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日本における外国出願助成金制度の 現状と課題

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経済のグローバル化に伴い、大企業ばかりでなく中小企業においても、進出先の国における特許権、意匠権、商標権などの取得は、外国市場の開拓や自社技術の模倣防止、技術力のアピール、さらにはブランド価値の維持・向上を図るために不可欠であると言っても過言ではありません。

このような状況において、日本の特許庁は、ベンチャー企業、中小スタートアップ企業、大学などにおける高額な外国出願費用を助成するため、中小企業庁、各都道府県の中小企業支援センターなどとも連携して、例えば、「中小企業等海外展開支援事業」、「外国特許出願費用助成事業」、「ものづくり・商業・サービス生産性向上促進事業」などの様々な支援事業を積極的に推進しております。

具体的には、これらの支援事業において、各国特許庁に提出する出願、審査請求、中間応答などの手続きに係る各国特許庁への納付手数料、現地代理人費用、国内代理人費用、翻訳費用が、助成の対象となっております。

また、現行の支援事業に対する更なる拡充を求めて、助成金の交付に至る申請手続きの簡素化、権利化後の権利維持費用の補助、中小企業に対する事業税の軽減などの様々な要望も多く寄せられております。

私共の東和国際特許事務所としても、より多くの中小企業様の海外ビジネスに少しでもお役に立てるように、各国の知的財産制度に精通する現地代理人と緊密に連携しながら、外国出願補助金制度のご活用を全力でサポートして参りたいと存じますので、どうぞ宜しくお願い申し上げます。

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Current Status and Challenges of Foreign Filing Subsidy Programs in Japan

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With the globalization of the economy, obtaining intellectual property rights—such as patents, design rights, and trademarks—in foreign markets has become indispensable not only for large corporations but also for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Securing these rights is essential for expanding into foreign markets, preventing the imitation of proprietary technologies, showcasing technical capabilities, and maintaining or enhancing brand value.

In response to this environment, the Japan Patent Office (JPO), in collaboration with the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency and various prefectural SME support centers, has been actively promoting various support programs to assist with the high costs of foreign filings for venture companies, SMEs, startups, and universities. Notable programs include the “SME Overseas Expansion Support Project,” “Foreign Patent Filing Assistance Program,” and “Manufacturing, Commerce, and Service Productivity Improvement Promotion Project.”

These support programs cover a wide range of costs related to foreign intellectual property filings. Specifically, they subsidize official fees paid to foreign patent offices for filing, examination requests, and office action responses, as well as local agent fees, domestic agent fees, and translation costs.

Additionally, several requests have been received for further enhancements to the current programs. These requests include simplifying the application procedures for subsidies, providing financial assistance for post-grant maintenance fees, and offering business tax reductions for SMEs.

Our firm, Towa International Patent Firm, is committed to supporting the overseas business activities of as many SMEs as possible. We will continue to work closely with local firms that are well-versed in the intellectual property systems of their countries to ensure that our clients can make the most of foreign filing subsidy programs. We remain dedicated to providing comprehensive support and look forward to serving you.