

i-link for Access Code on the AIA/14

Q1. What is an Access Code?

A1. Data that used together with the application number and filing date to uniquely identify a patent application that is registered into the WIPO DAS (World Intellectual Property Organization Digital Access Service). As of March 18, 2013, all WIPO DAS participating offices require that the access code be provided in order to retrieve the priority document. The WIPO DAS access code is assigned by the WIPO DAS participating office and consists of four alphanumeric characters.

Q2. When is an Access Code required?

A2. When the following conditions are met:

- (1) The foreign priority application is filed in a foreign intellectual property office that is a participating WIPO DAS depositing office;
- (2) Appropriate steps have been taken by the applicant to make the priority application available to the Office via the WIPO DAS; and,
- (3) The applicant wishes the Office to attempt electronic retrieval of the priority application.

Q3. Will the Office notify the applicant when an Access Code is required, but not furnished?

A3. When an applicant claims priority to a foreign application filed in a WIPO DAS depositing office and fails to provide the required access code, the U.S. application filing receipt will include an indication "No Access Code Provided" adjacent to the foreign application number.

Q4. Will the Office notify the applicant that retrieval of the priority document will be attempted?

A4. When an applicant claims priority to a foreign application filed in a WIPO DAS depositing office and provides the required access code, the U.S. application filing receipt will include an indication "Access Code Provided" adjacent to the foreign application number and the following notice:

Request to Retrieve – This application either claims priority to one or more applications filed in an intellectual property Office that participates in the Priority Document Exchange (PDX) program or contains a proper Request to Retrieve Electronic Priority Application(s) (PTO/SB/38 or its equivalent). Consequently, the USPTO will attempt to electronically retrieve these priority documents.

Q5. Which offices participate in the WIPO DAS and what format should be used on the Application Data Sheet (ADS) Foreign Priority Information section?

A5. The list of WIPO DAS participating offices and information concerning the scope of available priority documents are maintained by the WIPO. For successful retrieval, it is important that the foreign priority claim identify the country/office code and the foreign priority application number in the recommended format. The participating offices, the types of applications that may be available for retrieval by the USPTO from each participating office, and the recommended application number formats for each participating office are set forth on the [USPTO Priority Document Exchange](#) site.

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