RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY
LOW VISION RESEARCH AWARD

Guidelines and Instructions
Preliminary Application Only

DEADLINE
Preliminary Application: October 17, 2016
Finalists Notification: no later than January 6, 2017
Final Application: March 1, 2017 (awarded in June)

DESCRIPTION
The RPB/Reader’s Digest Partners for Sight Foundation (RDPFS) and RPB/Consumer Technology Association Foundation (CTAF) Innovations in Technology Low Vision Research Award: two awards, up to $100,000 each, over one year. These awards are available for a limited time. We anticipate a third and final round of these awards in 2018.

Low vision refers to chronic vision impairment that is not correctable by eyeglasses, contact lenses, medicines or surgery. Many eye disorders can lead to low vision, including age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy. Injury to the eye or to a portion of the brain involved in sight can also produce low vision. Low vision significantly and negatively impacts a person’s visual activities of daily living and quality of life.

The National Eye Institute estimated that nearly 3 million people in the U.S. suffered low vision in 2010 with projections that this number would increase to nearly 5 million in 2030 and 9 million in 2050. Low vision is among the 10 most common causes of disability in the U.S. Low vision can cause difficulty in common visual tasks such as reading, mobility (both walking and driving), and recognizing people and objects.

The RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF Award promotes the development of assistive devices for persons with low vision and we encourage submissions as follows:

- Those with a focus on mobile and/or wearable innovations;
- Solutions that can be implemented on multiple platforms, such as electronic tablets or phones;
- Solutions for persons with remaining functional vision rather than those who are totally blind;
- Environmental adaptations which can improve a visually impaired individual’s ability to perform a daily living activity;
- Interdisciplinary collaborations that bring together technical expertise coupled with real-life experience with persons with low vision;
- Applications from early-career investigators.

The RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF Award will NOT fund:
- Evaluations of existing education or treatment interventions;
- Supplements or additional funding to projects with existing funding;
- Market research (e.g., to determine the need for a particular innovation);
- Approaches that are focused on potential drug therapy or intraocular implant approaches;
- Applications from outside the U.S.

The RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF Award is intended to provide seed funding for innovative, cutting-edge, collaborative research which demonstrates out-of-the-box thinking and approaches that are mindful of the needs of low vision patients. Proposed research should have the potential to significantly advance the field.
The proposed research cannot be funded – previously or currently – by NEI, NIH, or other federal funders, although modest initial funding by private funders/foundations is acceptable. The purpose of the award is to serve as a catalyst to a novel approach to a problem.

There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted from any one institution.

Candidates receiving the highest scores on their preliminary application submissions will be asked to submit full applications which may ask for pilot data to show feasibility at that time. Candidates will be notified of initial screening results and the requirements for final application by January 6, 2017.

Awardees will be required to expend the award within no more than two (2) years.

ELIGIBILITY
- Researchers (regardless of academic rank) at U.S.-based higher education and/or advanced academic institutions, with applications particularly encouraged from researchers within departments/schools of Ophthalmology, Optometry, Psychology, Engineering, Computer Science, Neuroscience, and other relevant disciplines.
- Particularly encourage applications that involve interdisciplinary collaboration among engineers, ophthalmologists/optometrists, and rehabilitation specialists (e.g., OTs, VRT’s, special education professionals, etc.) that bring together technical knowledge and the lived experience of persons with low vision. For these interdisciplinary collaborations, some academic institutions may seek non-academic partners, although only academic institutions may serve as the grantee.
- Institutions must be non-profit as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) with 501(c)3 status, or other Federal exempt status.
- Any part of the RPB grant not earmarked for salary should help equip and staff the awardee’s lab and fund research efforts. The grant cannot replace salary support currently derived from other sources.
- Candidates must be either U.S. citizens or permanent residents (green card holder) by the preliminary application deadline. This award must remain free of institutional overhead and is non-transferable to other individuals or other institutions. Should the awardee leave the institution, the institution must return any unspent funds. Any equipment purchased with these funds is the property of the institution. Complete grant stipulations are included in award letters.

REPORTING
- RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF require a brief quarterly interim report while the award is active. A final report is required once funds are expended.
- Failure to properly report and credit research funded by RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF puts your grant at risk for termination.

PRELIMINARY APPLICATION SUBMISSION
We will accept applications via the password-protected page on RPB’s web site that has been established for application submission. While a candidate may submit more than one application, each application, including all supporting documentation, must be uploaded separately. This upload must be received no later than 11:59pm ET on October 17, 2016.
- Go to https://sites.rpbusa.org/low-vision/ to log in before you can upload an application.
- Enter the password: low vision
Click on the “Upload Innovations in Technology Low Vision Research Award Application” button to go to the upload form if you are applying for the Award.

Once you are on the upload form, enter your email address in the “From email” field.

Upload your application and supporting documentation by browsing for them on your computer using the “Browse” button on the form.

Use the Message box to add additional information, if any.

Before clicking “SendThisFile” to send your submission, check that the information is complete.

