

3. ECTA Committee Section

General Committee Elections 2021

If you are an ECTA member who wishes to join one of our Committees, remember that **General Committee Elections are coming up next January!**

Being part of an ECTA Committee is an invaluable opportunity to exchange with many experienced professionals throughout Europe and beyond, as well as actively contribute to relevant projects in your IP area of interest. Most active members of our Committees get the chance to represent our association in working groups, meetings and events with the EU institutions, such as EUIPO, international institutions, such as WIPO and other stakeholders.

Does this sound interesting and would you like to know more? Here is everything you need to know!

1.) How to join an ECTA Committee?

Every two years ECTA holds General Committee Elections. The next such elections are planned to take place in January 2021.

ECTA members who wish to serve on any of the association's Committees should nominate themselves by completing the electronic nomination paper by the deadline stipulated in the communications. It will be necessary to include a few lines regarding your involvement in ECTA and your IP experience to support your application. Existing Committee members should follow the same procedure if they wish to stay on the same Committee or apply for another one. In order to ensure continuity, elections of Committee leaders take place on even years, thus, not in the same year as the General Committee Elections.

2.) What are the ECTA Committees you can apply for?

ECTA Committees are grouped as follow:

- **Legal Affairs Committees** (Anti-Counterfeiting, Copyright, Data, Design, Geographical Indications, Harmonization, Internet, International Trade, Law, Professional Affairs);
- **Internal and Administrative Affairs Committees** (Membership and Disciplinary, Publications, Programme).

There are also other ECTA Committees, but they are not open for election, because members are nominated to join those from various Legal Committees (EUIPO-Link, WIPO-Link) or they are composed in a different manner (e.g. Advisory Committee is composed of Past Presidents of the association).

If you would like to find out more about ECTA Committees, please visit the [ECTA website / About ECTA / Overview of our Committees](#).

In general, members should only **apply for one Committee membership**. This is a general rule to which there may be exceptions. Any exception is to be confirmed by the ECTA Board of Directors.

3.) How long is the Committee term?

In 2019, ECTA policies concerning the duration of Committee affiliation have changed. The Committee term now constitutes two years. Committee members may serve on the same Committee for a maximum term of six years (three periods of two years each), unless they become Vice-Chair or Chair of the Committee. This is a general rule to which there may be exceptions. After a break

of two years, it is possible to re-apply for membership in the same Committee.

Since the new Data and International Trade Committees have been set up this year in the middle of the ECTA Committees' term, the members that have applied for these Committees will exceptionally serve as Data or International Trade Committee members until 2023, without the need to participate in the re-election next year. The members from the Brexit and China task forces that prefer to be part of another Committee than the International Trade Committee, can take part in the General Committee Elections to change Committees.

4.) What are the responsibilities of Committee members?

An Expectation Sheet exists explaining the responsibilities of ECTA Committee members. (There are separate expectation sheets for Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Secretaries.) It is usually sent together with the General Committee Elections announcement and we advise you to study this document carefully before submitting your nomination. The latest version of this document can also be found in the ECTA Library on the Private Section of the ECTA website.

5.) Am I guaranteed a place on a Committee of my choice?

While we do our best to place candidates in the Committees of their choice, this is not always possible, so, no, a place is not guaranteed.

At ECTA, we are trying to ensure balanced Committees, with diverse membership

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from different backgrounds, jurisdictions, experience and so on, while keeping the Committees at a reasonable size, to ensure the quality of their work. If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of places on the respective Committee, the membership of the Committee will be decided by the Chair in collaboration with the ECTA Board of Directors.

If you have any question on Committee membership or the General Committee Elections, we will be happy to address them. Please contact us at ecta@ecta.org.

We are looking forward to receiving your application when General Committee Elections will be open next January!

6.) What our Committee members say about serving on a Committee? And why you should become a member.

Cristina Bercial-Chaumier, EUIPO-Link Committee Secretary, Harmonization Committee member, past Law Committee Chair, Casalonga Alicante SL (ES):

'I strongly recommend the involvement in ECTA Committees. I have had a great experience in the Law and the EUIPO-Link Committees. Belonging to a Committee gives you the chance to be aware of relevant information regarding your IP practice in advance and the possibility of expressing your comments on relevant issues. You have the chance to be in direct contact with the EUIPO, WIPO, the European Commission among other institutions and to be informed on developments in IP matters. For instance, the Law and EUIPO-Link Committee

participate on a regular basis on the revision of the EUIPO Guidelines and ECTA Committee members have the possibility of participating at the EUIPO Convergence Programmes and official meetings on ECTA's behalf.

ECTA Committees are consulted on legislative projects and important issues having consequences on IP, such as the Brexit. Last and not least, belonging to a Committee creates professional and personal links with the members of your Committee, that you have the chance to meet twice a year in the Committee meetings and with which you correspond all year long working in the different projects. Do not miss this opportunity and join an ECTA Committee for the next term, you will not regret it!'

Alan Park, Geographical Indications Committee member, Director of Legal Affairs of The Scotch Whisky Association (UK):

'ECTA Committees provide a very valuable space for the exchange of views and knowledge. They help greatly with keeping up to date with the latest developments and provide fora which are open to globally respected participants, who can provide their views on problems faced within European jurisdictions. Committees also provide the chance to be consulted on legislation, guidance and policy. Combined with a social element which allows excellent networking opportunities. Why would you not seek to join?'

Manuel Minguez Balaguer, Professional Affairs Committee member, EUIPO-Link Committee member, Elzaburu SLP (ES)

'Being a member of the Professional Affairs Committee has been one of the best decisions I have made in recent years at the professional level, as it has allowed me to interact with colleagues from other countries, to deal with them on issues of current concern and work together. In addition, I can say that the selfless and effective work of the Committee members has strengthened the bonds between us, being able to consider many Committee members as friends.

It has also given me access to be part of the EUIPO-Link Committee, which deals with deepening matters related to EUIPO, as well as direct relations with EUIPO staff through the EUIPO-ECTA bilateral meetings. The attendance to events and/or meetings on behalf of ECTA, as well as the participation in the elaboration of the February round table in Alicante is something special and for which I am very grateful.

Finally, being part of the Professional Affairs Committee has given me the opportunity to represent ECTA in the Anti-Scam Network, in order to defend the interests of IP owners and practitioners against the fraudulent activity of several entities that seek to defraud by sending misleading invoices.

Therefore, I strongly recommend joining a Committee to contribute with your knowledge and experience, as well as to learn from the rest of the members of the Committee and thus be able to contribute on the improvement and evolution of the IP system.' «