CLAIMS

1. An image forming apparatus cartridge comprising:

a casing;

developer contained within the casing;

a developer roller having an axis L**1**, the developer roller being rotatably supported by the casing to permit rotation about the axis L**1**;

a first gear operatively connected to the developer roller;

a second gear in meshing engagement with the first gear; and

a coupling member operatively connected to the second gear, the coupling member having an axis L**2** about which the coupling member is rotatable and a free end portion for receiving a rotational force, the free end portion including at least two projections that are positioned at least partly outside of the casing, each of the at least two projections being open to the axis L**2**, and the coupling member being operatively connected to the developer roller via the first and second gears in order to be capable of transmitting of transmitting the rotational force to the developer roller,

wherein the coupling member is movable between (i) a first position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially parallel to and offset from the axis L**1** of the developer roller, (ii) a second position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position, and (iii) a third position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position in a direction opposite to the direction the coupling member is inclined when in the second position.

2. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein, when the coupling member is in the first position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially coaxial with an axis about which the second gear is rotatable.

3. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein the second gear has a hollow portion, and at least part of the coupling member is positioned within the hollow portion of the second gear.

4. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein the second gear is operatively connected to the coupling member such that the coupling member can partially rotate about the axis L**2** without transmitting a force to the second gear.

5. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein each projection has a tip, and when the coupling member is in the first position, the tip of each projection is the same distance from the second gear.

6. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein the coupling member

has an outermost surface, and for at least part of the outermost surface, a maximum distance from the axis L**2** to the outermost surface along a line perpendicular to the axis L**2** increases as the distance along the axis L**2** from the second gear increases.

7. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and at least part of the outermost surface tapers inwardly toward the axis L**2** as the distance along the axis L**2** towards the second gear decreases.

8. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein an angle at which the axis L**2** is inclined when the coupling member is in the second position is different than an angle at which the axis L**2** is inclined when the coupling member is in the third position.

9. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein, when the coupling member is in the second position or the third position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined between 20 degrees to 60 degrees with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

10. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 1, wherein, in addition to being inclinable, the coupling member is retractable towards an inside of the casing.

11. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 10, further comprising a spring biasing the coupling member towards outside of the casing.

12. An image forming apparatus cartridge comprising:

a casing;

developer contained within the casing;

a developer roller having an axis L**1**, the developer roller being rotatably supported by the casing to permit rotation about the axis L**1**;

a first gear operatively connected to the developer roller;

a second gear in meshing engagement with the first gear; and

a coupling member operatively connected to the second gear, the coupling member having an axis L**2** about which the coupling member is rotatable and a free end portion for receiving a rotational force, the free end portion including at least two projections that are positioned at least partly outside of the casing, each of the at least two projections being open to the axis L**2**, and the coupling member being operatively connected to the developer roller via the first and second gears in order to be capable of transmitting the rotational force to the developer roller,

wherein the coupling member is movable between (i) a first position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially parallel to and offset from the axis L**1** of the developer roller and (ii) a second position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

13. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim **22**, wherein, when the coupling member is in the first position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially coaxial with an axis about which the second gear is rotatable.

14. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein the second gear has a hollow portion, and at least part of the coupling member is positioned within the hollow portion of the second gear.

15. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein the second gear is operatively connected to the coupling member such that the coupling member can partially rotate about the axis L**2** without transmitting a force to the second gear.

16. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein each projection has a tip, and when the coupling member is in the first position, the tip of each projection is the same distance from the second gear.

17. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and for at least part of the outermost surface, a maximum distance from the axis L**2** to the outermost surface along a line perpendicular to the axis L**2** increases as the distance along the axis L**2** from the second gear increases.

18. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and at least part of the outermost surface tapers inwardly toward the axis L**2** as the distance along the axis L**2** towards the second gear decreases.

19. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein, when the coupling member is in the second position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined between 20 degrees to 60 degrees with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

20. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 12, wherein, in addition to being inclinable, the coupling member is retractable towards an inside of the casing.

21. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 20, further comprising a spring biasing the coupling member towards outside of the casing.

