

Navigating stakeholders

How to balance

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Nouryon

Nouryon

My Role

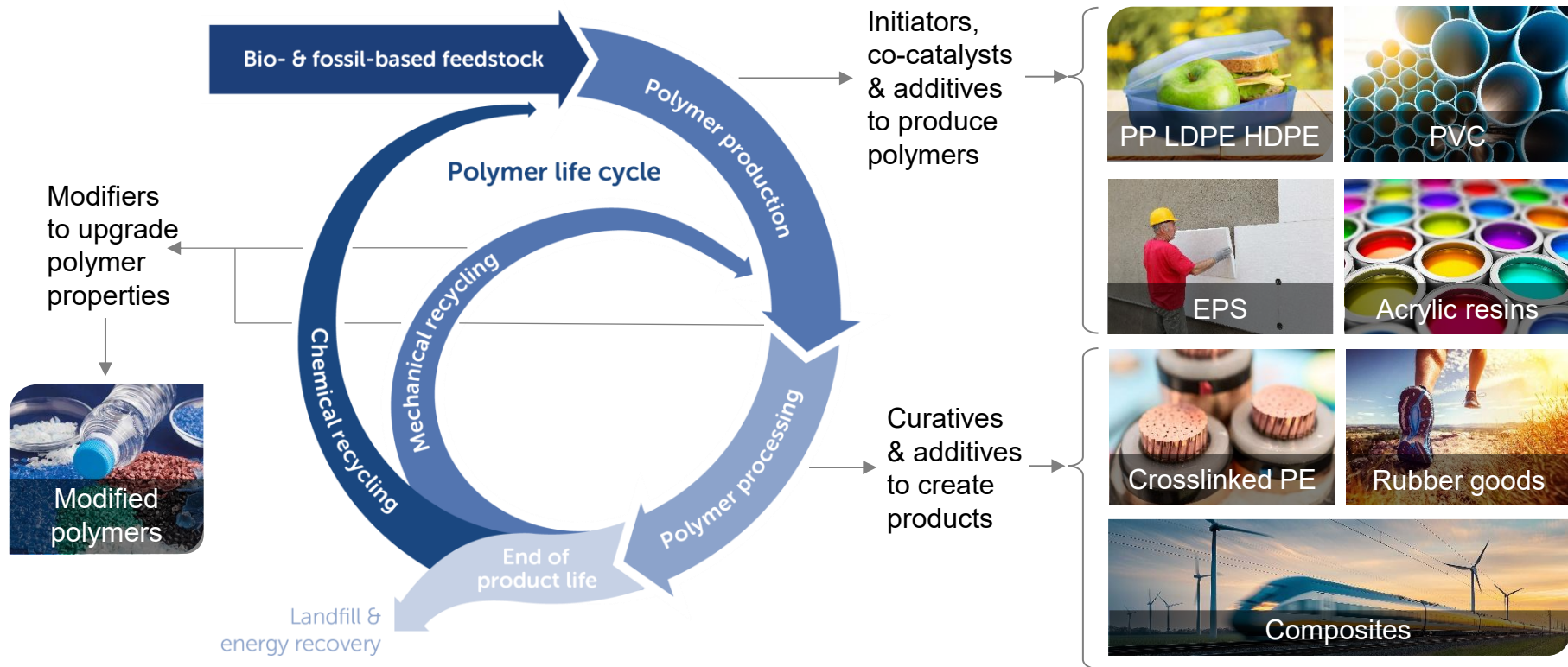
The Idea to IP process, its Stakeholders

Searches and AI

Challenges

Essential ingredients empowering the Polymer Cycle

Each of the segments has their own leaders and teams on marketing and R&D side.



Background Nouryon

- ✓ Used to be part of AkzoNobel (the chemicals unit)
- ✓ In 2018 we were purchased by The Carlyle Group.
- ✓ In “Akzo times” we had an internal IP department.
- ✓ In the transition to Nouryon we “lost” all our internal IP counsels.
- ✓ Current days we operate through an external IP firm (IFL) and have 1 US based internal counsel/attorney and 1 US based paralegal. IFL does not perform searches.
- ✓ We used to have a “library” function able to perform IP searches but lost that team due to a reorganization in November 2025.
- ✓ Hence: all activities related to IP search are done by Nouryon employees or external if budget is available.

