

# TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION SUPPORT CENTERS (TISC)

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IMPLEMENTATION  
GUIDE

The Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) program, run by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), is designed to give innovators easy access to locally based, high quality technology information and related services.

WIPO works with the governments of our member states to support the establishment and effective operation of TISCs by:

- Facilitating access to patent databases and other science and technology resources
- Building the skills of TISC staff through on-site training and distance learning courses
- Providing information and training materials
- Supporting awareness-raising activities
- Sharing experience and best practices

## INTRODUCTION

This guide is for governments and institutions wishing to participate in the TISC program. It outlines the four main stages involved in setting up and running a successful TISC:

- Project planning
- Project initiation
- Resource development
- Service provision

For further details and assistance, please visit our website at [www.wipo.int/tisc](http://www.wipo.int/tisc) or contact us at [tisc@wipo.int](mailto:tisc@wipo.int).

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## KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

A number of different stakeholders are involved in establishing a national network of TISCs, each with specific roles and responsibilities.

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### WIPO

- Supports participating governments in preparing project documentation
- Helps address training and resource needs
- Enables sharing of experiences and best practices among TISCs

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### Government Authority

- Identifies national priorities
- Assesses user needs
- Signs off on project documentation

Examples: National intellectual property offices; ministries; government agencies; diplomatic representations.

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### National Focal Point

- Identifies potential host institutions, assesses their capacities, and supports them in joining the TISC project
- Act as the main intermediary between WIPO and TISC host institutions
- Coordinates activities of the national TISC network
- Monitors and evaluates the progress of the TISC project

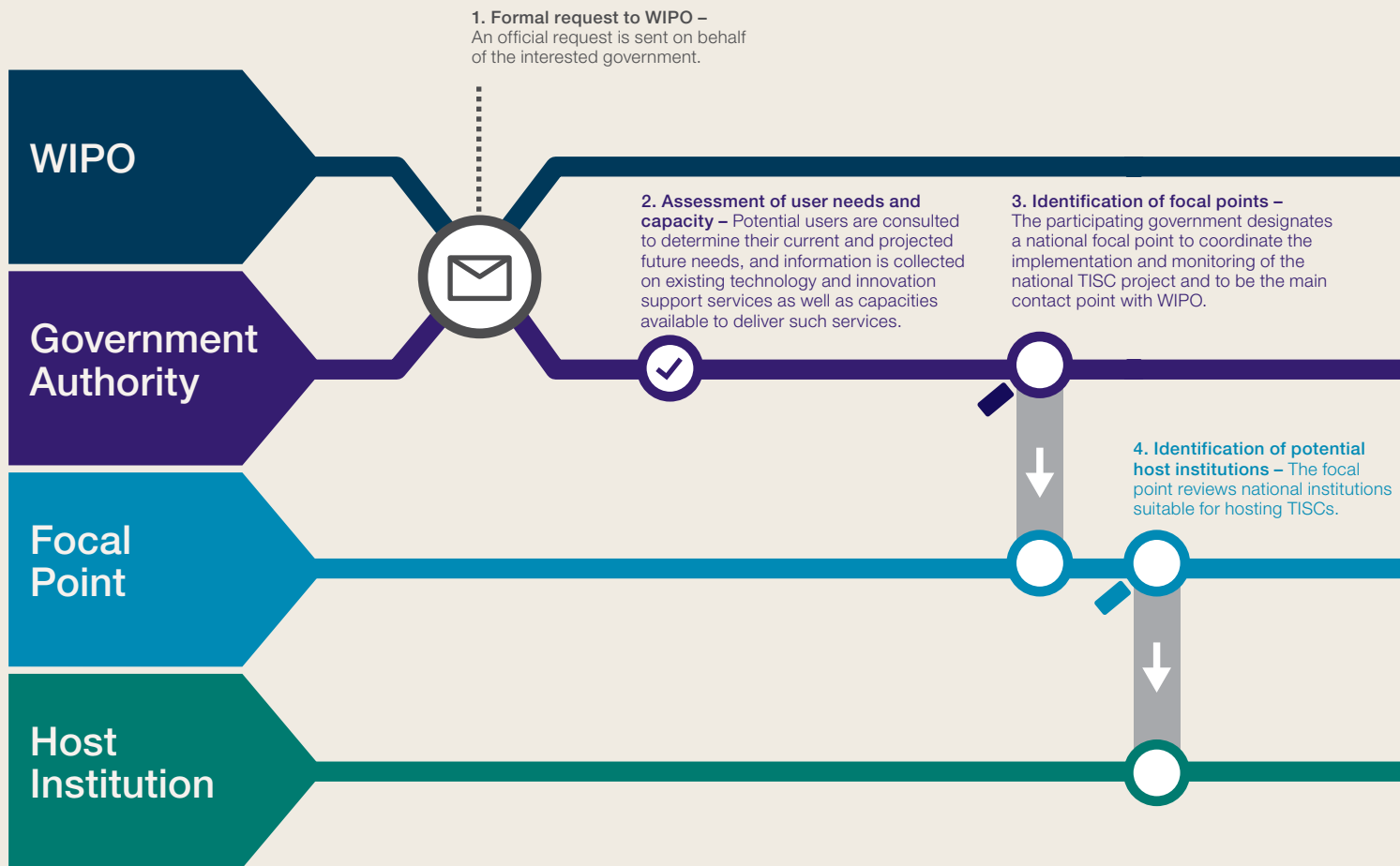
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### Host Institution