22. An image forming apparatus cartridge comprising:

a casing;

developer contained within the casing;

a developer roller having an axis L**1**, the developer roller being rotatably supported by the casing to permit rotation about the axis L**1**;

a first gear operatively connected to the developer roller;

a second gear in meshing engagement with the first gear; and

a coupling member operatively connected to the second gear, the coupling member having an axis L**2** about which the coupling member is rotatable and a free end portion for receiving a rotational force, the free end portion including at least one projection that is positioned at least partly outside of the casing, the at least one projection being open to the axis L**2**, and the coupling member being operatively connected to the developer roller via the first and second gears in order to be capable of transmitting the rotational force to the developer roller,

wherein the coupling member is movable between (i) a first position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially parallel to and offset from the axis L**1** of the developer roller, (ii) a second position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position, and (iii) a third position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position in a direction opposite to the direction the coupling member is inclined when in the second position.

23. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein, when the coupling member is in the first position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially coaxial with an axis about which the second gear is rotatable.

24. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein the second gear has a hollow portion, and at least part of the coupling member is positioned within the hollow portion of the second gear.

25. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein the second gear is operatively connected to the coupling member such that the coupling member can partially rotate about the axis L**2** without transmitting a force to the second gear.

26. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein the free end portion includes a recess facing away from the second gear.

27. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and for at least part of the outermost surface, a maximum distance from the axis L**2** to the outermost surface along a line perpendicular to the axis L**2** increases as the distance along the axis L**2** from the second gear increases.

28. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein the coupling member

has an outermost surface, and at least part of the outermost surface tapers inwardly toward the axis L**2** as the distance along the axis L**2** towards the second gear decreases.

29. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein an angle at which the axis L**2** is inclined when the coupling member is in the second position is different than an angle at which the axis L**2** is inclined when the coupling member is in the third position.

30. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein, when the coupling member is in the second position or the third position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined between 20 degrees to 60 degrees with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

31. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 22, wherein, in addition to being inclinable, the coupling member is retractable towards an inside of the casing.

32. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 31, further comprising a spring biasing the coupling member towards outside of the casing.

33. An image forming apparatus cartridge comprising:

a casing;

developer contained within the casing;

a developer roller having an axis L**1**, the developer roller being rotatably supported by the casing to permit rotation about the axis L**1**;

a first gear operatively connected to the developer roller;

a second gear in meshing engagement with the first gear; and

a coupling member operatively connected to the second gear, the coupling member having an axis L**2** about which the coupling member is rotatable and a free end portion for receiving a rotational force, the free end portion including at least one projection that is positioned at least partly outside of the casing, the at least one projection being open to the axis L**2**, and the coupling member being operatively connected to the developer roller via the first and second gears in order to be capable of transmitting the rotational force to the developer roller,

wherein the coupling member is movable between (i) a first position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially parallel to and offset from the axis L**1** of the developer roller and (ii) a second position in which the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

34. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein, when the coupling member is in the first position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is substantially coaxial with an axis about which the second gear is rotatable.

35. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein the second gear has a hollow portion, and at least part of the coupling member is positioned within the hollow portion of the second gear.

36. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein the second gear is operatively connected to the coupling member such that the coupling member can partially rotate about the axis L**2** without transmitting a force to the second gear.

37. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein the free end portion includes a recess facing away from the second gear.

38. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and for at least part of the outermost surface, a maximum distance from the axis L**2** to the outermost surface along a line perpendicular to the axis L**2** increases as the distance along the axis L**2** from the second gear increases.

39. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein the coupling member has an outermost surface, and at least part of the outermost surface tapers inwardly toward the axis L**2** as the distance along the axis L**2** towards the second gear decreases.

40. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein, when the coupling member is in the second position, the axis L**2** of the coupling member is inclined between 20 degrees to 60 degrees with respect to the position of the axis L**2** when the coupling member is in the first position.

41. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 33, wherein, in addition to being inclinable, the coupling member is retractable towards an inside of the casing.

42. The image forming apparatus cartridge of claim 41, further comprising a spring biasing the coupling member towards outside of the casing.