



RPB UNRESTRICTED GRANT

2025 Guidelines

DEADLINES*

January 10, 2025 (awarded in June)

July 1, 2025 (awarded in December)

**If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday the deadline is the following business day.*

DESCRIPTION

RPB Unrestricted Grants: \$115,000 a year.

Unrestricted Grants provide opportunities for creative planning and maximum flexibility in developing and expanding eye research programs. Funds automatically renew for five years unless the ophthalmology Chair steps down from the chairmanship or RPB requires the department to re-apply earlier. At the fifth year, the department will be required to re-apply for an Unrestricted Grant.

Unrestricted Grants may only be used for the following:

- salaries (new or existing research faculty, not administrative support staff)
- equipment (new purchase)
- small pilot research in vision science
- research support (including lab supplies, consumables, data gathering, statistical analysis, etc.)
- travel related to research

Grant disbursement will be made electronically. **All RPB grants must remain free of institutional overhead and indirect costs.**

Should the Chair step down from the chairmanship, RPB may provide one additional payment before the grant is terminated. An acting or interim Chair cannot re-apply for continued support.

Should a department have a balance on a previously approved RPB Unrestricted Grant AND the department's subsequent Unrestricted Grant submission is declined, the department will be required to expend the balance of the previously approved grant in two (2) years.

ELIGIBILITY

- The Unrestricted Grant is intended for current RPB Unrestricted Grantee departments or RPB supported departments whose Challenge Grants are ending. Departments not supported by an Unrestricted Grant are strongly encouraged to apply for RPB's Challenge Grant.
- Permanent, full-time ophthalmology department Chairs at university-connected medical schools may apply for the RPB Unrestricted Grant. Interim or acting Chairs cannot apply for the Unrestricted Grant.
- New Chairs at current RPB supported departments should speak with RPB to discuss the reapplication process for their department (contact MariaClaudia Lora-Montano at mlora@rpbusa.org). We suggest that new Chairs be active for at least six months but preferably twelve months prior to submitting an application – if rejected the Chair must wait two years before reapplying.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All reporting requirements relate to research conducted with the Unrestricted Grant:

- Summary report (annually, due each November while the award is active).
- Bibliography (annually, due each January while the award is active).
- Photo (annually, due each January).
- Financial report (annually, due each January while the award is active).

If awarded, information on fulfilling the above requirements will be sent under separate cover. Failure to properly report and credit research funded by RPB places the grant at risk for termination.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

RPB will accept applications and *most* supporting documentation via the password-protected page on RPB's website that has been established for application submission. Please note only one (1) upload action, with application and all applicable supporting documentation, will be accepted per department. This upload must be received **no later than 11:59pm ET on the deadline date**.

- Go to www.rpbusa.org to log in.
- Enter the password: **Research** (not case sensitive)
- Click on the "Upload Grant Application" button to go to the upload form.
- 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.

DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION

The single upload action must include **only four (4)** separate documents:

1. Signed, completed application form, in a **Word** document. – **Make sure ALL SIGNATURES are included!**
2. Chair's letter, biosketches, non-profit determination: As a **single PDF** (not a PDF portfolio), this document must include the below, **in this order**:
 - a. A statement from the Chair, co-signed by the Dean of the medical school. Statement must be on letterhead, signed, in PDF, and addressed to "RPB's Review Committees." Limit eleven (11) pages; font size 10-point or higher. Avoid condensed typeface. Statement must include in this order:
 - i. Brief paragraph on the history and development of the ophthalmology department.
 - ii. Detailed description of the department's current status, including review of:
 1. Current research programs and interests, including the department's top researchers and/or researchers in department's primary research areas.
 2. Facilities, including equipment and technology, for clinical and basic ophthalmic research within the department.
 3. Department's most important collaborations between other departments/centers/etc., within the institution as well as outside of institution, including grants, papers and/or activities. Institution's commitment to the department, including funding (internal institutional and external philanthropic), space allocation, and personnel.
 4. Department's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. *(These efforts are taken very seriously by RPB. Ensure this information is included in your submission.)*
 5. Major achievements from department's last application submission to RPB (if applicable).
 6. Specific description of how RPB funds were used in the last five (5) years (if applicable).

DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION *continued*

- iii. Description of vision research (outside of ophthalmology department) at the institution, including review of:
 - 1. Current inter-departmental and inter-institutional collaborations, with description of top vision researchers from other departments and institutions.
 - 2. Available facilities, including equipment and technology, for vision research.
 - 3. Institution's commitment to vision research as a whole, including funding (internal institutional and external philanthropic), space allocation, and personnel.
- iv. Comprehensive vision statement for the department's future over the next five years. This statement must provide specific benchmarks for each year, with analysis of:
 - 1. Sustainability and/or expansion of existing programs and development of new programs and initiatives, including collaborations both internal and external to the institution.
 - 2. Research and training objectives for department and faculty, including a broad-based mentoring plan for the department's junior faculty.
 - 3. Faculty recruitment plans.
 - 4. Diversity, equity, and inclusion plans for the department. *(These efforts are taken very seriously by RPB. Ensure this information is included in your submission.)*
 - 5. Facility expansion, including new equipment and technology.
 - 6. Financial viability and sustainability of these goals and plans.
 - 7. Specific description of how RPB funds will be used in the next five (5) years.
- v. Provide any additional information, not specifically requested above, which is unique to your department and/or institution, which may affect RPB's review of your application (i.e., industry contracts, intellectual property, high-impact awards, high-impact presentations, etc.) which may help "build your case" and may aid in RPB's review of your application.
- b. NIH-style biosketches for each full-time faculty member, including Chair, in PDF. **DO NOT INCLUDE BIOSKETCHES FOR CLINICAL FACULTY.** Limit five (5) pages for each biosketch. Based on the Master Faculty List, biosketches must be grouped by primary research area and then in alphabetical order by faculty member's last name. Each faculty member, including Chair, must adhere to current NIH format and instructions. **However**, for *Section A, Personal Statement*, provide a summary of the faculty member's current research/work in the department rather than describing the faculty member's research/work as it pertains to this grant request. Biosketches submitted in any other format will be disqualified. Except for clinical faculty, biosketches included in the submission must mirror the Master Faculty List.
- c. Institution's IRS 501c(3) Letter of Determination and Federal Employment Identification Number, in PDF.
- 3. Master Faculty List for Unrestricted Grant: The fourth document is the Master Faculty List of full-time faculty, including Chair **AND CLINICAL FACULTY**, in Excel, with primary appointments in ophthalmology as of application deadline. Do not include individuals with secondary appointments in the ophthalmology department or ophthalmology department residents. Faculty list must be grouped by primary research area and then in alphabetical order by faculty member's last name. **Include clinical faculty, in alphabetical order, at the end of the faculty listing.** Use only the template provided and follow the instructions on the template. Do not alter formatting. Document should print exactly how the template appears. Excluding clinical faculty, the Master Faculty List must mirror the biosketches included in the submission.
- 4. Grant Support List: The fifth document is the Grant Support List of all current and pending NEI and non-NEI funding for the department and the institution, in Excel. Tables to be completed in the document include:
 - Table A: Ophthalmology Department's Current NEI Grant Support
 - Table B: Ophthalmology Department's Current Non-NEI Grant Support
 - Table C: Ophthalmology Department's Pending Grant Support
 - Table D: Institution's Current NEI Grant Support (researchers outside ophthalmology department)
 - Table E: Institution's Current Vision-Related Grant Support (researchers outside ophthalmology department)

Tables A, B, and C should be used to properly complete the summary of the grant support section on page 1 of the application. Do not leave a table blank. If not applicable, indicate N/A.

DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION *continued*

Materials received after the deadline will not be accepted and will render the submission incomplete. Incomplete submissions are not forwarded to RPB's review committees and are automatically declined. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, proposals will be accepted the first following business day. Do not alter application format. Do not include manuscripts, reprints, or any information not required by RPB. **Notify RPB if there are any changes to the status of major pending grants or faculty members or recruits after the application has been submitted.**

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

Any questions, please contact MariaClaudia Lora-Montano at 646-892-9564 or mlora@rpbusa.org.