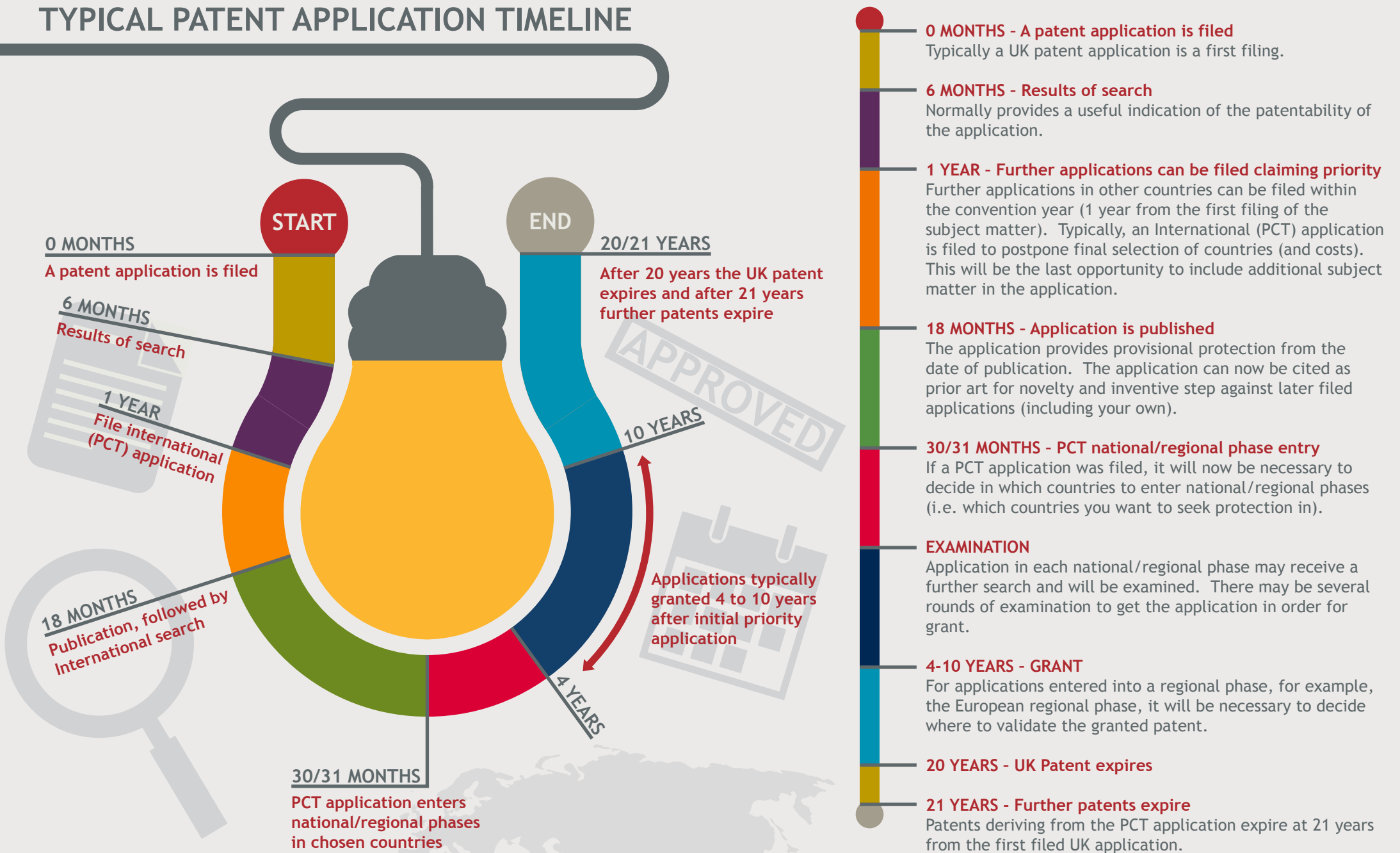


TYPICAL PATENT APPLICATION TIMELINE



0 MONTHS - A patent application is filed
Typically a UK patent application is a first filing.

6 MONTHS - Results of search
Normally provides a useful indication of the patentability of the application.

1 YEAR - Further applications can be filed claiming priority
Further applications in other countries can be filed within the convention year (1 year from the first filing of the subject matter). Typically, an International (PCT) application is filed to postpone final selection of countries (and costs). This will be the last opportunity to include additional subject matter in the application.

18 MONTHS - Application is published
The application provides provisional protection from the date of publication. The application can now be cited as prior art for novelty and inventive step against later filed applications (including your own).

30/31 MONTHS - PCT national/regional phase entry
If a PCT application was filed, it will now be necessary to decide in which countries to enter national/regional phases (i.e. which countries you want to seek protection in).

EXAMINATION
Application in each national/regional phase may receive a further search and will be examined. There may be several rounds of examination to get the application in order for grant.

4-10 YEARS - GRANT
For applications entered into a regional phase, for example, the European regional phase, it will be necessary to decide where to validate the granted patent.

20 YEARS - UK Patent expires

21 YEARS - Further patents expire
Patents deriving from the PCT application expire at 21 years from the first filed UK application.