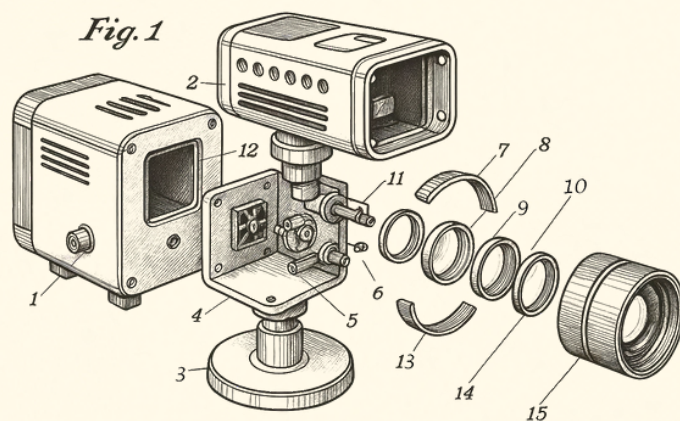


# *The innovative* **PATENT ROYALE**



|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Classification</b> | Card Games — A63F1/04 |
| <b>Priority Date</b>  | 19.02.2025            |
| <b>Inventor</b>       | Lukas Girlevicius     |

# Abstract

Welcome to *The Innovative Patent Royale*! This card game uses a classic format to explore the complexities of patent law in a fun and accessible way. Players assume the role of Chief IP Officers at innovation-driven companies, competing to secure exclusive rights to a pioneering invention. The goal is to outmaneuver rivals and emerge as market leaders by strategically deploying key actors from the patent system. Every card represents a distinct role with a thematic ability and an innovation value that contributes to victory. The game is quick to learn, scales well for different group sizes, and requires no prior IP knowledge. Luck, skill and playful deduction are carefully balanced to provide an engaging experience while subtly introducing key legal concepts. Success in Patent Royale comes to those who recognize the synergistic value of the professional roles and adapt their strategy to the constantly shifting innovation landscape.

Patent Royale was originally developed as a playful kickoff activity for patent examiners at the Swedish Patent Office. The cited priority date marks that occasion.



# Description

## **Background and Prior Art**

There has long been a need for an accessible, engaging method to convey patent law concepts. Traditionally perceived as technical and dry, principles of intellectual property become more intuitive when tied to gameplay, given their inherently competitive nature. By gamifying key roles and actions, Patent Royale addresses a long-felt educational need, offering players both entertainment and insight into innovation strategy.

Patent Royale draws inspiration from classic deduction games like *Love Letter* by Seiji Kanai, known for their quick play and unique card powers. These mechanics are reimagined to highlight strategic roles within the patent system. While not a literal simulation, the game provides a metaphorical model for how patents are filed, challenged and defended.



It is a common misconception that innovation requires completely new inventions. In reality, most patents disclose marginal improvements of previously known solutions.



Browse to next page  
if you just want to  
start playing!

## **Summary of the Game**

The primary objective of Patent Royale is to seamlessly integrate elements of the patent system into a dynamic gameplay framework, offering both educational insights and engaging entertainment to players of all backgrounds. This competitive card game consists of 22 playable cards, each representing a unique patent system actor or role with a specific innovation value ranging from 0 to 9, as well as a thematic ability. Additionally, 4 reference cards are provided for player consultation. Success in Patent Royale hinges on players employing deduction and strategic deployment to outmaneuver opponents.

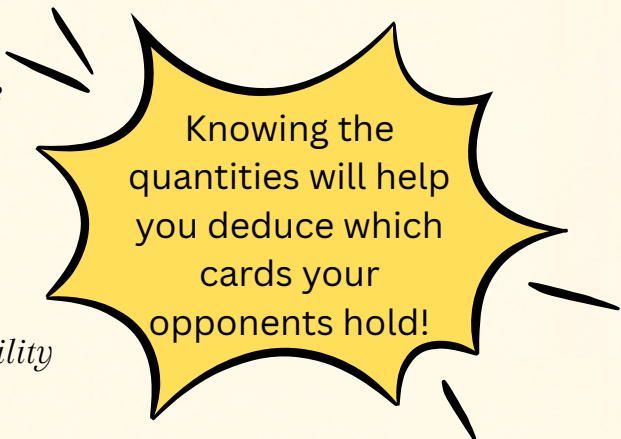
Each round begins with players secretly receiving one card from a shuffled deck. On their turn, a player draws a second card, then chooses one of the two to play face-up. The played card's ability activates immediately and may affect other players or card states. Turns proceed clockwise. A round ends in one of two ways: either the deck is empty and all remaining players reveal their card, with the highest innovation value winning the round; or only one player remains, who wins immediately. Players accumulate victories over multiple rounds. The first to win three rounds secures the coveted patent giving exclusive rights to the invention.

As the game progresses, players will discover how each actor embodies a crucial step in the patent lifecycle, from initial conception to complex litigation. The roles and abilities within the game mirror real-world dynamics, such as filing, opposition, invalidation, and enforcement, demanding adaptive strategies in a constantly shifting landscape.

