



## **IPOTENTIAL NEWSFEED**

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## **ASPEC PROGRAMME**

The first regional patent co-operation programme, the ASEAN Patent Co-Operation otherwise known as ASPEC, was launched in 2009 with the initial membership of Cambodia, Indonesia, LAO PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. In 2012, Brunei Darussalam joined the ASPEC group further strengthening the programme.

The ASPEC programme provides for the sharing of search and examination results among the participating countries IP Offices which serves to help reduce duplication on the work thereby allowing for obtaining corresponding patents faster and more efficiently. This benefits entrepreneurs, SMEs, inventors and universities in obtaining patents for their innovations within the region.

The search and examination work done on a corresponding application by a participant IP Office also serves as a valuable reference to other participating ASEAN IP Offices. Patent examiners are also able to access information and assessments of prior art found in specific technical databases, local databases, and databases in other languages which an examiner may otherwise not have access to previously. This is possible as ASPEC works in the English language in all its participating ASEAN IP Offices. This standard helps patent examiners develop their search strategy more quickly and efficiently furthering their understanding of the claimed invention.

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**[www.pintas-ip.com](http://www.pintas-ip.com)**

**Email : [postoffice@pintas-ip.com](mailto:postoffice@pintas-ip.com)**

With the objective of reducing complexity, improving the quality of search and examinations and the increase of time savings, this equals to substantial cost savings, and ASPEC has achieved a measure of that goal in the region. This serves and benefits anyone interested in filing regionally in ASEAN.

An ASPEC requests can be filed at any participating ASEAN IP Office. To qualify for ASPEC, an applicant must have filed a corresponding patent application for the invention at any participating ASEAN IP Office and/or have search and examination documents issued by any one of the other participating ASEAN IP Offices with at least one claims determined to be patentable. A request for ASPEC can be done by simply filing a completed ASPEC Request Form and attaching all required documents.

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**Email : [postoffice@pintas-ip.com](mailto:postoffice@pintas-ip.com)**