

Japan Patent Office to Offer Reduced Fees for Small/Micro Entities

On April 1, 2019 the Japan Patent Office launched a fee reduction system for examination requests and the first to tenth years of annuities in patent applications.

Applicants that meet the JPO's requirements for small entity status will see the examination request fee reduced by half, while applicants that qualify for micro entity status will have their fee reduced by two thirds.

The table below shows the requirements for qualifying for small entity or micro entity status.

(I) Small entity (reduced to 1/2)			
Type of industry	Employees	or	Total capital or investment
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-a) Manufacturing, construction, transportation, etc. (other than those listed in I-b to I-g)	300 or fewer		300 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-b) Wholesale business	100 or fewer		100 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-c) Service business (other than those listed in I-f and I-g)	100 or fewer		50 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-d) Retail business	50 or fewer		50 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-e) Rubber manufacturing (other than manufacturing of car and plane tires and inner tubes, and industrial belts)	900 or fewer		300 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-f) Software or information processing business	300 or fewer		300 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (I-g) Hotel business	200 or fewer		50 million JPY or less
<input type="checkbox"/> (II) Micro entity or sole proprietorship (reduced to 1/3) 20 employees or fewer (5 employees or fewer for trading or service companies)			
<input type="checkbox"/> (III) Small venture company (reduced to 1/3) An entity that does not fall under (II) and which was established less than 10 years ago and, in case of a corporation, has a total investment amount of 300 million JPY or less			
<input type="checkbox"/> (IV) University (reduced to 1/2) A university or individual primarily conducting research at a university			

* As an exception to the above, applicants that fall under one of (I) to (III) are not eligible for fee reductions in the following cases:

- Half or more of the applicant's total investment or shares are owned by a single large company
- Two thirds or more of the applicant's total investment or shares are owned by large companies

Any applicant that meets any of the criteria above can apply for the fee reductions under small or micro entity status. There is no need to worry about extra paperwork; the JPO does not require any additional documentation to apply for the reduced fees.

If you would like to know more, feel free to contact us via email.