## **Brief Description of the Cards**

The deck consists of 22 playable cards, representing 16 unique roles within the patent system. Some roles appear multiple times to reflect their frequency and importance in real-world IP workflows. Cards have the quantity/name/innovation value/ability as disclosed below:

- 4× Patent Analyst (1) – *Invalidity Search*
- 1× Doctorate Student (2) – *Publish Research*
- 1× Patent Paralegal (2) – *Timely Filing*
- 1× Formalities Officer (2) – *Deficiency Notice*
- 1× Startup Founder (3) – *Market Disruption*
- 2× Direct Competitor (3) – *Infringement Dispute*
- 2× Patent Examiner (4) – *Office Action*
- 2× Patent Attorney (5) – *Freedom to Operate*
- 1× Patent Judge (6) – *Injunction Order*
- 1× Angel Investor (6) – *Seed Capital*
- 1× Prototype Engineer (7) – *Industrial Applicability*
- 1× Brilliant Inventor (8) – *Inventive Step*
- 1× Pioneering Invention (9) – *Lack of Novelty*
- 1× Artificial Intelligence (0) – *Machine Learning*
- 1× Industrial Spy (0) – *Corporate Espionage*
- 1× Patent Troll (0) – *Frivolous Lawsuit*



Knowing the quantities will help you deduce which cards your opponents hold!

Each reference card includes a full card list with quantities to support deduction and memory strategies during play.

The game accommodates 2–6 players but is optimally balanced at a 4-player count. Note that at only 2 players, it is recommended to remove the 0-value wildcard roles, as these introduce effects that are not balanced for 1-on-1 play.

# **Detailed Rules Description**

## **1. Preparation**

- Provide each player with a reference card and shuffle the playing card's deck.
- Place the top card of the deck face-down to establish the Prior Art pile. Played or discarded cards are revealed face-up on top of this card. Players are allowed to study all revealed prior art at any time, without disturbing the card order.
- Deal one face-down card to each player. The remaining cards form the draw pile, referred to as the deck.

## **2. Initiating Play**

- The player closest to 20 years old (the standard patent term) starts.
- Starting player draws one card, then selects one of the two cards to play.

## **3. Turn Structure**

- Card chosen to be played is revealed, placed into the prior art pile and its ability activates immediately.
- If a card's effect necessitates a target but no valid target exists, the effect has no impact and the turn passes to the player.
- If a player is eliminated, their card is placed in the prior art pile. Eliminated players still may study the prior art pile and publicly share their insights.
- Turns proceed clockwise: players draw one card, then play one card.

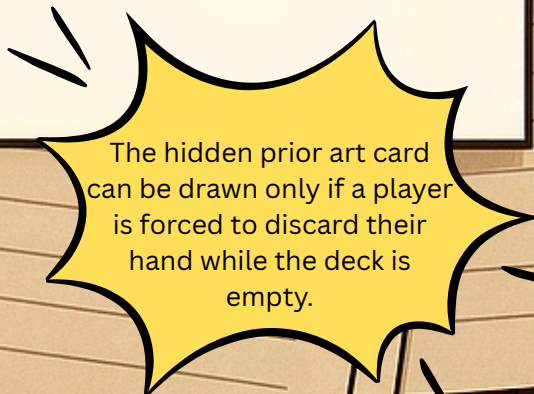
## **4. Round Conclusion**

A round concludes under one of two conditions:

- The deck is empty and the remaining players hold one card each. Player with the highest innovation value card wins. Ties are resolved in favor of the last player to take a turn (following the first-to-file rule).
- Alternatively, only one player remains and therefore wins the round.
- The winner leads the way by starting the subsequent round.

## **5. Game Conclusion**

The game continues over multiple rounds to allow players to experience various roles and strategies. The first player to accumulate 3 victories is declared the overall winner.