My Role

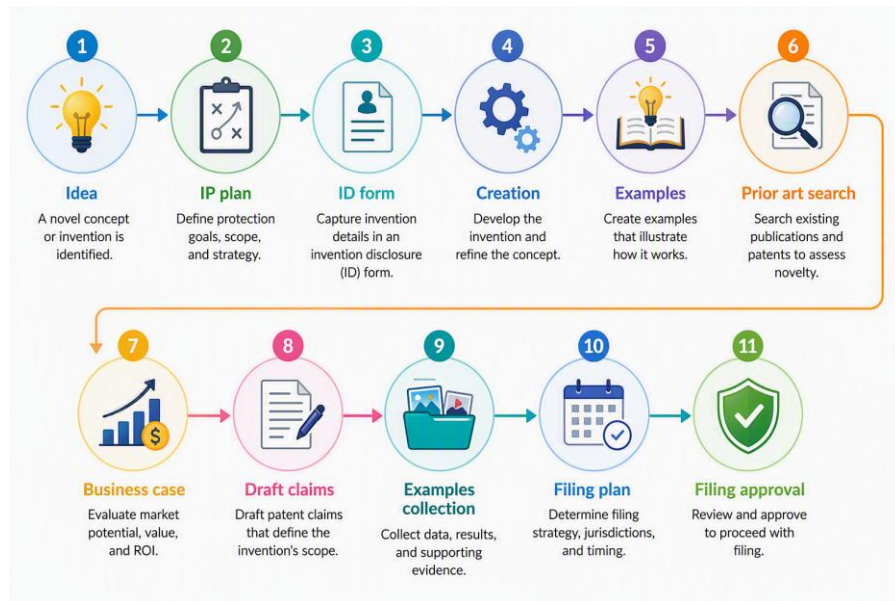
Officially:

Senior Scientist & IP Specialist (+ AI Champion) - for our Business Unit

- A hybrid role I built over 20 years, no legal training (1 month at our (then) internal IP firm)

- ✓ Leading and contributing to (longer term) R&D projects
 - ✓ Performing application experiments
- ✓ Guidance CDA and JDA process
- ✓ Tracking IP plans all R&D projects
 - ✓ Collection of internal Innovation Disclosures
- ✓ Literature, Prior art and FTO searches
- ✓ Tracking competition/customer IP, filing TPO's (EPO only).
- ✓ Patent background information and examples collection (writing itself done by IP firm)
- ✓ Patent maintenance (office actions, pruning, strategy discussions, oppositions)
- ✓ Promoting and testing AI tools (not only related to IP search)

Our (ideal) ID to IP process: a stage-gate system



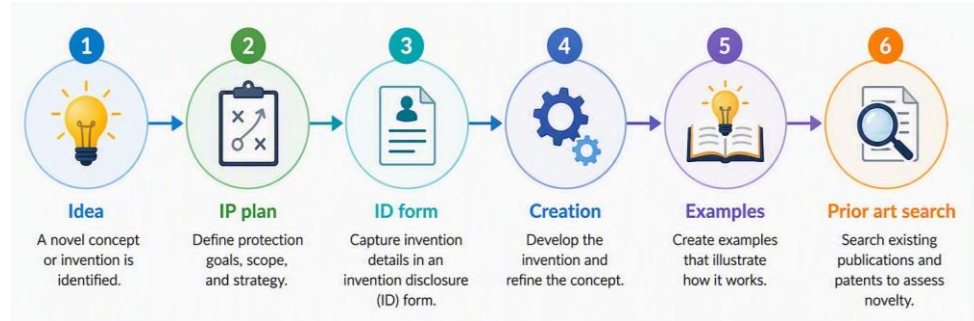
This is a possible flow-chart.

Prior art search is mainly performed to help the project team and to identify immediate red flags. But could also be performed before any experimental work.

We do not perform a full patentability search anymore (after claim drafting).

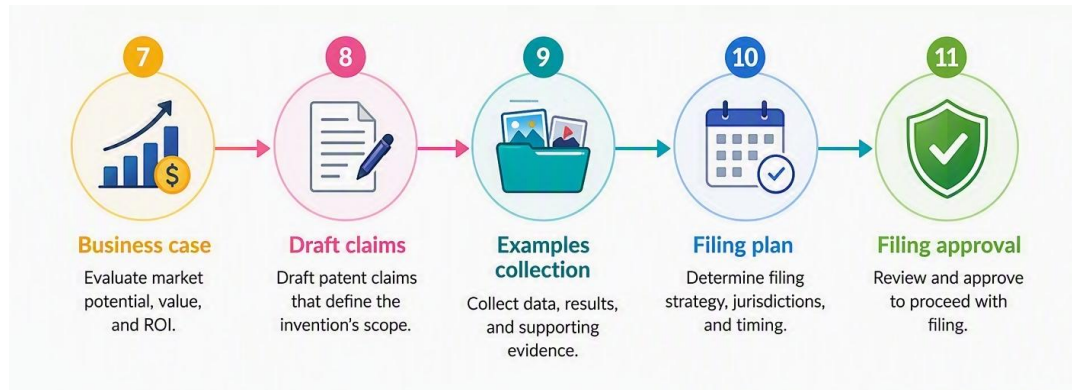
Rely on the EPO search opinion for novelty and inventiveness

