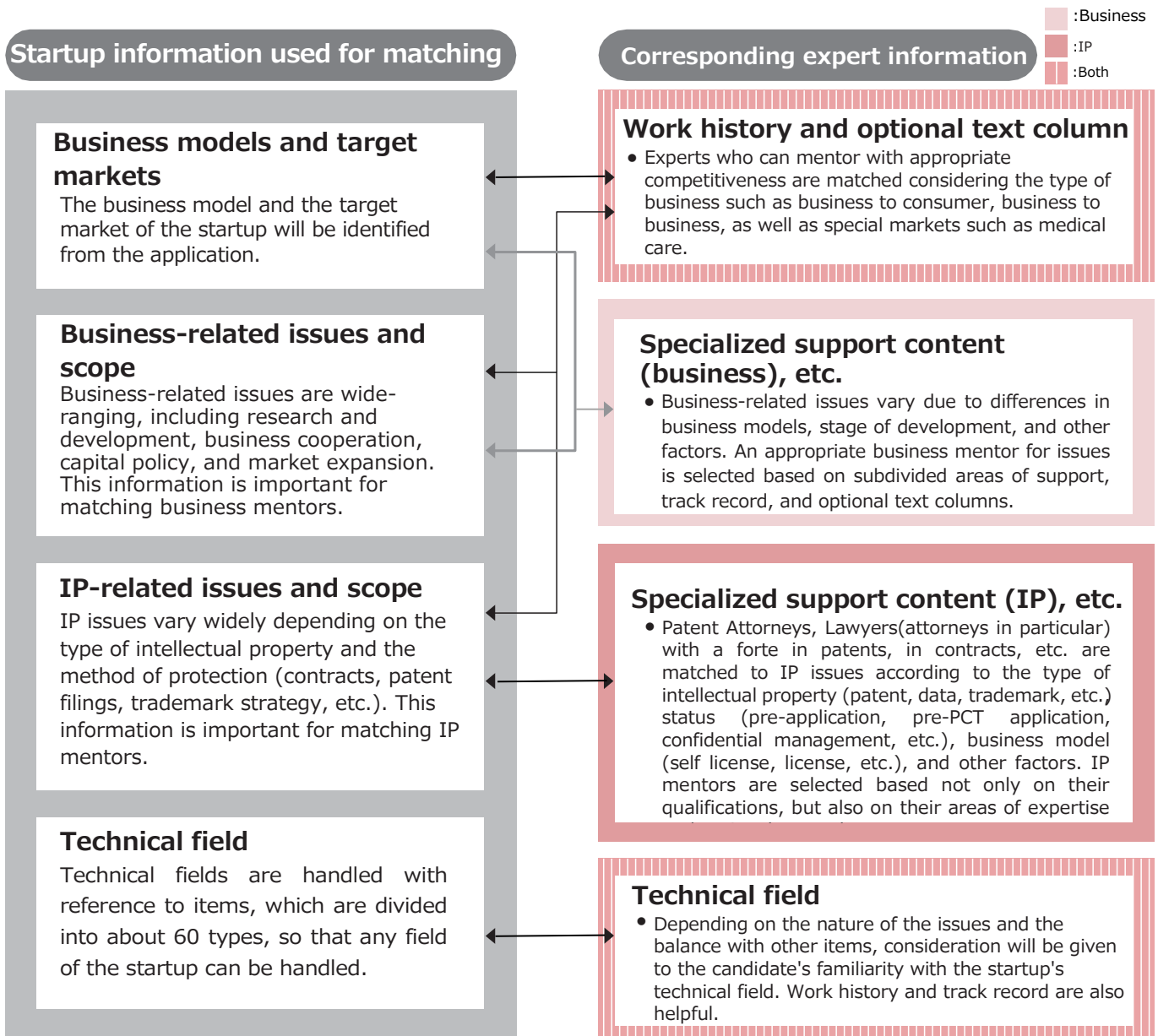| Example of items |
|---|
| Basic information (name, contact information, affiliation, work history) |
| Occupation and qualifications |
| Specialized support content |
| Track record of support |
| Specialized intellectual property |
| Specialized IP strategy |
| Technical field |
| Information about intention to become a mentor and schedule |

- The areas of business and intellectual property are each subdivided into approximately 20 categories, with check boxes and optional text columns.

