

Letter of Intent Guidelines

PRPH2 and Associated Retinal Diseases (PARD) Science Awards - Targeted call for new proposals

The Nixon Visions Foundation, in collaboration with the Foundation Fighting Blindness, has committed funding to advance research towards potential treatments for PRPH2-associated retinal diseases.

The Foundation will make awards for meritorious research proposals that advance our understanding of the biology and pathophysiology of PRPH2 in the retina. To address gaps in knowledge, proposals that focus on the following topics are strongly encouraged:

- Fundamental PRPH2 biology and biochemistry, including, but not limited to:
 - PRPH2 protein-protein interactions
 - The differential role(s) of PRPH2 in rod and cone photoreceptors
- Development of high throughput and/or saturation assays to determine the functional consequences of PRPH2 variants on protein structure and/or function and to assign pathogenicity.
- Creation and characterization of precise, accurate animal models, including, but not limited to:
 - Systematic natural history studies of mouse disease models on standardized genetic backgrounds
 - Generation and characterization of gene-edited large animal disease models
- Studies demonstrating proof-of-concept for therapeutic approaches, particularly mutation-agnostic approaches.
- Improved understanding of disease heterogeneity, through understanding of genotype-phenotype relationships or identification of genetic and/or environmental modifiers

The Foundation Fighting Blindness expects to fund a limited number of PARD Science Awards with an anticipated start date of April 1, 2024. Each award will provide research support up to \$500K.

If you are interested in being considered for an award, submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) and short Curriculum Vitae (5 pages maximum, NIH Biosketch is acceptable) to the Foundation by **September 7, 2023**, via the Foundation's grant application portal (submission details below).

The following sections must be entered into the designated application portal fields:

1. Title of project
2. Why this research is important to and will make a significant difference in achieving the goals of this program.
3. Overall research goals and hypothesis to include the specific aims and rationale proposed for grant funding (it is recommended that the specific aims are listed, and rationale stated)
4. Stage of development
5. Overall description of application or research proposal. Up to 3 figures/tables are permitted but not required. Figures/tables can be uploaded on the figures upload page. .doc or .pdf are acceptable.
6. Reference list
7. Curriculum vitae for each principal investigator (not required for listed collaborators or consultants). 5-page NIH biosketch format is acceptable. Curriculum vitae is not included in word limits.

A budget is not required with the letter of intent.

Use the print application tab to preview your application in pdf format. Your signature will be added to the pdf when the submit application page is completed.

Email confirmation of submitted application will be sent immediately from blindness@onlineapplicationportal.com. Add this address to your safe sender list to avoid emails being sent to your SPAM folder.

Eligibility:

Applicants must hold a Ph.D., M.D., D.M.D., D.V.M., D.O., O.D., or equivalent degree and have a faculty position or equivalent at a domestic or foreign: non-profit organization, or public or private institution, such as a university, college, medical school, hospital, research institute, or laboratory.

Award:

The award is up to \$500,000, dispersed over one to three years. *Projects that are shorter in duration or do not require the full budget are also suitable.* The award may be used to support the salaries of research trainees (graduate students, postdoctoral or clinical fellows), technical staff, and research supplies. Partial support for the Principal Investigators' salary is permitted but is not to exceed **20% of the total annual award. The Foundation Fighting Blindness does not provide funds for equipment or indirect administrative costs.**

Letter of Intent Submission:

Applicants must submit the completed LOI electronically by **September 7, 2023, 11:59PM EST** via the Foundation's Application Portal. Access the Foundation's Application Portal through the website, <https://www.onlineapplicationportal.com/blindness>. Automated acknowledgement of receipt of LOI will be sent upon submission.

Letters of intent will be reviewed for scientific merit and relevance to this program's goal to advance current knowledge for PRPH2-related dystrophies toward translational studies. Letters addressing the targeted area(s) identified above will receive priority consideration. If your letter of intent is selected, the Foundation will contact you to request a full application by October 20, 2023. Full applications will be due on December 20, 2023.

PLEASE USE YOUR OWN EMAIL ADDRESS, IF POSSIBLE, WHEN SUBMITTING A LETTER OF INTENT SO THAT WE CAN INFORM YOU IN A TIMELY FASHION IF YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN SELECTED FOR SUBMISSION OF A FULL PROPOSAL. IN ADDITION, PLEASE ADVISE US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF A CHANGE IN E-MAIL ADDRESS.