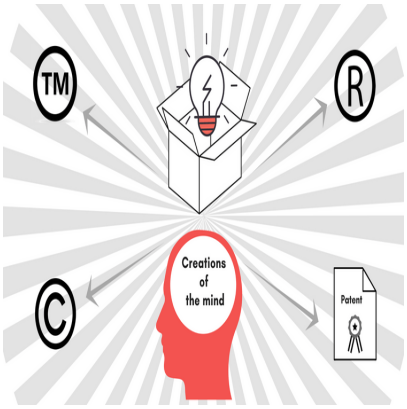


Description

Intellectual property rights help protect creations of the mind that include inventions, literary or artistic work, images, symbols, etc. If you create a product, publish a book, or find a new drug, intellectual property rights ensure that you benefit from your work. These rights protect your creation or work from unfair use by others. In this article, we will discuss different types of intellectual property rights and learn how they can help researchers.

Types of Intellectual Property Rights

There are two main types of intellectual property rights (IPR).

- Copyrights and related rights
- Industrial property

Copyrights give authors the right to protect their work.

> It covers databases, reference works, computer programs, architecture, books, technical drawings, and others.

By copyrighting your work, you ensure that others cannot use it without your permission.

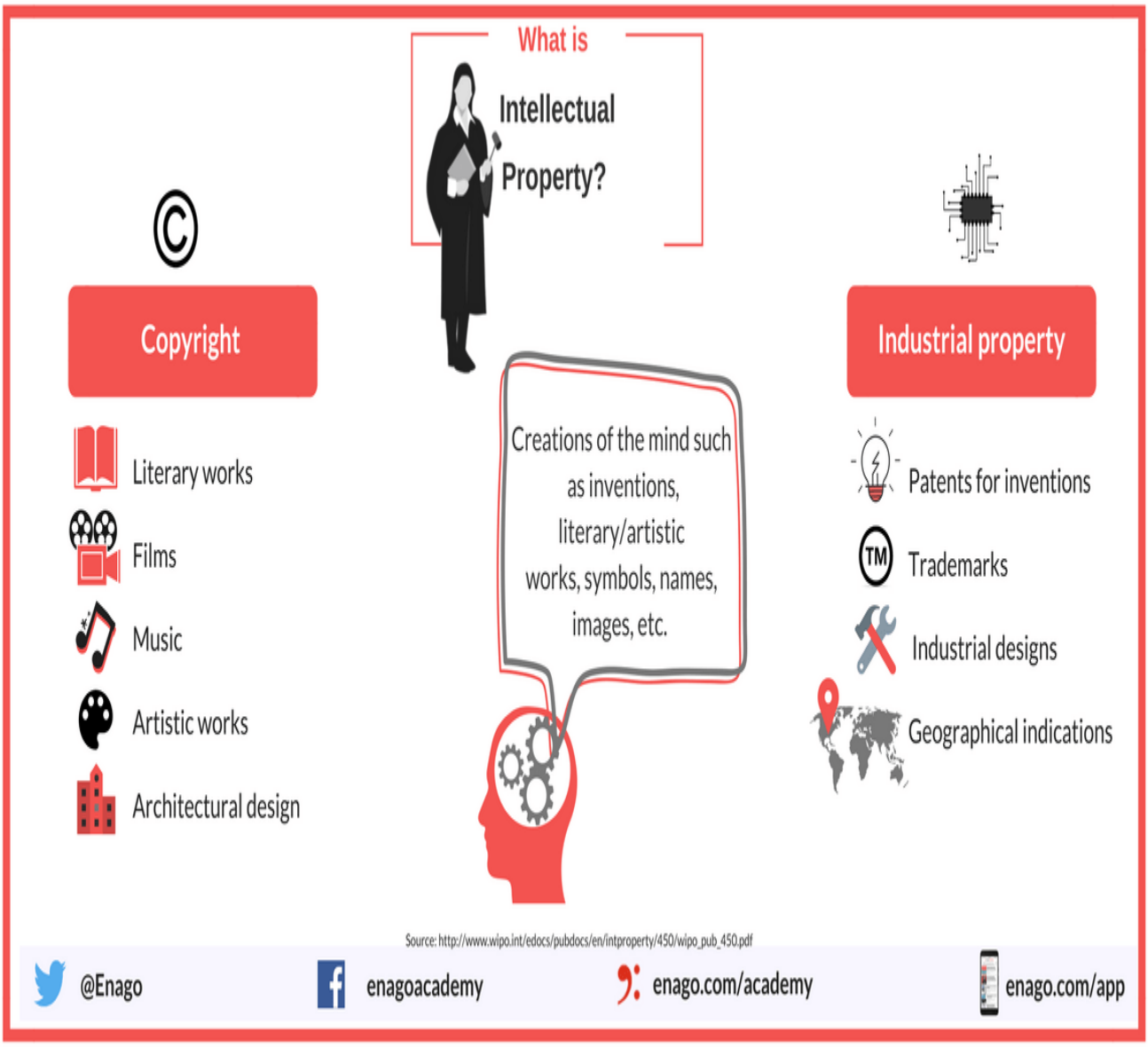
> Industrial property rights include trademarks, patents, geographical indications, and industrial designs.

- A trademark is a unique sign used to identify a product or a service. It can be a single word or a combination of words and numbers. Drawings, 3-D signs, or even symbols can constitute a trademark. For instance, Google is a famous trademark. The trademark application can be filed at national or regional levels depending on the extent of protection required.
- A patent is an exclusive right to an invention that introduces a new solution or a technique. If you own a patent, you are the only person who can manufacture, distribute, sell, or commercially use that product. Patents are usually granted for a period of 20 years. The technology that powers self-driving cars is an example of a patented invention.
- A geographical indication states that a product belongs to a specific region and has quality or

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reputation owing to that region. Olive oil from Tuscany is a product protected by geographical indication.

- An industrial design is what makes a product unique and attractive. These may include 3-D (shape or surface of an object) or 2-D (lines or patterns) features. The shape of a glass Coca-Cola bottle is an example of the industrial design.



What Do I Need to Know About IPR?

Intellectual property rights are governed by WIPO, the World Intellectual Property Organization. WIPO harmonizes global policy and protects IPR across borders. As a researcher, you rely on the published work to create a new hypothesis or to support your findings. You should, therefore, ensure that you do not infringe the copyright of the owner or author of the published work (images, extracts, figures, data, etc.)

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How do you decide whether to publish or patent? Check your local IPR laws. IPR laws vary between countries and regions. In the US, a patent will not be granted for an idea that has already been published. Researchers, therefore, are advised to file a patent application before publishing a paper on their invention. Discussing an invention in public is what is known as *public disclosure*. In the US, for instance, a researcher has one year from the time of public disclosure to file a patent. However, in Europe, a researcher who has already disclosed his or her invention publicly loses the right to file a patent immediately.

IPR and Collaborative Research

IPR laws can impact international research collaboration. Researchers should take national differences into account when planning global collaboration. For example, researchers in the US or Japan collaborating with researchers in the EU must agree to restrict public disclosure or publication before filing a patent. In the US, it is common for publicly funded universities to retain patent ownership. However, in Europe, there are different options. An ideal collaboration provides everyone involved with the maximum ownership of patent rights. Several entities specialize in organizing international research collaborations. Researchers can also consider engaging with such a company to manage IPR.

What questions do you have about IPR? Have you faced any situation where you need to consider IPR issues when conducting or publishing your research? Please let us know your thoughts in the comments below.

Category

1. Publishing Research
2. Understanding Ethics

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