



BEPIUG Charter

A. What is the BEPIUG?

The BEPIUG is the **BE**lgian **P**atent **I**nformation **U**ser **G**roup.

Patent information users are internationally a well networked community. European based user groups, like WON (Netherlands), CFIB (French speaking community) and PDG (European Region) count several Belgian based members.

However, in Belgium itself, people active in the field of patent information resided for many years in some degree of isolation of each other. That is why, at the Belgian level, patent information users from innovative companies and knowledge centers, in 2010, felt the need to launch a local community, the BEPIUG, to increase networking, sharing of information and experience, as well as having open discussions on their profession.

Are you interested in learning more about BEPIUG? If so, send an email to info@bepiug.org

B. What are the goals of the BEPIUG?

BEPIUG is a Belgian community created by patent information users for people and companies involved in the search and use of patent information. BEPIUG provides a place for open discussion, unprejudiced and free from any influence by commercial providers of patent information.

BEPIUG is driven by its members for its members and also strives to be the showcase of the profession towards the public.

I. For the members by the members

1. To share knowledge concerning the use of patent information
 - a. sharing experiences by the members for the members via different ways (meetings, wikis,...)
 - b. developing best practices (in workgroups for instance)
2. To organize training sessions for patent information experts with specific contents like
 - a. copy or repeat certain sessions that are of interest to the BEPIUG members
 - b. refer to courses with more extensive content like e.g. WON/GO
3. To interact with service providers active in the domain of patent information search engines, databases and related applications (statistical, business information, etc...)

4. To interface with the national & international organizations on matters of patent information
5. To follow up and be the point of contact with CEPIUG (among others) on the matter of examination & certification of PI specialists
6. To share the calendar of events related to patent information
7. To promote networking by sharing meta information (contact data of members, career opportunities,...) amongst their members.

II. Towards the public by the members

1. To give market exposure to the profession of patent information experts
 - a. contact point (for new members,...)
 - b. showcase of the profession (job description,...)
2. To provide a gateway to resources of PI expertise
 - a. general introductory courses (like WON/GO)
 - b. service providers (ut supra)
 - c. ...

C. How is the BEPIUG organized?

BEPIUG is a non-statutory community of individual members. A steering committee (sometimes simply referred to as 'board') takes care of the organization of BEPIUG and its activities.

I. Membership

1. General membership.

Anyone can apply for being member of the BEPIUG, except for commercial providers of patent information search engines, databases and related applications.

Membership applications are communicated to all members of the BEPIUG. When applying for membership it will be requested to agree on the code of conduct. Unless at least one member opposes a membership, within a period of one month, the applicant becomes member. Hence, membership application will be pending at least for one month.

When the membership is opposed, a debate¹ will be organized by the steering committee in which the attending members decide on the membership application by voting². In case of a voting, at least 2/3 of the attending members needs to be in favor of the membership to BEPIUG to approve it. If the voting results in less than 2/3 of the number of attending members the membership is refused. In order to be valid, the voting requires a quorum of 50 % of the members voting. If the quorum is not reached, the voting has to be reorganized. Until the next voting, the membership remains pending.

2. General membership duration.

Membership of the BEPIUG is in principle unlimited in time. Only on personal request, in case of misconduct (see section III), or when the BEPIUG is informed about the death of a member, membership can be concluded. It is, however, the responsibility of the member to keep their contact details at the BEPIUG up-to-date. Changes should be sent as soon as possible to info@bepiug.org. Not being able to contact a member for one calendar year will, for practical reasons, lead to automatic termination of the membership.

II. Steering committee

1. Duty and size of the steering committee

The duty of the BEPIUG steering committee is to take care of all organizational matters and to safeguard the continued existence of the BEPIUG.

The steering committee consist of a maximum of 9 members.

2. Steering committee membership

Every year at least 1/3 of the steering committee positions will be open for election, on a rotating basis. If a steering committee member steps down this will count as one of the open positions. Steering committee members may be re-elected without restrictions.

Any member of the BEPIUG can apply for membership of the steering committee. When there are more candidates than open positions, a member voting will be organized during the user meeting. This voting will be announced to all members and will be put on the user meeting agenda. Candidates will be selected as steering committee member in order of the number of votes they received. The chairman of the steering committee is selected by voting of the steering committee members.

III. Code of conduct

In order to become member, applicants need to declare they agree to comply with the code of conduct. Members can be excluded when they are found not respecting it. When the latter occurs, any member may call for a debate and voting following the same procedure as the debate and voting on membership.

¹ The debate and voting can be held using web tools.

² Every individual member holds one vote

1. Responsibility

Every individual and/or company undertaking actions (organization of events, meetings, communicating,...) via BEPIUG does this on its own responsibility.

2. Confidentiality

When a member discloses – in writing, by word of mouth, or in any other way – information designated as confidential, the receiving members are obliged to keep this information confidential and will refrain from disclosing the information to third parties being not BEPIUG members. Not considered as confidential information, is information that was already known before the disclosure, or that is received in due course from non-BEPIUG members.

The member list of all BEPIUG members will be available to all members, but marked as confidential not to be disclosed to non-members, and should not be used for any commercial activity.

Presentations given at BEPIUG meetings remain the sole property of the creator. Only with explicit permission of the owner, re-use, or distribution of these presentations outside the BEPIUG is permitted.

3. Internal communications

Only for non-commercial purposes, members are allowed to use the member-list for direct one-to-one communication with fellow-members. Communication to ALL members, like the announcement of vacancies or events, or asking general questions, should always go through the steering committee (use the email address info@bepiug.com), or through the BEPIUG wiki.

A member shall refrain from explicitly promoting software.

IV. Meetings and reporting

-English is the language for meetings and reports.

-Meetings are open for all members.

-During a working year, preferably at least 2 general member meetings shall be organized, hosted by one of the members of BEPIUG.

D. Changes to this charter

Changes to this charter will always be clearly communicated to all members.

For significant changes to this charter, the steering committee can decide upon a member voting for approval. To initiate such a voting, a 2/3rd majority in the steering committee is needed.

Such a member voting will follow these rules:

-The quorum should be at least 50% for a decisive voting

-When no quorum is reached, the steering committee will decide

-50% + 1 means acceptance of the approval.

Last update of this charter: 30 June 2015.