- The areas of expertise are easy to understand when the names of specific companies and the content of the support are presented.

- This is important because each type of intellectual property, such as patents, trade secrets, and trademarks, has a different methodology.

- Technologies are divided into four major fields and approximately 60 subfields for registration. It is important to update the fields based on the relevant fields and include optional text columns for more detailed information.

- Scheduling information, including availability for mentoring, is also important.

5.1.3 Matching startups with mentors

Matching startups with mentors is an important process that affects the success or failure of mentoring. IPAS assembles a three-person team of a business mentor, an IP mentor, and an associate mentor for matching to address startup challenges from multiple perspectives.

Comparison of key factors and expert characteristics information

:Business
:IP
:Both

Startup information used for matching

Corresponding expert information

Business models and target markets
The business model and the target market of the startup will be identified from the application.

Business-related issues and scope
Business-related issues are wide-ranging, including research and development, business cooperation, capital policy, and market expansion. This information is important for matching business mentors.

IP-related issues and scope
IP issues vary widely depending on the type of intellectual property and the method of protection (contracts, patent filings, trademark strategy, etc.). This information is important for matching IP mentors.

Technical field
Technical fields are handled with reference to items, which are divided into about 60 types, so that any field of the startup can be handled.

Work history and optional text column
- Experts who can mentor with appropriate competitiveness are matched considering the type of business such as business to consumer, business to business, as well as special markets such as medical care.

Specialized support content (business), etc.
- Business-related issues vary due to differences in business models, stage of development, and other factors. An appropriate business mentor for issues is selected based on subdivided areas of support, track record, and optional text columns.

Specialized support content (IP), etc.
- Patent Attorneys, Lawyers(attorneys in particular) with a forte in patents, in contracts, etc. are matched to IP issues according to the type of intellectual property (patent, data, trademark, etc.) status (pre-application, pre-PCT application, confidential management, etc.), business model (self license, license, etc.), and other factors. IP mentors are selected based not only on their qualifications, but also on their areas of expertise

Technical field
- Depending on the nature of the issues and the balance with other items, consideration will be given to the candidate's familiarity with the startup's technical field. Work history and track record are also helpful.

Point!

IPAS has people with experience in corporate IP departments, legal experts, etc. in the organizer and holds regular discussions to ensure that the scope of support provided by the mentoring team matches the challenges of the startup. For example, a filing strategy may require a patent attorney as an IP mentor, a contract aspect may require an lawyers(attorneys in particular) as an associate mentor; in this way, the match is designed to thoroughly address startup challenges.

5.1.4 Mentoring - overview and preparation -

The following is an example of what the secretary does to clarify requests to the mentoring team and to ensure the smooth delivery of advice.

Items to prepare in advance

Points of attention

Conflict of interest and NDA confirmation
IPAS confirms that mentors have no conflict of interest in supporting startups prior to teaming up. In addition, an NDA agreement will be signed prior to support if there is no work related confidentiality obligation.

Support plan and reference examples
Goals and support plans are set up to make sure that the results will be achieved within the time frame.

Meeting minutes
The format is prepared so that the day's progress and homework assignments are clear in addition to the understanding of the mentoring content.

File sharing methods
Secure and convenient file servers should be used instead of e-mail attachments for sharing large volumes of documents.

Schedule adjustment
To streamline mentoring scheduling, it is effective to use a scheduling tool and hold mentoring sessions on a regular basis.

- Conflict of interest is always verified before matching a startup with a mentor. In the event of a conflict of interest, the mentor may be reassigned to another startup.