Click the “SendThisFile” button to send your application and supporting documentation.

This upload must include three separate documents:

Two signed, completed preliminary application forms:
1. One as a PDF document.
2. One as a Word document.

The third document must include, in PDF, in this order:

- The candidate’s abbreviated CV or NIH-style biosketch, in PDF; limit three (3) pages. Information must include a list of all current and pending funding as well as funding terminated in the last three (3) years.

- The candidate’s signed, detailed scientific statement, in PDF, outlining the research and specific objectives to be pursued if granted. Statement should include:
  - Program/project description;
  - The need to be addressed and the population to be served and potential number of people to be impacted;
  - How is the project innovative in its development of technology to address the needs of persons with low vision;
  - How the program/project will be implemented over the grant period, and how success will be measured;
  - Description of the collaboration and professionals involved that will couple technical expertise with real-life experiences with persons with low vision;
  - Arguments that show long-term sustainability is possible.

Limit statement to three (3) pages including references. Entire statement should not exceed three (3) pages. Font size 10-point or higher.

- Institution’s IRS 501c(3) Letter of Determination or other Federal determination letter and Federal Employment Identification Number, in PDF.
REVIEW PROCESS
The Review Committee will review all timely, satisfactorily completed preliminary application submissions. The highest scoring institutions will be asked to submit full proposals for the grant. Notification of eligibility will occur by January 6, 2017.

The members of the Review Committee are:

- **Aries Arditi, PhD**, Founder & Principal Scientist, Visibility Metrics, LLC, Chappaqua, NY (Committee co-Chair)
- **Sheila West, PhD**, Professor, Departments of Epidemiology and Ophthalmology and Vice Chair for Research, JHU Wilmer Eye Institute (Committee co-Chair and member of the RPB SAP)
- **Suleiman Alibhai, OD, FAAO**, Owner and Director, Low Vision Services, PLC Alexandria, VA & Bethesda, MD
- **Ian L. Bailey, OD, MS, FBCO, FAAO**, Professor of Optometry and Vision Science, University of California-Berkeley School of Optometry
- **Gary Rubin, PhD**, Helen Keller Professor of Visual Function & Rehabilitation, University College London Institute of Ophthalmology

Materials received after the deadline will not be accepted. Incomplete submissions are not forwarded to the Review Committee and are automatically declined. Notify Pattie Moran at 646-892-9566 or pmoran@rpbusa.org if there are any changes to the status of major pending grants. Do not include binders, manuscripts, reprints, or any information not required. However, the Review Committee reserves the right to request additional information.

Granting of awards is at the full discretion of RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF; we reserve the right to not make any award, based on submissions.

For more information contact Pattie Moran, Grants Administrator at RPB at 646-892-9566 or pmoran@rpbusa.org. Applicants should not contact Review Committee members directly regarding potential or submitted applications.
RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF Innovations in Technology Low Vision Research Award

PRELIMINARY APPLICATION PREPARATION
Though the preliminary application is self-explanatory, we’ve included information below to assist you in preparing and completing the RPB/RDPFS and RPB/CTAF Innovations in Technology Low Vision Research Award Preliminary Application.

Do not change formatting. Please keep pagination the same. If necessary, abbreviate answers to fit allotted space. Please provide responses in Arial 9 (font/size). Do not change the font/size of the actual questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Information:</th>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Enter Candidate’s name; include degrees.</td>
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<td>➢ Place X to the right of your selection for the following (see example below):</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Citizen          Permanent Resident (Green Card Holder) X</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Enter name of institution and department Chair or supervisor; include degrees.</td>
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<td>➢ Enter Candidate’s current primary appointment, including degrees, academic title and department.</td>
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<th>Title of Proposed Research:</th>
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<th>Proposed Research Summary:</th>
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<td>➢ Do not go beyond allotted space.</td>
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<td>➢ <em>In layman’s terms</em>, include scientific accomplishments, clinical relevance, current research activities, and aspirations. Be sure your response includes one or two sentences outlining the research and objectives to be pursued. Do not duplicate biosketch/CV information, awards, pubs, etc.</td>
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<th>Anticipated Use of RPB Funding:</th>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Include percentage and description of grant use. Use brief descriptions, e.g., salary supplement for PI; partial salary for assistants; equipment; consumables; etc.</td>
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<td>➢ Two awards, up to $100,000 each, are available. We will consider research projects with budgets less than $100,000.</td>
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<th>Publications:</th>
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<td>➢ Candidate’s Publications Pertaining to Proposed Research: Provide number of peer-reviewed publications; number of other publications; and the total number of publications pertaining to proposed research (number of peer-reviewed and other publications should equal total number of publications).</td>
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<th>Agreement:</th>
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<td>➢ Department Chair or Supervisor and Candidate to sign.</td>
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<td>➢ Enter contact information for department Chair or Supervisor; include degrees.</td>
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<td>➢ Enter contact information of Research Grant Administrator, if applicable; include degrees.</td>
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<td>➢ Complete contact information for Candidate; include degrees.</td>
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