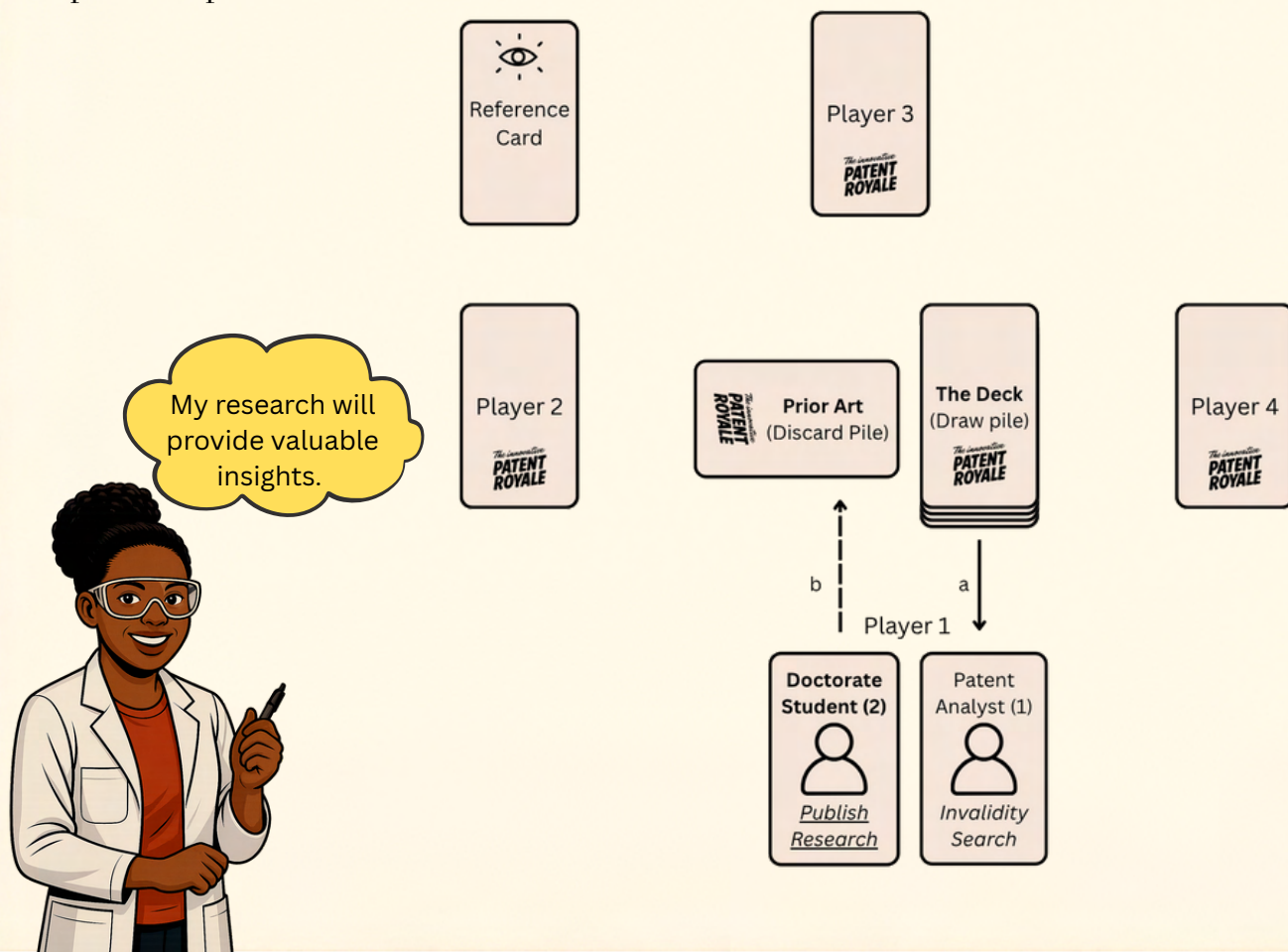


The hidden prior art card can be drawn only if a player is forced to discard their hand while the deck is empty.

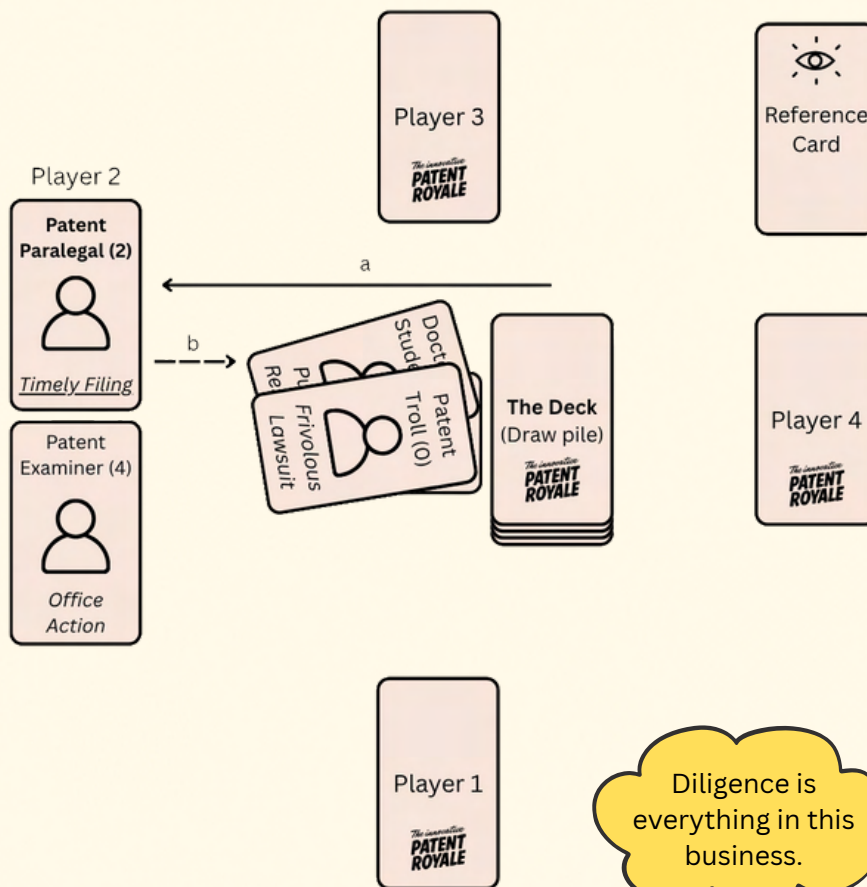
## Example Game Round Embodiment

To further illustrate the method of play, an example round involving four players will now be described, referencing accompanying figures.