- If there is no legal obligation of confidentiality, an NDA agreement should be signed prior to providing support so that all members of the support team are bound by confidentiality agreements. This will allow the startup to feel comfortable providing the necessary information for support.

- The plan is written in a simple and provisional position so as not to become a burden.

- A typical sample support plan is provided to allow discussion of the business diagnosis and IP strategy process.

- Any factors that may affect the schedule, such as the length of the patent search, will be communicated in advance.

- Intellectual property and information are the lifeblood of a startup. Always ensure that security standards and access rights are properly managed. Passwords are not reused. All passwords are set individually.

Point!

It is important for the organizer to have an idea in advance of who will do what. Clarification of roles and goals ensures that the mentoring process is effective.

The organizer must support and encourage the startups to be proactive.

It is also useful to have occasional meetings between mentors and the organizer (team meeting) without the startup to discuss mentoring goals.

5.1.4 Mentoring - basic procedure -

Below are examples of mentoring support provided by the organizer to make the most efficient use of mentoring time while minimizing the burden on mentors and startups. Please use this as an example, although there are other ways to proceed.

Flow before and after mentoring

Preparation, points of attention

Several days before the meeting

The meeting date, time, agenda, and subtopics are provided as reminders. Participants are notified of any management requests or additional agenda items.

Confirm that all members are included to be notified of the meeting request. For the first contact, it is necessary to pay attention to check that the messages are not in the spam mail folder.

Mentoring progression

Beginning: Review of the previous meeting, agenda, content of previous e-mails, and status of homework preparation and hand off to the mentoring team.

During the meeting: Minutes are taken. Rephrasing is requested in cases of ambiguity or poor audio.

End: Notifications such as next meeting date, decisions made, homework items and assignees, and relevant due date of survey results, etc. are made.

Have the phone numbers of all participants in the meeting in case there are connection problems or sudden changes in the meeting schedule.

If a meeting appears to be running long, the organizer will actively intervene to confirm participants' schedules and discuss how to move the meeting forward.

When materials presented in a meeting are to be shared later, sharing is requested.

After mentoring

Sharing materials, requesting review of meeting minutes, notification of next meetings, and confirmation of homework assignments are handled.

It is helpful to have a format for the minutes that follows the flow of the meeting. In particular, it is useful to provide a description column in advance for information that needs to be confirmed at the beginning and at the end.

Point!

Immediately after the mentoring begins, the organizer will actively break the ice to ensure smooth progress. In the middle stages of mentoring, the organizer helps keep the schedule on track by explicitly confirming the agenda and conclusions.
If participants miss opportunities to speak or stray from the discussion, it is best to give them a chance to discuss separately.

These collections of resulting cases of IPAS are presented on the last pages.
- 14 Challenges that Startups Face and How to Deal with Them: Lessons from Experiences in IP strategy Support
- Evaluation and Support for Venture Capitalists

5.2.1 Launch event for the startup to be supported

IPAS organizes two events: "IPAS Kick-Off" to introduce the selected startups to be supported, and "Demo Day" to publicize the results of the mentoring when it is completed. For reference, below are the details of the implementation for FY2021.

IPAS kick-off

Purpose	Announcement of the selected startups
Agenda	• Introduction of IPAS project • Comments of the Organizer on each field • Introductory presentation by each startup (6 minutes x 20 companies)
Timing of events	Between the selection of the company to be supported and the start of mentoring
How to host events	• Hybrid event with online and offline (YouTube live) • Requires advance request; a viewing link will be provided to attendees • Presentations are recorded and streamed online • Introduction of IPAS project; the commentary for the fields will be live streaming

Tips❶

Viewers are encouraged to "listen" to the presentation for a better understanding in the comments for each field. It's best to explain using relatable ideas. For example, connect the topics to skills you learned in school.