- Provides administrative and technical staff required to deliver technology and innovation support services
- Provides facilities and infrastructure

Examples: Academic or research institutions; chambers of commerce; science and technology parks; technology, innovation or business incubators; industry associations)

## STAGE ONE: PROJECT PLANNING



### Stage One: Project Planning

#### 1. Formal request to WIPO

An official request is sent on behalf of the interested government, proposing the launch of a national TISC project and seeking WIPO's assistance in its implementation.

#### 2. Assessment of user needs and capacity

Understanding the needs of potential clients is essential in order to ensure that demand exists for the technology and innovation support services that are ultimately set up to support these clients. Information that could be collected from potential users includes:

- Which kind of services they need to support their research or business activities, in particular with regard to intellectual property (patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyrights, etc.) and technology
- How these services could support their activities
- How they prefer to receive support (e.g. face-to-face, telephone, email, or online)
- Where they would be most likely to go for services designed to support their activities (e.g. university, chamber of commerce, library)

Tools that can be used to gather this information include surveys, interviews, and discussion groups. Some approaches for ensuring broad coverage and an adequate response rate are:

- Publicizing and carrying out surveys through websites or social media platforms
- Using “multipliers” (e.g. government institutions, existing networks and associations) to extend the reach of information gathering activities
- Linking information gathering activities to other activities (e.g. meetings or training events)
- Offering incentives for competing surveys or participating in interviews or discussion groups using online media to publicize and carry out surveys

Getting an overview of the services already provided in some form in the country can help determine which gaps are present in the service landscape. A review of skills and resources available to fill these gaps and where these skills and resources are located can provide an indication of how to set up the TISC network (which host institutions should be included in the network) and which kind of support will be needed to build any missing capacities.

#### 3. Identification of focal points

The participating government will designate a national focal point to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the national TISC project and to act as an intermediary between WIPO and host institutions in the TISC network.

#### 4. Identification of potential host institutions

The focal points will identify potential TISC host institutions through which technology and

innovation support services will ultimately be provided.

The scope of the national network of TISCs (ranging from a single TISC to a large network including a diverse set of host institutions) will depend on which needs exist among potential clients and how the skills and resources required to provide services are distributed in the country.

Potential host institutions include universities with science or engineering faculties, research centers, technology parks, business associations, etc.

Focal points may themselves be located within host institutions; for example, a national intellectual property office may host the focal point and also provide technology and innovation support services.

#### 5. Implementation plan

With the support of and in consultation with WIPO, government authorities develop a project-based implementation plan. This plan should include:

- Objectives and expected results
- Activities and timelines for their implementation
- Indicators for tracking the progress of the project and sources for collecting information on these indicators

The plan should take into account assessed needs and capacities as well as the participating governments' wider national intellectual property, innovation and development strategies.

## STAGE TWO: PROJECT INITIATION

**5. Implementation plan –**  
An approach for developing TISCs at the national level is decided.

**1. Sign Service Level Agreement (SLA) –**  
WIPO and the government authority sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA), detailing their respective contributions and responsibilities and annexing the implementation plan.

**2. Exchange of national institutional agreements –**  
The government authority or focal point may also sign institutional agreements with host institutions.