**Figure 1 - Initial Setup and First Turn:** The image below depicts the initial setup for a four-player game. The top card is removed from the deck, establishing the prior art and draw piles. Each player receives their starting card face-down. Player 1 starts the round by drawing a card (a), now holding two cards: a Patent Analyst and a Doctorate Student. Player 1 plays the Doctorate Student card and places it into the prior art pile (b). The Doctorate Student's ability *Publish Research* activates, allowing Player 1 to examine the top two cards of the draw pile. Player 1 discards one of these two cards, Patent Troll – revealed to everyone, to the prior art pile and returns the other, Patent Paralegal – only known to Player 1, to the top of the draw pile. Thus, a total of 2 cards are placed into the prior art pile.



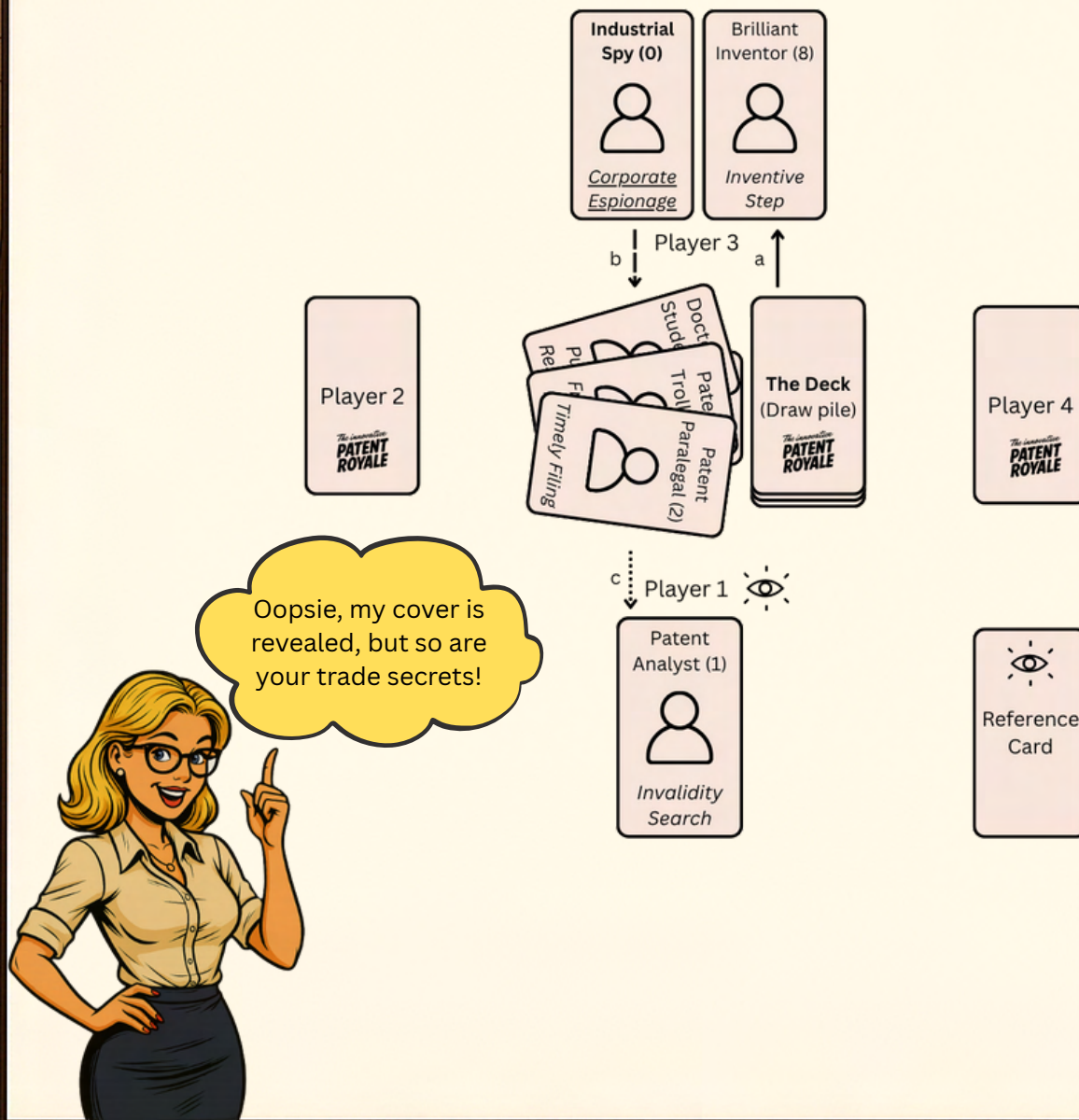
**Figure 2 - Next Player's Turn:** As priority is passed to the next player in clockwise direction, Player 2's turn now commences. Player 2 draws one card (a), resulting in a hand with a Patent Paralegal and a Patent Examiner. To establish defensive protection and keep the Patent Examiner for later turns, Player 2 plays the Patent Paralegal card (b). The *Timely Filing* ability activates, granting temporary immunity from being targeted by abilities from cards valued 0 - 2 until the next turn.