Stakeholders 1



- ❖ For Idea and IP plan the interaction is between the researcher(s) and IP Specialist (Me)
- ❖ The ID form is approved by the R&D VP and shared with Legal and the IP Attorney/firm.
- ❖ Creation is done within the project team and the experiments / examples are shared with the IP Specialist and the IP Attorney
- ❖ The prior art search is performed by the IP Specialist (or external via him) and shared with the project team and the IP attorney

Stakeholders 2



- ❖ The business case is where there is interaction with the R&D Vice President and Marketing Vice President (informal approval drafting).
- ❖ The claim drafting, example collection and filing plan is an interaction between the IP attorney, the IP specialist and the project team.
- ❖ The filing approval is by agreement by key stakeholders: R&D VP and Marketing VP, the internal legal department and external IP law firm (budget?)

Challenges in this process

1. Get involved in the R&D projects

- sometimes im “forgotten”
- Convincing people to work with CDA
- How do you arrange such, formal rules of engagement ?

2. IP firm is external, direct contact in Ireland.

- Visit in person 2x per year for 2 days.
- Quarterly meetings incl VPs (information exchange, IP filing approval)
- Irregular meetings ad hoc (works best)
- Quite happy with external firm – feedback others who have other feeling?

3. Budget at legal and IP firm is limited, aim max x (low number) new application filings pa

- Target is cost-cutting (with as selling argument: file less, but better applications)
 - (but this does seem to be in partial contradiction with the “let EPO do the search”)
- Explore other options (RD, publication, trade secret)
- Any suggestions on this approach? Sounds familiar?

4. Marketing and R&D VP both feel that they “own” the IP and are both in charge (Legal however...)

- How is this arranged within your companies, which “function” owns IP?



Our search possibilities

No library team anymore. Searching now relies on three tools:

CAS IP Services

Previously CAS STN

- Setting up procedures
- 1 CAS IP Search completed, still evaluating
- FTO searches only after budget approval by Nouryon Legal

Orbit

- 2 users with Premium
- All other users on Advanced

SciFinder

- Almost everybody within R&D has access

Sounds like we have gone backwards in search possibilities, however we never made much use of the past possibilities in the prior years.

Discussion: What are your experiences, same movement away from centralized in-house library services?

Search Methodology (for chemical structure searches)

Search strategy is tailored to the content of the invention disclosure (ID); Claude is used to extract keywords directly from the ID.



Orbit workflow

- Command-line search for structural precision, using Boolean and proximity operators
 - Complemented by Sophia AI searches - run from multiple angles
- Relevant art (also from scifinder and patentscope) compiled into lists to run similarity searches
- Classification search used mainly for landscaping, less often for novelty checks

Why this sequence

- *SciFinder has limited recall for patent literature, so it is used for chemistry identification rather than IP coverage*
- *Patentscope's structure search returns high recall but low precision (significant noise), so results are narrowed further in Orbit*

The AI promise

Hype vs. reality

Hype

- Standalone AI agents will replace search entirely
- Everyone's life gets so much easier, any day now
- Traditional searching becomes obsolete

Reality

- Orbit AI: useful add-on, adds confidence not less work
- Newton (SciFinder): not yet suitable for prior art
- Claude / Copilot: sharpen ID quality and search strings, not a search engine
- IPRally: genuinely promising, best used alongside Orbit
- Tools keep improving / changing
- Extremely time consuming to follow

Combining AI and traditional tools beats picking One

My quick evaluation IPRally vs Orbit (why make a choice? Use both..\$)

Item	IPRally	Orbit
Family grouping	Poor – duplicates/noise	Yes, via FAMPAT
AI-powered search	Flexible, tunable, doc upload	Rigid, not tunable, doc upload
Plain text search	Yes	Limited (Sophia only)
Boolean search	Simple strings only	Strong, complex strings
Advanced search	Yes, incl. CMD line	Yes, incl. CMD line
Similarity search	Zoom to favorites	Similarity search
Invalidity search	Strong, AI-assisted	Manual / similarity-based
State of the art search	Strong, AI-assisted	Manual / similarity-based
Applicant search	Flexible on legal entities	Selection tool, less flexible
Graph search	Yes (use case unclear)	No
Full text available	Yes	Yes
Chat with document (AI)	Yes – Ask AI	Yes – Sophia Document
Highlighting	Automatic, editable	Manual
CPC/IPC classes	Visible, not interactive	Interactive, linked
Structuring searches	Projects, favorites, tagging	Lists/workfiles, less usable
Sufficient standalone?	No – strong on chemistry, some noise	No – more complete, better history
Alerts	Query monitoring via email	Complex alerts via email
Legal events (LE)	Yes, no register link	Yes, linked to register
Alerts on LE	Unclear if possible	Yes
Landscaping & analysis	Limited; AI in beta	Complete (premium)
Export	Easy export to Orbit	Import via Excel only
Download	All formats	All formats



Thanks