



Restore Vision 20/20 Initiative: General Guidelines

It is estimated that 1 in 9 Canadians will develop irreversible vision loss by the age of 65. There are no treatments for many of these blinding eye diseases. The Restore Vision 20/20 Initiative aims to change this. In 2017, The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB) is thrilled to announce the **Restore Vision 20/20 Initiative**, which is a new \$2.5 million funding commitment to drive the development of therapies for people living with late-stage retinal degeneration.

Over the past decades, vision research has made great strides forward. Today, more than 250 causative genetic mutations have been linked to retinal degeneration, and advances in stem cell biology and gene editing have opened the door to regenerative medicine approaches to restoring vision. This knowledge presents opportunities to develop an effective therapeutic approach to restore sight.

The goal of Restore Vision 20/20 is to support world-class research teams with the capacity to initiate clinical trials to test innovative treatments for late-stage retinal degeneration. To achieve this goal, Restore Vision 20/20 will fund essential research, facilitate strategic international collaborations and provide financial, technical, administrative, and commercialization support.

The Restore Vision 20/20 grant competition invites teams to apply for up to \$400,000 per year for up to 4 years. Teams must create a 4-year strategic plan, including a high-level, 4-year budget. Funding will be contingent on the team's yearly progress. Please review the Letter of Intent form for further details. The full application package will be forthcoming.

The Restore Vision 20/20 initiative will support teams who are developing a therapeutic approach to treat late-stage retinal degeneration, as experienced by people living with retinitis pigmentosa and other retinal diseases where the loss of photoreceptors leads to blindness.

All proposed projects must be clearly aimed at developing therapies and articulate a path to the clinic. Projects may involve:

- Completion of proof-of-principal experiments in small or large animal models using novel cellular or stem cell related approaches to tissue repair;
- Completion of proof-of-principal experiments in small or large animal models using optogenetics and/or gene therapy approaches to restore vision;
- Completion of proof-of-principal experiments in small or large animal models using a retinal prosthetic approach to restore vision;
- Identification/characterization of compounds/drugs with the potential to treat late-stage retinal degeneration;
- Production of materials necessary for a clinical trial



Institutional partnerships are strongly encouraged but are not required. Please contact the FFB's Director of Research and Education (msunderland@ffb.ca) if you would like to consult with private donors who may be interested in your project.

Commercialization is an important consideration on the path to the clinic. The FFB has developed commercialization partnerships to ensure that successful applicants meet key commercialization milestones. Applicants should consider the following areas in their 4-year research plan toward the clinic:

- Patent and intellectual property
- Technology and manufacturing scale-up
- Regulatory approval (clinical trial application to Health Canada)
- Clinical trials expertise (trial design and protocol, REB, DSMB, screening and recruitment, data management, monitoring, reporting, site management, etc.)
- Industry receptors and/or out-licensing or company creation
- Development of a reasonable reimbursement model
- Engagement of the clinical community for future adoption of technology or therapy

Eligibility and Requirements

- Principle investigator must be based at a Canadian institution
- International co-PIs and collaborators are welcome
- Project should involve a collaboration between scientists, clinicians, and clinician-scientists
- Principle investigators may apply for only one grant per competition

Application and Review Schedule

Deadlines	Activity
April 3, 2017	Deadline to submit Letter of Intent through the ffb.ca portal
April 14, 2017	Applicants informed of eligibility to submit full proposal
July 28, 2017	Deadline to submit Full Proposal through the ffb.ca portal
October 1, 2017	Funding starts