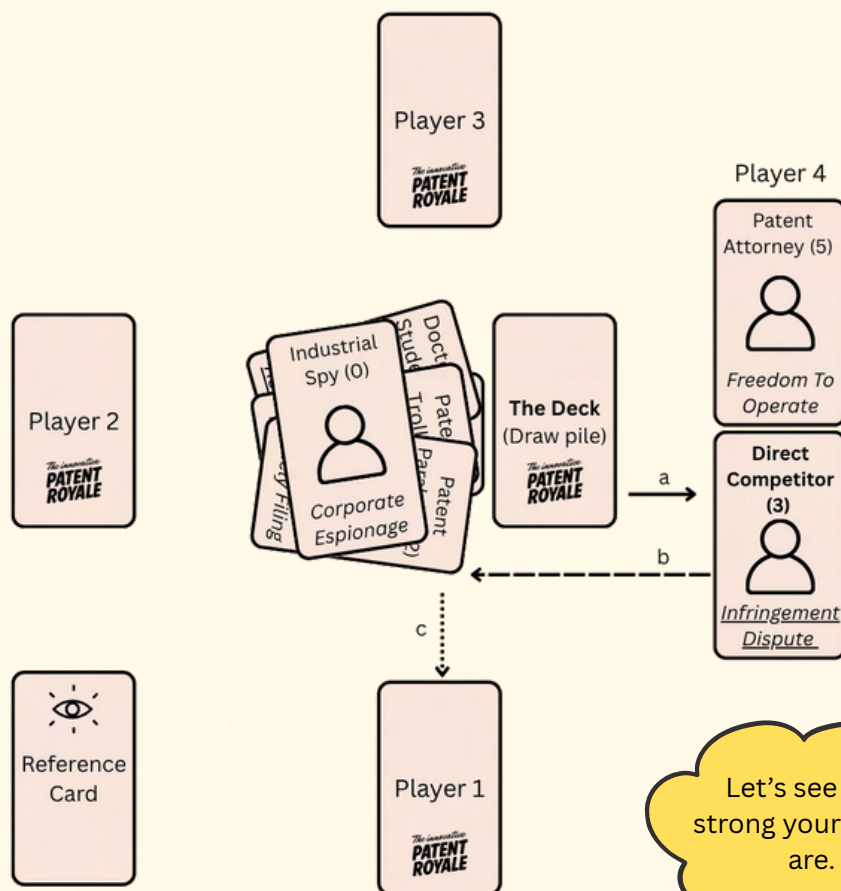
Diligence is everything in this business.



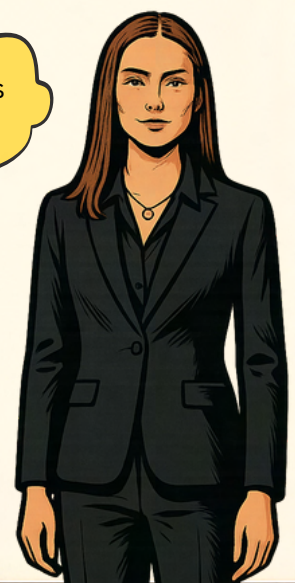
**Figure 3 - Exposing an Opponent:** Player 3's turn begins by holding an Industrial Spy and drawing (a) a Brilliant Inventor – a high innovation value card that could potentially win the end game. Player 3 then plays the Industrial Spy, activating the *Corporate Espionage* ability and choosing Player 1 as the target. Player 1 is compelled to show their current card to Player 3, who then chooses to leak this information to everyone else. Now Player 1 is exposed, holding a low innovation value card, which makes them vulnerable to most offensive abilities.



