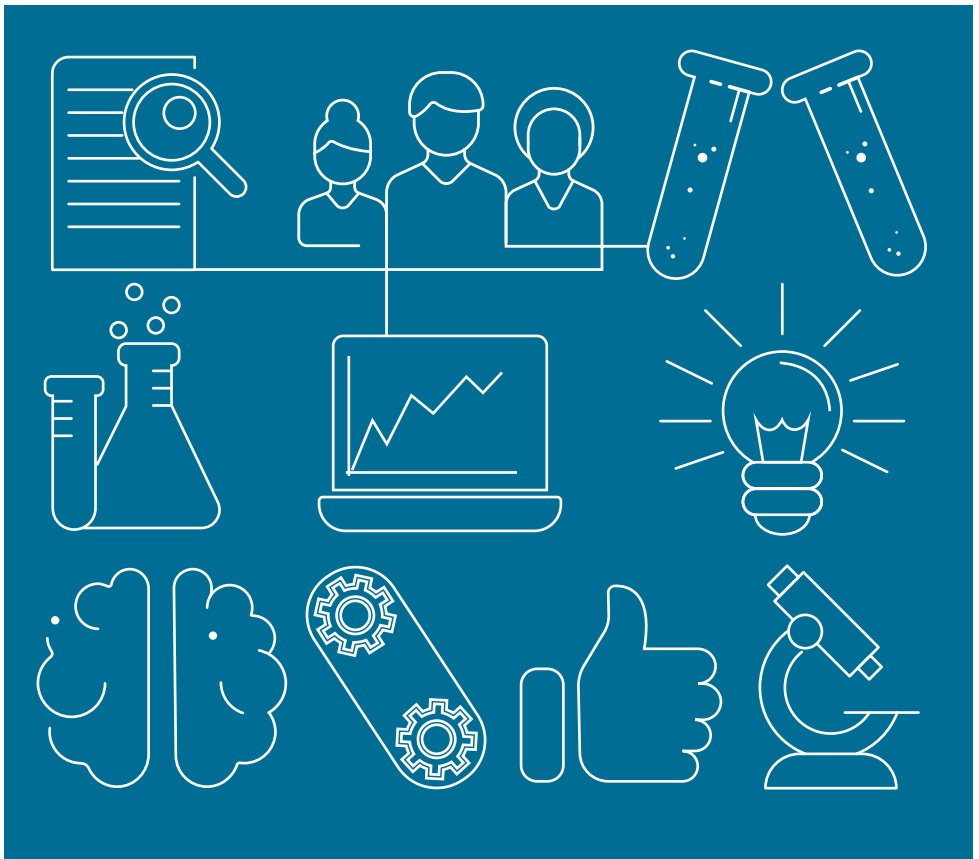




Intellectual  
Property  
Office

# Protecting your entry to The Big Bang Competition



**IPO** | Making life better through IP

Intellectual Property Office is an operating name of the Patent Office

# A guide to Intellectual Property

Congratulations on entering a project to The Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Competition. Whether your project is an invention, research into solving a problem or a communication campaign – the process of creating your work gives you a right to be identified as the creator.

To formalise your right as the creator there are intellectual property rights. Intellectual property (IP) is something that you create using your mind – for example a story, an invention, an artistic work or a symbol. The intellectual property rights are patents, trade marks, designs and copyright.

Your project will automatically be protected by Copyright. Copyright protects literary, musical and artistic work and original non-literary written work, such as software, web content and databases. It stops others from using it without your permission. You don't have to apply for protection – it is an automatic right when you create original work.

## New Inventions

Your project might be a new invention. Something that has never been seen or done before. For a patent to be granted, the invention must be all the following:

- Something that can be made or used.
- New (you can check for similar one by searching published patents: <https://www.gov.uk/search-for-patent> )
- Inventive – not just a simple modification to something that already exists.

The invention must be a secret and have not been promoted or published publicly.

If your invention meets the criteria, you may need to apply for patent protection before submitting the entry to The Big Bang Competition. Patents are expensive and difficult to get, only 1 in 20 applicants get a patent without professional help. The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA) provide free 30-minute clinics with Chartered Patent Attorneys. <https://www.cipa.org.uk/ip-clinics/> for more details.