DemoDay

Purpose	Presentation of results upon completion of mentoring
Agenda	• Introduction of IPAS project • Presentation of results report by each startup (6 minutes x 20 companies) • Round-table discussion with representative mentoring teams (15 minutes x 4 teams)
Timing of events	End of month when project completes
How to host events	• Hybrid event with online and offline(YouTube live) • Requires advance request; a viewing link will be provided to attendees • Presentations are recorded and streamed online • Introduction of IPAS project; round-table discussions are live streaming

Tips❷

The program flow should be designed to be easily understood by viewers. For example, the order of presentation of startups can be made by their field.

▶ The QR code and URL for viewing the archive are introduced on the last page.

Main expected viewers

(1) Entrepreneurs

Startups interested in other companies' business models and those preparing to start their own businesses.
These are potential candidates for the following year.

(2) Experts

Experts interested in mentoring and other startup support.
Affiliates of intermediary organizations, such as university IP departments, are also expected.

(3) Business companies, VCs

Companies that find promising startups and consider investing, partnering or acquiring them.

Point!

Startups are always looking for a place to gain visibility or "prestige" and appeal to investors and partners. A high-profile event will make the project more attractive and is expected to attract a large number of applications. Similarly, since the program is conducted by the JPO, viewers interested in startup IP strategy can be considered in addition to the expected viewers mentioned above. Therefore, it is effective to plan events (e.g., polls, round-table discussions, etc.) that will keep participants and viewers interested rather than ending as a simple introductory event.

5.2.2 Demo Day (Results report meeting)

The purpose of holding a results report meeting after mentoring is to (i) publicize the results of the mentoring and raise awareness of the purpose of the project, and (ii) expand the scope of the project for both potential experts and startups participating in the next term.

In IPAS2021, the meeting was designed for startups that may apply to IPAS, IP and business experts that may register as IPAS experts, VCs, new business planners from large companies, and actors in innovation industries such as media.

Event organization flow

Planning
- Organize event goals
- Decide who to target, quota, and time
- Select presenters
- Select a date and location

Preparation
- Create a schedule up to the day of the event
- Share advertisements/announcements
- Assign roles to event management members
- Prepare a time table for the event
- Prepare various equipment
- Preview event location

Implementation
- Record for archival distribution
- Have a backup system in case of problems

Follow-up
- Request to answer a survey
- Distribute archives
- Analyze survey results and implement for the future

Points of attention

Based on the purpose of the results report meeting, the direction and detailed program of the event will be discussed.

The availability of startups and mentors will be confirmed in advance, and the date and time will be arranged to maximize participation.

Main contents

Report on challenges/results from each startup (presentation)
The presentation includes the startup's business introduction and the results of the IPAS mentoring.

Point: It is preferable to use photos, diagrams, videos, etc. for better understanding by the audience. When presenting the results of mentoring, it is also effective to share how problems were tackled and what results were achieved. In addition, presenters should share their impressions of the support they have received and their future prospects and ambitions.

Round-table discussion with startups and mentors
During the round-table discussion, startups and mentors reflect on the mentoring process and report results.

Point: It is important that all members of the startup and the mentoring team talk about how the mentoring was conducted, etc., so that the audience has a clear picture of the mentoring process.

Point!

Care should be taken not to include confidential information or strategic goals in both pitches and round-table discussions.

The following cases require attention.

Problematic cases ▶ Include copyrighted material from others
Include confidential information in slides/oral presentations
Comparative advertising: Comparisons using specific names, such as that one's technology is superior to "X" from company "Z."

5.3.1 Knowledge-sharing program

A knowledge-sharing program is an event-type program in which information accumulated by experts through startup support in both business and intellectual property is shared with other experts.

Aim (1)

To share knowledge from mentors with experience in both intellectual property and business to experts with little or no experience in startup support.

Aim (2)

To gain new knowledge and insights, expand the scope of activities, and share knowledge by discussing and understanding the challenges faced by startups and the characteristics of their business.