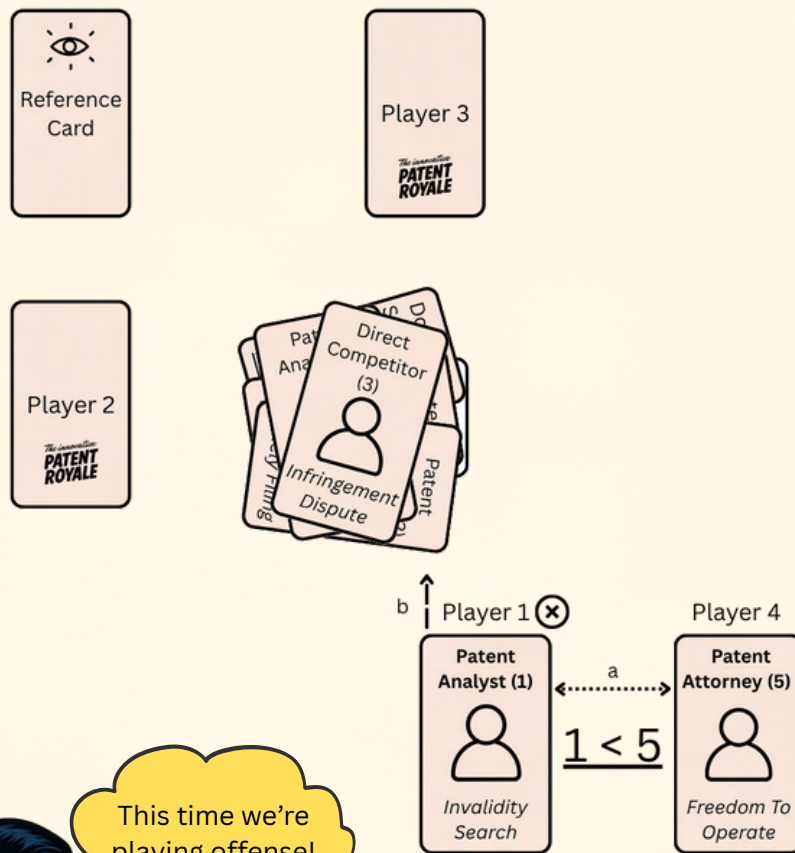
**Figure 4 - Last Turn:** Subsequently, the last card from the deck is drawn (a), indicating that this is the last turn before end game begins. Player 4 now holds a Patent Attorney and a Direct Competitor. Player 4, plays the Direct Competitor for the *Infringement Dispute* ability (b), targeting Player 1 as for an easy elimination (c), given the Patent Attorney's higher innovation value.



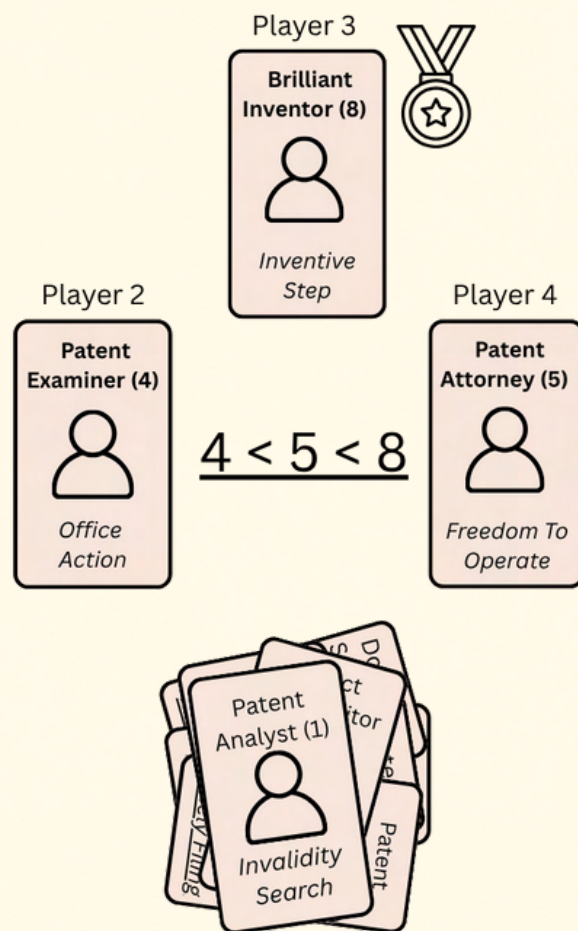
Let's see how strong your claims are.



**Figure 5 - Dispute Resolution:** The *Infringement Dispute* ability takes effect, making Player 1 and Player 4 compare their cards (a). In this case the dispute is between the Patent Analyst and the Patent Attorney. Holder of the lower innovation value – Player 1, gets eliminated from this round and discards their card in the prior art pile (b). Note that the standard game deck holds more cards than in this example round, but the eliminations can occur just as quickly. If eliminated early, third-party observers can publicly share their insights in hopes of affecting the round's outcome.



**Figure 6 - End Game and Winner Determination:** Since there are no more cards left to draw and each remaining player only holds 1 card, the end game commences. Now only the innovation value of each card is compared, and the unique card abilities have no effect on the outcome. Player 3 wins the round as the Brilliant Inventor has the highest innovation value among the cards left in play. A victory point gets assigned to Player 3. Now the cards are shuffled and a new round can be played, until one of the players secures 3 victories. Player 3 will have the honour to start the next round. Observe that the Pioneering Invention was not in play during this round, which can sometimes occur, if it is removed face-down at the round's start.



