

Dr. Berthold Rutz  
Examiner Biotechnology | Dir. 2.4.0.1  
Scenarios for the Future team  
European Patent Office  
Landsberger Str. 30 | 80339 Munich | Germany  
Tel. +49 (0)89 2399 7828  
Fax +49 (0)89 2399 1946  
brutz@epo.org  
<http://www.epo.org>

## **Shades of "Open innovation" through the EPO Scenarios lens**

The powerful paradigm of open and collaborative innovation is no longer limited to the area of software development but has found proponents in other technical fields such as consumer goods, pharmaceuticals and automotive. Are traditional forms of intellectual property protection such as patents, copyrights or design rights still appropriate in a world where knowledge is increasingly shared and innovation becomes a collaborative process? What role will IP rights play in the future and what challenges will they face?

In the course of a two-year project, the EPO interviewed around 150 key players from the fields of science, business, politics, ethics, economics and law, seeking their opinions on how intellectual property and patenting might evolve over the next fifteen to twenty years. Four scenarios for the IP world in 2025 - relevant and plausible stories about the future - were developed in a series of workshops from their answers.

The impact of open innovation but also the role of patents and IPRs varies substantially from one scenario to the next. Looking through the scenario lens provides a broad view on the different directions that "open innovation" might take depending on the development of the major driving forces.