The objectives and expected results can be linked to wider innovation and development goals and should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound). Timelines for the implementation of activities should take into account available resources and dependencies among different activities. Indicators should be selected in a way that not only reflects the results they are intended to measure appropriately but also allows them to be tracked with a reasonable effort.

### Best practices

- An inclusive process of consultation, information gathering, and planning can help secure the commitment of all parties to the project, by raising their awareness of the project and their role in it and by ensuring that their interests are appropriately reflected.
- Activities to develop TISCs are most effective when they are fully integrated into national intellectual property, innovation and development strategies, within which they can help strengthen the innovation infrastructure by improving access to technological information and building specialist services.

### Stage Two: Project Initiation

#### 1. Service Level Agreement (SLA)

WIPO and government authorities sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA) detailing their respective contributions and responsibilities. The SLA also officially designates the national focal point and the contact point on the part of WIPO.

The contribution by participating governments generally includes ensuring the availability of:

- Premises and technical infrastructure
- Personnel

#### The contribution by WIPO may include:

- Support for access to patent database systems and science and technology resources
- On-site training and distance learning courses
- Information and training materials
- Support for awareness-raising activities
- Platforms and activities to facilitate an exchange of experiences and best practices within national networks of TISCs or between different networks

The SLA may also document the services to be provided and possible fee structures for different services. Though no fees may generally be charged for services and resources contributed by WIPO, they may be charged for other value-added services at the discretion of the

participating government, to ensure the financial sustainability of TISCs.

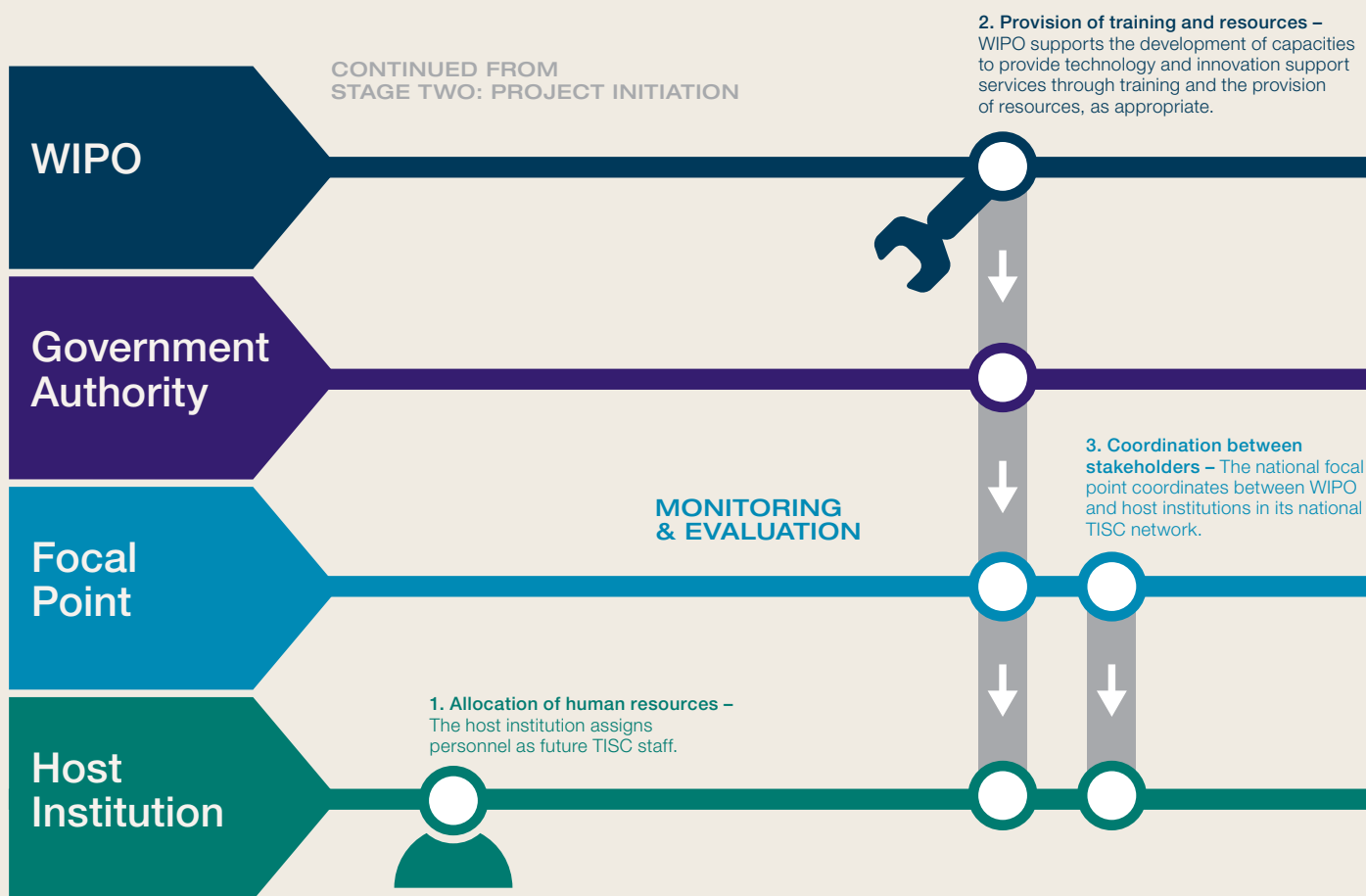
#### 2. National institutional agreements

