**Pillar 1 — Proposal 2:  Automated Pre-Examination Search**

**Summary**:  One of the most critical, time -intensive aspects of patent application prosecution for the USPTO is performing a thorough prior art search.  It is also a vital aspect to quality examination.  As technologies develop and the information age matures, more and more prior art is available for review and analysis by Examiners. We currently have a limited search tool (PLUS) that can provide automated searches at the request of the examiner.  As such, the USPTO is continuing to pursue automated tools to assist the Examiner in prior art discovery that may include advanced natural language and linguistic technologies.  The USPTO understands Applicants are typically interested in receiving a patent as quickly as possible with the most relevant art considered by the examiner on the record at the earliest point possible during prosecution.  Thorough review of prior art, as efficiently as possible, enables these goals. Therefore, the USPTO is seeking input on several key aspects of providing a pre-examination search:

| Concept | Brainstorming Questions |
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| Value of the Automated Pre-Examination Search Results | • What is the value of a pre-examination search conducted by the USPTO after an application is filed, in promoting a quality examination in all applications? <br> • Do applicants find value in searches that they conduct before they file an application, with or without the use of linguistic tools? |
| Legal Implications and Timing of the Automated Pre-Examination Search Results | • If the Office moves forward with performing an automated pre-examination search in all applications and providing the results to Applicants, at what point after filling of an application should this occur? <br> • If the Office moves forward with performing an automated pre-examination search in all applications, what are the legal implications of providing these automated pre-examination search results on the record to applicant(s) during prosecution? |
| What should the Contents be in the Automated Pre-Examination Search Results | • What information should be included in the results of any pre-examination search? <br> • What would be most useful presentation of results to compare between application's specification and claims to that of the prior art?  For example, claim to claim comparison or comparison between specification and claims to the prior art? |