# Patent Role Cards

1. **The Pioneering Invention (9)** card carries the highest innovation value, guaranteeing a round victory if the holder survives until the end. *Lack of Novelty* ability introduces a balancing vulnerability to this end-game dominance, eliminating the player if the card is played or discarded. This precisely illustrates novelty as one of the foremost criteria for patentability, underscoring the critical importance of maintaining secrecy prior to filing a patent application.
2. **The Brilliant Inventor (8)** presents another high innovation value coupled with a strategic trade-off. *Inventive Step* ability allows the player to select a previously discarded card and shuffle it back into the deck, embodying the principle that true innovation frequently arises from the recombination of existing concepts. The requirement to play this card if held alongside a 6, 7, or 9 innovation value card balances its formidable late-game potential. This action further reflects the restless nature of a brilliant inventor, driven by an inherent compulsion to pursue new projects and challenge the status quo.
3. **The Prototype Engineer (7)** wields one of the most powerful abilities, as it grants the player both strategic control over their hand and valuable insight into future draws. *Industrial Applicability* is the third fundamental patentability criterion, representing the rigorous work required to transform abstract ideas into working and reproducible technical solutions. While patent applications don't necessitate proving a solution's functionality, this criterion is frequently cited as an objection against inventions deemed incompatible with established laws of physics or those pertaining to supernatural phenomena.
4. **The Angel Investor (6)** enables high-risk, high-reward plays, capable of dramatically altering a player's strategic position. *Seed Capital* privately trades hands with another player, with the option to reveal both sides of the trade. New innovative ventures often require substantial capital before becoming profitable, yet few investors possess the deep understanding, trust, and belief in an idea to commit their own funds. This card symbolizes that, in the early stages of an innovative venture, the division of ownership is just as important a consideration as the actual business itself.

5. **The Patent Judge (6)** imposes formidable temporal control over the game. *Injunction Order* allows the player to choose another player, forcing them to skip their next turn and not draw a card. This ability is inspired by the patent court's real-world power to issue injunctions, effectively halting commercial activity or operations pending the resolution of legal conflicts.

6. **The Patent Attorney (5)** is a highly effective role thanks to its strong defensive ability. *Freedom to Operate* grants the player immunity from all other players' card abilities until their next turn. This mirrors the due diligence that patent attorneys conduct on behalf of their clients, meticulously analysing the existing patent landscape to identify and avoid potential infringement risks. By proactively securing this strategic immunity, the attorney clears a safe path to market entry, deterring litigation and protecting innovation. Although the card holds only a moderate innovation value, it pairs exceptionally well with high-value roles, shielding them from elimination. Just like in real-life,

7. **The Patent Examiner (4)** represents the patent attorney's equally strategic, but bureaucratically empowered counterpart. *Office Action* allows the player to choose any player, including themselves, to discard their card and draw a new one. This mirrors the real-life examination process at the patent offices, where applications are scrutinized, challenged and often revised in response to cited prior art. The self-targeting option reflects an examiner's workload management, where difficult or unclear cases may be deprioritized or reassigned in favour of more tractable files.

8. **The Direct Competitor (3)** is a high-risk offensive card that players may find themselves forced to play even with a weak hand. *Infringement Dispute* allows the player to compare hands with another player, with the player holding the lower-value card being eliminated. This card embodies the intense, often litigious, business competition where rivals aggressively challenge intellectual property. Specialized lawyers carry out this legal manoeuvring, serving as a competitive asset capable of eliminating rivals or securing significant market dominance for the victor.

9. **The Startup Founder (3)** represents an agile, adaptive card that can disrupt established opponents despite its lower innovation value. *Market Disruption* allows the player to compare hands with another player, with the player holding the higher-value card being forced to discard it and draw a new one. This role powerfully illustrates how innovation-driven startups can challenge large market veterans through their nimble approach and novel solutions. It serves as an important reminder that small size and adaptability can be leveraged to overcome even the greatest market obstacles.

10. **The Doctorate Student (2)** provides utility and valuable insights' for strong future plays. *Publish Research* lets the player look at the top two cards of the deck, discard one, and return the other to the top. This mirrors how academic research advances the general body of knowledge through selective disclosure and publication. However, the decision of which card to discard subtly introduces the real-world risk that premature publication can inadvertently create prior art, potentially blocking future patentability of related inventions.

11. **The Patent Paralegal (2)** is a supportive role with strong early-game defensive value. *Timely Filing* protects the player from card effects originating from roles valued 0–2 until their next turn. In real-world patent practice, paralegals are the organizational backbone, ensuring filings are complete, critical deadlines are met, and sensitive information is handled correctly. This procedural vigilance helps prevent costly errors that could otherwise undermine patent rights and protects the overall integrity of the application process.

12. **The Formalities Officer (2)** clears low innovation value threats without their abilities getting activated. *Deficiency Notice* allows the player to choose another player; if that player holds a card valued 0–2, they must discard it and draw a new one. This role underscores the necessity of compliance with administrative requirements in the patent application process. They act as an initial filter at patent offices, efficiently identifying and addressing applications that are incomplete, improperly formatted, or otherwise procedurally flawed.

