Pediatric Cataract Initiative - Small Research Grant
Request for Proposals
Deadline: October 14, 2011

Introduction
The Bausch + Lomb Early Vision Institute and Lions Clubs International Foundation have partnered since 2010 to support the Pediatric Cataract Initiative (PCI; http://pediatriccataract.org/), a program aimed at improving the quality of eye care for children by helping overcome the debilitating condition of pediatric cataract.

Founded in 1853, Bausch + Lomb is one of the best-known and most respected eye care companies in the world, with its contact lenses and solutions, ophthalmic pharmaceuticals, and ophthalmic surgical products available in approximately 100 countries. The Bausch + Lomb (B+L) Early Vision Institute is a program of the global eye health company which focuses on children’s vision research, treatment, prevention and advocacy. Its first area of focus is pediatric cataract.

The Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is the grant-making body of Lions Clubs International, the world’s largest volunteer service organization. The LCIF SightFirst program, Lions’ flagship initiative, builds comprehensive eye care systems in underserved communities through the delivery of critical eye care services, human resource training and infrastructure development.

To help combat and decrease the number of children affected by pediatric cataract, the PCI supports efforts to:

- Improve understanding of the incidence, causes and treatment of pediatric cataract through a variety of research initiatives
- Increase the capacity of eye care centers, through infrastructure improvements and personnel training, to detect and refer pediatric cataract cases, perform pediatric cataract surgeries and provide follow-up care

Research Objectives
The PCI small research grant of US$50,000 is available to support an experienced individual, institution or organization engaged in applied, basic, clinical or epidemiological research investigating the causes of pediatric cataract, the prevalence or incidence of pediatric cataract in a specific geographic area, and/or improved treatment tools and protocols.
Project types might include, but are not limited to: pilot or feasibility studies, secondary analysis of existing data or small, self-contained research projects which advance work in progress. Priority will be given to proposals which demonstrate potential for future growth, wide geographic application and immediate impact.

Grant Award Information
The PCI offers two small research grants of US$50,000 each to support a qualified individual, institution or organization engaged in a single research project to be completed in no more than 12 months. Subsequent funding is not guaranteed, but may be available based upon the findings of the initial grant project and their relevance to the advancement of PCI priorities.

Eligibility Information
Eligible institutions and organizations must have a proven track record of success and may include: public or state controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, nonprofits, and governmental agencies or institutions of any nation. Eligible individuals or groups of individuals include any person(s) with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research as the Project Director (PD)/Principal Investigator (PI) with his/her organization. Multiple PD/PIs may be designated on the application. Multiple PDs/PIs share the authority and responsibility for directing the project and each is accountable to the PCI for the proper conduct of the project including required reporting.

Proposal Preparation
A Letter of Intent is not required for this grant opportunity. Proposals should include a cover letter with PI/PD contact information and project site location(s). Research plans are restricted to an additional six pages and must include the following information:

- Introduction
- Specific aims
- Research strategy
- Results and analysis plan
- Department resources, collaborators & contractual arrangements
- Multiple PD/PI leadership plan (if applicable)
- Research team bio-sketches
- Literature review, pilot data
- Letters of support
- Publication plan
The proposal budget should accompany the research plan. Cost sharing is not required, but is also not restricted. The PCI small research grant cannot be used for capital improvements or ongoing institutional operating expenses. The budget must be submitted in US dollars and itemized according to the following categories:

- Key Personnel & Participant/Trainee Support Costs
- Equipment – Limited to no more than 1/3 of the total grant
- Travel – Limited to US$2,500
- Other Direct Costs – Materials & Supplies, Publication Costs, Training, Consultant Services, Computer Services, Equipment/Facility Rental

Proposal Submission
Complete proposals should be submitted by October 14, 2011 to the attention of Phillip Albano, Manager, LCIF Sight Programs. Proposals are accepted via e-mail at: phillip.albano@lionsclubs.org or via fax at: 1 630 706-9250. All attachments must be provided in PDF format. Applicants may submit more than one application provided that each is scientifically distinct.

Due Dates
Opening date (earliest date a proposal can be submitted) – September 1, 2011
Application deadline – October 14, 2011
Advisory Council review – late-October - December 2011
Anticipated project/grant start date – January 2012

Proposal Review & Selection
To be eligible for consideration, completed proposals must be submitted no later than October 14, 2011. Proposals will undergo a preliminarily review during which applicants may be asked to follow-up with further detail and/or revisions by a specific deadline. Final review and selection by the PCI Advisory Council will occur at their meeting in late-October 2011.

The grant will be awarded based upon the scientific and technical merit of the proposed project and relevance of the proposed project to PCI priorities. In their evaluation of the proposals, the PCI Advisory Council will consider the two U.S. National Science Board-approved merit review criteria; intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed effort.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?
How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?
What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?
How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society? The PCI may also consider the following criteria of the U.S. National Institutes of Health:

Significance
Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the proposal are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Approach
Are the conceptual or clinical framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well reasoned, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the proposer acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics? For proposals designating multiple PDs/PIs, is the leadership approach, including the designated roles and responsibilities, governance and organizational structure consistent with and justified by the aims of the project and the expertise of each of the PDs/PIs?

Innovation
Is the project original and innovative? For example: Does the project challenge existing paradigms or clinical practice; address an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field? Does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area?

Investigator
Are the PI(s) and other key personnel appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the PI(s) and other researchers? Do the PI(s) and the investigative team bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project (if applicable)?

Environment
Do(es) the scientific environment(s) in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed studies benefit from unique features of the scientific environment(s), or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?
Budget
Does the proposed budget seem reasonable for the requested period of support in relation to the proposed research?

Award Information
A formal Notice of Award will be provided to the grant recipient no later than January 2012. Funding will be awarded in two disbursements, with the second disbursement being sent upon receipt and approval of a mid-term progress and financial report. Subsequent funding is not guaranteed, but may be available based upon the findings of the initial grant project and relevance to the advancement of PCI priorities.

Reporting Requirements
The grant recipient is required to submit a progress report and financial statement at 6 months and a comprehensive final report at project end (12 months). The reports should detail: expenditures, work accomplished, results, problems encountered and mitigating actions taken.

Project Communications
When possible, research findings will be published and made available to ophthalmologists, optometrists and other eye care professionals through seminars, direct mail and professional meetings. All materials suitable for the lay public will be made available and distributed through the B+L and Lions through their websites and at appropriate events. The grant recipient may be required to discuss their research findings with Lions, the media and others as part of the PCI communications plan. Any additional costs for travel would be incurred by the PCI.

For More Information
The PCI welcomes inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals. Please direct questions or comments to the following persons:

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<tr>
<th>Proposal Administration0</th>
<th>Email: <a href="mailto:phillip.albano@lionsclubs.org">phillip.albano@lionsclubs.org</a></th>
<th>Tel: 1 630 468 6895</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phillip Albano, Manager</td>
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<td>Sight Programs, Lions Clubs International Foundation</td>
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<th>Research Objectives</th>
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<td>Dr. G.N. Rao, LV Prasad Eye Institute Chair, PCI Advisory Council</td>
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