Program implementation flow

Planning stage

- Plan and create a structure
- Decide who to target, quota, and time
- Select presenters
- Decide how to implement

Notification

- Prepare an application form
- Send notification by e-mail
- Send reminders

Implementation

- Prepare a time table
- Prepare presentation materials
- Perform rehearsal
- Record for archival distribution
- Have a backup system in case of problems

Follow-up

- Thank participants for their participation
- Request to answer a survey
- Distribute archives
- Analyze survey results and implement for the future

Implementation method

The goal of a knowledge-sharing program is to share knowledge, and one-way communication of information will not achieve that goal. It is important to select or combine appropriate formats from those listed below, depending on the topic.

Lecture

A format in which a speaker addresses a specific topic

| Pros | • Effective for sharing knowledge on specific topics
• Information can be easily communicated with slide presentations |

| Cons | • Knowledge retention is difficult |

Round-table discussion format

A form in which several speakers interactively discuss a particular topic

| Pros | • Immersion experience for participants
• Effective for the intended sharing of knowledge |

| Cons | • Knowledge retention is difficult
Results vary depending on the topic setting
• Require a facilitator and advance preparation |

Group discussion style

A form of actual discussion by the audience on subjects that are pre-arranged in advance

| Pros | • Effective for the practice and retention of the knowledge
• Unexpected insights and discoveries come from discussion |

| Cons | • Results vary depending on the subject
• Require a facilitator and advance preparation |

Point!

For a knowledge-sharing program, it is best to consider the demographics of the participants and choose a topic accordingly. Setting up "questions" within the program will naturally elicit opinions from speakers and participants. In addition, a combination of formats can be used to engage participants and encourage participation.

5.3.2 Spot mentoring

Spot mentoring is a sub-program that provides a one-time, two-hour mentoring session for startups that could not be selected for regular mentoring.

Aim (1)

Increase the incentive to apply for future programs by increasing the number of companies that can be part of the program.

Aim (2)

Experts can experience mentoring so that they have an idea of their participation in the following year.

Program implementation flow

Set program date and time and secure location

- IPAS conducts spot mentoring three times a year with four to six companies at a time, but the more times and the more companies the better.

Recruitment

- The application materials for regular mentoring can be used to reduce the burden on startups.

Matching and selection

- This is essentially the same as regular mentoring.

Conflict of interest checks, commissioning

- Any conflict of interest between the startup and the mentor will be reviewed prior to formal assignment. Execution of the NDA is also highly recommended.

Mentoring

- For a fulfilling mentoring experience, it is effective to share the details of the consultation in advance.
- Questionnaire surveys should also be conducted for continuous improvement.

Preparation, points of attention

Matching points

Additional interviews with startups are also useful for matching. In some cases, the information on the application may be insufficient or there may have been a change in circumstances.

Conflict of interest checks

In many cases, confidential information and trade secrets before patent applications are filed are dealt with. IPAS requires conflict of interest checks.

NDA execution

Confidentiality is important for safe consulting for startups. Organizer request that all persons, other than licensed professionals (e.g., patent attorneys and attorneys) who are required to maintain confidentiality, sign the NDA.

Mentoring points

The following is information that should be shared with mentors in advance.

- Basic information for startup
- What you want to discuss
- Patent gazettes, etc. that have been filed

Point!

Since this is also an opportunity for the organizer to make plans for the following years and to gauge mentor readiness, it is advisable to use the questionnaires to get feedback on the process and the needs of the startups, and to analyze the results for use in selecting mentor candidates for the following years.

5.4 Expert committee (Meeting preparation)

In the operation of IPAS, the expert committee is established to provide advice from a broad and expert perspective on the selection of supported startups and the confirmation of support plans.

Flow to expert committee meeting

Determination of the role of the Committee
The IPAS committee selects the startups to be supported, confirms the mentoring plans and reviews the project results.

Selection of members for the balance of the committee
The members of the IPAS Committee have been selected to provide a balance of expertise in a wide range of areas, including affiliations (how they have been involved in supporting startups) hands-on investments, management practices, intellectual property, and contracts.