13. **The Patent Analyst (1)** is a specialist adept at leveraging information to assess patent strength and weakness. This card has two abilities to choose from. First, *Invalidity Report* allows the player to guess another player's card value, resulting in elimination if that guess is correct. This simulates the strategic use of prior art analysis to challenge the validity of existing patents. Alternatively, *Novelty Search* lets the player look at the hidden prior art card. This reflects the crucial role of pre-filing searches to determine if an invention is truly new and patentable, underscoring that thorough knowledge of existing solutions is vital for both offensive and defensive patent strategies.

14. **The Artificial Intelligence (0)** is a powerful wildcard balanced by a situational twist. *Machine Learning* allows the player to copy the effect of one of the three most recently played or discarded cards. This ability illustrates AI's capacity to replicate and optimize existing processes by learning from old data, rather than originating novel inventions. Its low innovation value reflects this distinction and the ongoing legal debate regarding AI's role as an inventor versus a sophisticated tool lacking inherent human creativity.

15. **The Industrial Spy (0)** is another strong wildcard, introducing an element of unauthorized intelligence gathering. *Corporate Espionage* lets the player look at another player's card, with the option to reveal it to all players. This highlights the severe implications of losing trade secrets due to security breaches, leaving the targeted entity highly vulnerable to competitors. Such data leaks can have devastating consequences for a company's market position and innovation pipeline, underscoring the critical importance of safeguarding intellectual property.

16. **The Patent Troll (0)** presents the most unique role, acting as a passive threat until deliberately provoked, turning defensive actions against the aggressor. *Frivolous Lawsuit* states that if the player is targeted by an *Invalidity Report*, the player who initiated it is eliminated instead; the Patent Troll then discards this card and draws a new one. This ability captures how certain entities engage in opportunistic patent litigation, primarily by weaponizing the patent system for financial gain rather than genuine commercial production or innovation.

# Appendix

## Glossary of Patent Terminology

**Patent** – A legal document that publicly discloses a technical invention, granting its holder up to 20 years of exclusive rights for commercial use.

**Novelty** – One of the core requirements for patentability. A claimed invention must be new and cannot have been publicly disclosed anywhere prior to the patent's filing date.

**Inventive Step** – The invention must not be an obvious solution to a technical problem for someone skilled in the field. It must make a meaningful contribution to the art.

**Industrial Applicability** – The invention must be capable of being made or used in some kind of industry. A person skilled in the art must be able to reproduce the invention based on the information provided in the patent.

**Prior Art** – All information made public before a patent's filing date that could affect its validity, including patents, articles, presentations, or even social media posts.

**Priority Date** – The filing date of the initial patent application for an invention.

Subsequent related applications can claim this date to establish an earlier effective filing date for assessing novelty and inventive step against prior art.

**Opposition** – A formal procedure enabling third parties to challenge a granted patent within a specific time period. The goal is to revoke or limit the patent's scope, typically on grounds of lacking novelty or inventive step.

**Invalidity Search** – An investigative effort to uncover prior art that can be used to challenge or revoke an existing patent.

**Office Action** – An official response from a patent examiner raising objections or requiring clarifications before a patent can be granted.

**Freedom to Operate (FTO)** – A legal assessment to determine whether a product or a service can be marketed without infringing on existing patents.

**Injunction** – A court order immediately preventing a party from undertaking certain actions, such as manufacturing or selling a product.

**Patent Troll** – A term for a non-practicing entity that uses patent rights primarily to threaten litigation or extract settlements.

## Learn more about Patents

Swedish Patent and Registration Office (PRV) – <https://www.prv.se/>

European Patent Office (EPO) – <https://www.epo.org/>

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) – <https://www.wipo.int/>

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) – <https://www.uspto.gov/>

## Upcoming Titles

The Royale series will continue with new thematic roles and game mechanics in *The Distinctive Trademark Royale* and *The Original Copyright Royale*.

The flagship strategy board game *Innovation Bubble* will tie together the entire innovation ecosystem in a dynamic struggle for dominance. Players will implement realistic R&D, IP, leadership, and financial strategies to outmaneuver their rivals.

With over 120 patentable innovations across 9 technology clusters, 60 hireable talents, 40 implementable strategies, and 20 unpredictable market swings, players will be balancing resources, partnerships, lawsuits and long-term planning to stay ahead.

## Ludosophy

The primary goal of the developer is to spark curiosity around academic and professional subjects through the tactile and social experience of board gaming.

Through gamification, we aim to encourage players to learn, explore, and master topics that might otherwise feel inaccessible or difficult to grasp. It is also an opportunity for experts to share their passions with colleagues, friends, and family in a playful and engaging way. To learn more, visit *Ludosophy.se* or contact us at *lukas@ludosophy.se*.

We welcome all types of inquiries and feedback.



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