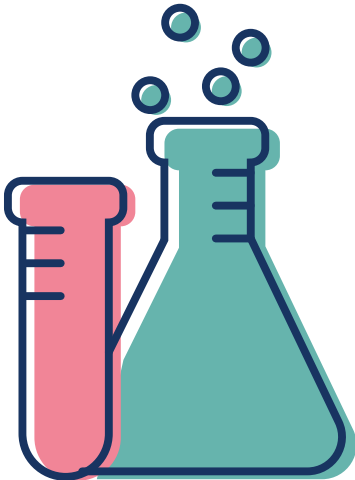
# Research Project

The original creator/s of the research project are automatically protected by Copyright – if it is original work. Your school or college may have its own rules on the copyright of work created during your study. Ask your teacher for your school/ college policy.

Copyright protects your work and stops others from using it without your permission. You can mark your work with the copyright symbol (©), your name and the year of creation. Whether you mark the work or not does not affect the level of protection you have.



# Product Development



Most of us will buy a product because we like the way it looks. Your project may have made improvement to an existing product to improve its physical appearance, price or functionality. Design protection can protect the unique appearance. The look of your design includes the:

- Appearance.
- Physical shape.
- Configuration (or how different parts of a design are arranged together.)
- Decoration.

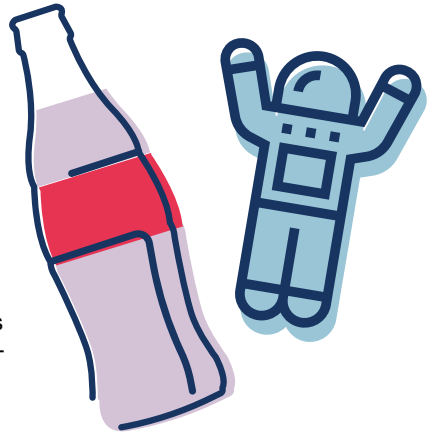
Registering the design of your product protects any aspect of the design. It also gives you the right to prevent others from using it for up to 25 years, and makes taking legal action against infringement and copying more straightforward.

# Brands

Coca-Cola, Nike and YouTube are major brands that are recognisable all around the world. When your product comes to market a trade mark plays an important role, as well as identifying your product or service with an effective marketing campaign they will help increase brand awareness.

By protecting your brand with a trade mark you can take action against competitors who might be tempted to copy your brand. The IPO's trade mark register contains the thousands of brands, straplines and even sound marks that are protected in the UK – why not search for your favourites:

<https://www.gov.uk/search-for-trademark>



## Why use the IP system

It is true to say that few technological innovations are completely new products, most are improvements which in some way make a product better than its predecessor and many businesses offer similar services.

The IP system exists to protect what is unique about your product or brand and plays a significant role in helping you enter the marketplace and gain and retain an advantage.

Your IP could be as valuable a company's goods, premises or stock. It could be the business's single most valuable asset which could secure finance for future growth.

If you want to find out more about intellectual property please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/intellectual-property-an-overview> or [www.crackingideas.com](http://www.crackingideas.com) for games, and education resources

# Competition Tips

Things to remember when entering your project into The Big Bang Competition:



If your project is unique and new, seek advice prior to entering the Competition on whether it could be protected. The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA) provide free 30 minute clinics with Chartered Patent Attorneys. <https://www.cipa.org.uk/ip-clinics/>.



If you want to keep your project private while you apply for a patent, you can apply via the online entry route. To find out more and to enter online visit <https://www.thebigbang.org.uk/the-big-bang-competition/>.



If you plan to share ideas for your product with anyone make sure you get them to sign a non-disclosure agreement. All Big Bang Competition judges & moderators are required to complete a non-disclosure agreement before reviewing project work to ensure your work is protected throughout the judging process.

Concept House  
Cardiff Road  
Newport  
NP10 8QQ

**Tel:** 0300 300 2000

**Email:** [information@ipo.gov.uk](mailto:information@ipo.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.gov.uk/ipo](http://www.gov.uk/ipo)

**Facebook:** Intellectual Property Office UK

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**Published: February 2022**

CP2200282



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