Requesting to serve on a committee and commissioning
Confidentiality (definition of confidentiality and obligations) and conflict of interest checks with the company to be supported should be established in advance. The more experienced a person is, the greater the risk of conflict of interest is.

Scheduling
Meetings should be scheduled well in advance, as experienced experts are usually busy.

Committee meeting
Narrow down the points to be discussed at the committee meeting. By sharing materials in advance, discussions on the day of the meeting can be conducted efficiently.

Preparation, points of attention

Selection criteria
There are three possible criteria for selecting committee members.

(1) Technical field
Whether experts have a wide range of technical areas by considering the nature of the project

(2) Balance between business and intellectual property
Whether the committee can cover both business and intellectual property

(3) Awareness of social issues
Whether experts on social issues and industrial development issues are involved

Notes on requesting to serve on a committee
When asking an expert to serve on a committee, it is important to explain the IPAS project and the expected roles of the committee members so that they fully understand.

Conflict of interest confirmation
Conflicts of interest must be reviewed before information about applicant companies is shared with members of the Expert Committee.

17

5.4 Expert committee (Review to select companies to be supported)

In selecting the startups to be supported, organizer conduct an effective review with the help of the expert committee.

Review process flow

First and second round reviews (Conducted by the organizer)

- The first round of review is a document review, and the second round of review is an interview review with presentations.

Final reviews (Conducted by an expert committee)

- The final review is an interview with an expert committee.
- Below are examples of key items to review.

A IP	IP and technology
	Issues/Support content
B Business feasibility	Sociality
	Business content
	Issues/Support content
C Corporate Governance/Personality	Commitment
	Communication skills
	Need for support

Points of attention

- The first round of review will eliminate companies that fall outside the support targets assumed by IPAS. In the second round, the commitment of the managers and the issues that cannot be identified in the document review are investigated in depth, so that the final review by the experts makes an efficient selection based on the IPAS evaluation criteria.

- The final review is generally a presentation by the CEO. During the review process, the companies to be supported are determined through interviews of the managers of the applicant companies with experts in the fields of intellectual property, management, investment, and academia.

- The presentation time is six minutes. The ability of the company's managers to accurately introduce the company's products and their support needs in a short period of time is also checked.

- If possible, time will be set aside for questions and answers from the expert committee members following the presentations.

- In order to efficiently conduct the review in the limited time available, the organizer will prepare materials for the final review, such as the presentation format and scoring tables, including the information necessary for the review expert committee members to make their decisions for a smooth review process.

Point!

Each year, improvements are made to the first and second round reviews based on cases where mentoring was effective. Prior to the review, the expert committee will exchange views on the proposed improvements and the presentation guide, which will systematically elicit the information required for the review.
During the final presentation review, the expert committee members will ask questions and evaluate the companies directly. The evaluation is conducted from the viewpoint of intellectual property, business feasibility, corporate governance and personalities comprehensively and broadly from an expert's point of view along with the evaluation criteria.

Operational considerations that emerged from the mentoring results

In order to continuously improve the project, questionnaires were sent to mentors and startups who had completed mentoring, and the results were analyzed based on the opinions of the expert committee. Here are the results of the analysis.

Startup factors that influence mentoring outcomes

Commitment of mentor participant

Mentoring requires the startup itself to take stock, organize and present its own situation as material for discussion with the mentor. Therefore, active information sharing and spontaneous identification of issues by startup mentoring participants is necessary. It is helpful if the organizer asks the startups to secure the expected time at the time of the open invitation. This way the startups can visualize the required commitment.

Commitment of management team

It is difficult to fully discuss the business strategy if only the IP staff participates in the mentoring. Therefore, the IP strategy may be inappropriate because the business diagnosis cannot be performed. Since the IP strategy is optimized based on the right business model, the commitment of the management team is also important for in-depth discussions about the business.