Government authorities or focal points may also sign national institutional agreements with host institutions. The institutional agreements can detail the contributions and responsibilities of the national focal points and host institutions and specifics on e.g. the treatment of confidential data.

### Best practices

- Institutional agreements can be a useful way of ensuring that decisionmakers at host institutions are fully aware of and committed to the process of developing a TISC within their institution. This can help manage expectations and ensure that the necessary resources are made available to successfully build TISCs.
- Institutional agreements can also help ensure uniform standards of service quality, by including commitments in terms of resources invested (e.g. number or background of staff, scope of facilities or technical infrastructure) or in terms of services offered (e.g. opening hours, certifications).

## STAGE THREE: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



### Stage Three: Resource Allocation

#### 1. Allocation of human resources

The host institution assigns personnel to be trained to assist clients in using technology databases and providing technology and innovation support services. These personnel may be drawn from existing staff at the institution that will eventually be allocated part-time or full-time to providing these services.

Depending on the existing skills of the personnel assigned, the process of building the skills of the future TISC staff may itself involve a substantial time commitment that should be taken into account by the host institution.

#### 2. Provision of training and resources

WIPO helps build the technical skills of future TISC staff through on-site training and distance learning courses, supported by the provision of information and training materials.

As appropriate, WIPO helps host institutions obtain access to patent database systems and science and technology resources to enable the provision of technology and innovation support services. Publications may also be provided to support host institutions in developing their library resources.

#### 3. Coordination between stakeholders

The national focal point supports the effective operation of its national TISC network by assisting in the implementation of training activities, tracking the progress of host institutions, and communicating new developments to all parties involved.

#### Best practices

- A training schedule included in the implementation plan can help host institutions ensure the availability of their personnel to participate in training activities.
- Continuous contact by national focal points with future TISC staff can help track the progress of these staff in developing the skills necessary to carry out their future function, identify further training needs, and establish more effective approaches to addressing these needs. Communication can be maintained through personal contact, by telephone or email (including mailing lists), or using online tools such as discussion groups.
- Numerous resources are available at no cost to host institutions, many of which are available through the WIPO website and WIPO's dedicated TISC website. Focal points and TISC staff may also find it useful to collect information about resources they find particularly useful, which can be shared within their national networks or even with other networks.

### Stage Four: Service Provision

#### Basic services

TISCs provide the following basic services:

