THE KENYAN NETWORK OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION SUPPORT CENTRERS (TISCs)

Prepared by Kenya Industrial Property Institute

Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) Program is an initiative by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) implemented pursuant to WIPO development agenda. The Program facilitates access to and use of technological information, scientific and technical literature, search tools and databases, and builds capacity in developing counties to effectively support innovation, technology transfer and commercialization-related services. The TISC Program significantly contributes to further development of the WIPO knowledge Network by providing value added services and specialized platforms and tools for strategic knowledge and innovation management.

TISC provide innovators with access to locally based technology information and related services. They foster innovation by building on the rich set of technology information disclosed in patent documents, of which over 100 million have been published to date, and in scientific and technical publications, TISCs may be established within a variety of host institutions, including patent offices, universities, research centers and science and technology parks.

Within the context of a joint engagement with national and regional industrial property authorities, WIPO supports the effective operation of TISCs by:

- Facilitating access to patent databases and other scientific and technology resources;
- Training local users through on-site and distance learning;
- Providing information and training materials;
- Supporting awareness-raining activities; and
- Disseminating best practices and experiences among TISCs.

TISCs provide a diverse range of basic and value added innovation support services, helping inventors, researchers, and entrepreneurs to unlock their innovation potential.

Support services are provided by trained local staff and designed to promote access and effective use of valuable sources of technical and commercial information, such as patent information, scientific and technical journals, trade mark and industrial design information. Basic services that may be available from TISCs include:

- Access to online patent and non-patent (scientific and technical) resources;
- Access to industrial property-related publications;
- Assistance in searching the retrieving technology information Additional services provided by selected TISSCs may include:
  - Training in searching databases;
  - On-demand searchers (novelty, state-of-the art, and infringement);
  - Technology and competitor monitoring;
  - Basic information on industrial property laws;
  - Basic information on industrial property management and strategy; and;
  - Information on technology commercialization and marketing.

Designated focal points coordinate national TISC networks established in diverse partner institutions. These nationwide networks serve as a basis for communication and cooperation between participating member institutions. A similar networked approach is taken on an international level.

In close cooperation with national and regional industrial property offices, the WIPO actively supports the continued training of TISC staff and its users. This training is provided as a standard package and includes:

- local and/or regional training workshops and seminars;
- WIPO Academy courses, in particular distance learning courses; and
- E-learning tutorial (from 2021).

Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) signed a service level agreement with WIPO on 4th October 2011, effectively becoming the designated focal point for the establishment of coordination of the Kenya TISC Network. Subsequently, a number of sensitization seminars have been held to encourage the potential host institutions to establish TISCs. To date, a number of institutions have already signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with KIPI to establish the TISCs. Institutions that have already established TISCs include Jomo Kenyatta University of

Agriculture and Technology, University of Nairobi, Technical University of Mombasa, University of Eldoret, Sigalagala National Polytechnic, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology and Maseno University. A number of other public universities and Technical and Vocational Training (TIVET) institutions have also indicated their willingness to establish a TISC in their premises. KIPI continues to encourage more institution to establish a TISC Center and join the Kenyan Network.