

Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Alcon sponsor XOVA awards ^[1]

Education & Awareness ^[2]

Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Alcon sponsor XOVA awards providing grant funding up to EUR 50,000 for non-profit programs in ophthalmology

- **Life-changing vision: Novartis opens XOVA (eXcellence in Ophthalmology Vision Award) for 2015 entries**
- **XOVA, now in its fifth year, aims to improve eye care worldwide by funding projects expected to significantly impact patients' vision needs**
- **The XOVA program, open to all eye care professionals and institutions, has made a significant impact in the last five years through 21 grants in 16 countries**

2nd March: Novartis is calling for submissions for the 2015 eXcellence in Ophthalmology Vision Award (XOVA), which provides grants to support innovative, sustainable, not-for-profit eye care projects worldwide that typically address the vision needs of underserved populations. Launched in 2010 and co-sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Alcon, XOVA has awarded more than EUR 650,000 for 21 grants in 16 countries. XOVA welcomes entries through April 30, 2015 from all eye care specialists, including trainees and specialist nurses, with the support of their responsible institutions. Applications are made via the XOVA program website <http://www.xovaprogram.org/index.html#apply>. ^[3]

Globally, more than 285 million people live with vision impairment and blindness¹. But, more than 80% of vision problems can be prevented, treated or cured, provided patients have access to treatment¹. XOVA seeks to protect and enhance vision health by empowering leaders and innovators in the fields of ophthalmology and optometry.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Alcon initiated and support the XOVA as part of their commitment to improving eye care around the world.

Impactful projects benefiting patients worldwide

The 2014 XOVA winners comprised five programs: door-to-door screening for glaucoma,

diabetes and hypertension in India; surgery, postoperative care and low vision devices for children and training of a vision professional in eastern Uganda; a hospital operating theater in Myanmar; training and deployment of ophthalmic personnel to support an eye care service in Ethiopia; and clinical and managerial training to enable affordable treatment for diabetic retinopathy patients in Nigeria. In 2011, "Right to Sight", the Irish non-profit organization was selected from over 80 applications throughout Europe, and awarded funding towards a state of the art sustainable cataract surgeon training centre in Rift Valley, Kenya.

Application process and eligibility

The 2015 XOVA applications are open to ophthalmologists, optometrists and allied eye healthcare professionals, including those in training. Applications must be endorsed by a legitimate academic institution (e.g., a university) or organization (e.g., recognized not-for-profit organizations, hospitals and clinics). The XOVA grants are awarded to the employing institutions of the winning applicants. Winners will receive their grants as part of a XOVA ceremony at a medical congress in the Autumn of 2015.

- The XOVA is awarded to eye care professionals and institutions who have devised not-for-profit educational or innovative initiatives;
- These not-for-profit educational or innovative initiatives are expected to have a significant impact on unmet needs in the field of eye care;
- Proposals must indicate how the initiative can be run in the local country using local resources after the funds have been used;
- Proposals must demonstrate with clear plans and examples long-term viability, impact and benefit in the local area.

About Novartis

Novartis provides innovative healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, eye care, cost-saving generic pharmaceuticals, preventive vaccines and over-the-counter products. Novartis is the only global company with leading positions in these areas. Novartis Group companies employ approximately 130,000 full-time-equivalent associates. Novartis products are available in more than 180 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.ie> [4]

About Alcon

Alcon, the global leader in eye care, provides innovative products that enhance quality of life by helping people worldwide see better. Alcon's three businesses, Surgical, Pharmaceutical and Vision Care, offer the widest spectrum of eye care products in the world. Alcon is the second-largest division of the Novartis Group. Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, USA, Alcon has more than 25,000 employees worldwide, operations in 75 countries and products available in 180 markets.

Novartis is on Twitter. Sign up to follow @Novartis at <http://twitter.com/novartis> [5].

Reference

1. International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), WHO Facts Blindness and

Visual Impairment: Global Facts. <http://www.iapb.org/vision-2020/global-facts> ^[6][Accessed February 6, 2015]

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[4] <https://www.novartis.ie/>

[5] <http://twitter.com/novartis>

[6] <http://www.iapb.org/vision-2020/global-facts>