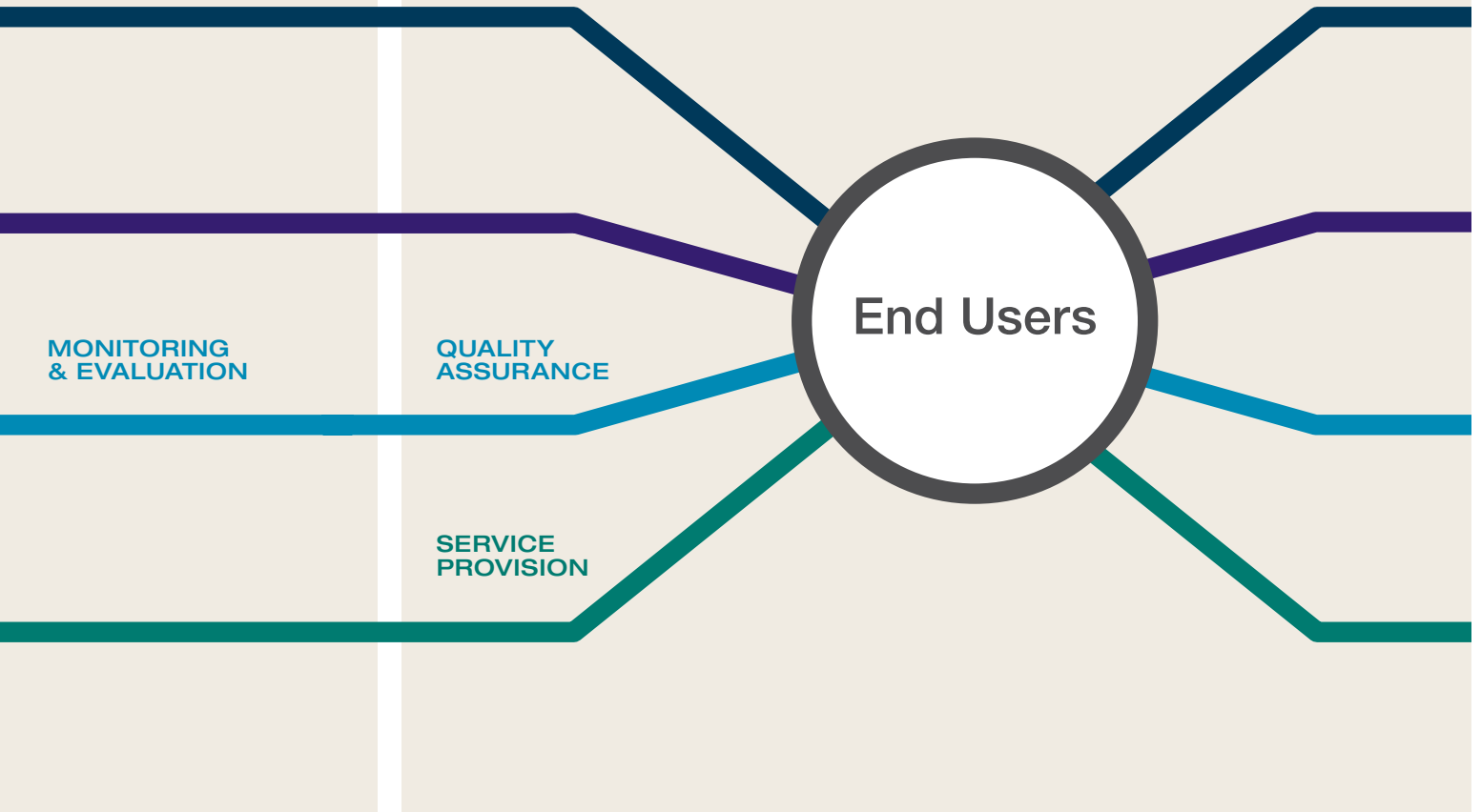
- Access to online patent database systems and science and technology resources
- Access to industrial property-related publications
- Assistance in searching and retrieving technology information

#### Additional services

Depending on assessed needs and available capacity, TISCs may also provide the following services:

- Training in searching databases
- On-demand searches (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
- Basic information on technology commercialization and marketing

## STAGE FOUR: SERVICE PROVISION



### WIPO support

Among the services provided by WIPO to TISCs to support their regular operations are the following:

- Experience sharing platforms. WIPO offers a number of resources to support the exchange and dissemination of experiences and best practices among TISCs nationally and internationally, including online knowledge management platforms and awareness-raising and training opportunities. These resources are supported by the development of standards such as skill certification schemes.
- Patent Landscape Reports. These Reports provide a comprehensive overview of a given field of technology and may inform policy discussions, strategic research planning, or technology transfer.
- WIPO's Patent Information Service for Developing Countries (WPIS). For more complex searches, WIPO coordinates with donor offices to obtain reports on the state of the art for a specific technology.

### Project Checklist

#### Stage One: Project Planning

- Request submitted
- Assessments conducted
- Focal points identified
- Host institutions identified
- Implementation Plan agreed

#### Stage Two: Project Initiation

- SLA signed
- National institutional agreements exchanged

#### Stage Three: Resource Development

- Training activities planned (or reviewed if included in implementation plan)
- Training activities implemented
- Skills and resources available at host institutions reviewed

Cycle repeated, as appropriate.

For more information,  
contact WIPO at [www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int)

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