Startups' preconceptions about the issues

Some startups may have a negative reaction to trying to figure out their issues, thinking that "they have already studied the business strategy internally" or "consulted with outside experts."

Good

Once an IP strategy has been established, it must be translated into a concrete implementation plan.
There are significant advanced cases in which the concrete development roadmap, application plan, revenue and expense plan are made, so that the strategy alone does not turn out to be just a picture of the future.
The combination of highly engaged startups and experienced mentors makes mentoring more successful.

Operational considerations that emerged from the mentoring results

Mentoring team factors that influence mentoring outcomes

Mentoring team structure

To facilitate mentoring, it is preferable to include at least one person experienced in mentoring on the mentoring team. Even if the mentor's expertise and experience are sufficient, a lack of facilitation skills can prevent effective mentoring. In such cases, the team will hold team meetings at appropriate times to discuss measures and make improvements, mainly with those who have had mentoring experience.

Level matching skills

If a startup is unable to respond to a request from the mentors, it is important to distinguish between "lack of commitment" and "lack of understanding due to lack of expertise." In the latter case, the situation is improved by showing concrete ways to compile materials and examples of information sources to be researched with an easy-to-understand explanation. The willingness of mentors to receive information is also important.

Mid- and long-term perspectives

Although mentoring satisfaction is high because the most recent issues have been addressed, there may be no contribution to strategic business expansion. It is important to provide advice on current issues in order to build a relationship of trust, but it is also important to provide mentoring with an eye on the bigger picture of the business in order to link mentoring to the startup's own growth.

Prompt IP research

The use of IP research is essential for IP strategy planning. It is important that the organizer urges the team to conduct the IP research as early as possible so that the results can be thoroughly analyzed within the mentoring period.

Point

As for the mentoring team, there are cases where the mentors have introduced strategic frameworks and templates for startups to think about and describe their strategies, which has helped startups organize their issues and solve problems. In addition, the mentoring content is documented to serve as a guide for startups so that they can operate on their own after the mentoring is complete.

We hope that this booklet will interest you in planning and managing an IP strategy support program and/or an expert program. The following are websites that may be useful for planning and operations.

Collection of resulting cases of IPAS

The collections of resulting cases of IPAS describe the mentoring activities and lessons learned from the mentoring activities over the past three years.

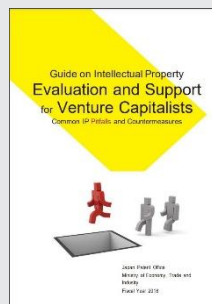### 14 Challenges that Startups Face and How to Deal with Them
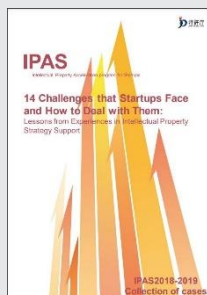
■ **Collection of cases 2019**

It presents the 14 challenges that startups tend to face, divided into "business model/seed strategy," "IP strategy," and "filing strategy," and how to deal with each.

https://ipbase.go.jp/assets/pdf/jireishu-e.pdf

Evaluation and Support for Venture Capitalists

■ **Collection of cases 2018**

It summarizes the pitfalls of IP valuation and support and how to avoid them, and provides examples of what has actually happened when investing in startups, aimed at investors who invest in startups.

https://ipbase.go.jp/assets/pdf/venture_tebiki_e.pdf

Reference websites (Japanese only)

IP BASE (IP community portal site): "The First Site to See" for startups and "The Site to Connect" with IP experts	IP BASE Facebook	IP BASE X	IP BASE Channel YouTube	Demo Day 2020 YouTube	Kick-Off 2021 YouTube
https://ipbase.go.jp/	@IP_BASE	@IP_BASE	https://www.youtube.com/c/IPBASE	https://youtu.be/tc5DJb_kCQI	https://youtu.be/uIDnZmnqTdU

Contact

IPBASE ENGLISH PAGE

https://ipbase.go.jp/learn/english/

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