



For Immediate Release:
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Arthur Makar, Fight for Sight; Torrey DeKeyser, Eyesight Foundation of Alabama; Dawn Prall George, ED, Macula Vision Research Foundation; Sandra Blackwood, International Retinal Research Foundation, and; Tom Brunner, Glaucoma Research Foundation, were among the leaders funding eye and vision research attending the September RPB meeting in Washington DC.

Vision Research Funding Partnership: *Imagining the Possibilities*

Fight for Sight and nearly two dozen of its colleagues from organizations committed to the advancement of eye research, convened on September 17, 2014, in Washington, DC, to discuss vision research funding and a role for funder collaboration in preventing, treating, and curing vision disorders. The meeting was hosted by Research to Prevent Blindness and was an important first step toward collaborations.

Taking into account organizations' unique priorities, the participants acknowledged that a collective effort based on shared interests could impact vision research and outcomes for patients. Consensus began to build in several areas, including:

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- **advancing the public health agenda**, to address vision problems of the aging US population
- **encouraging funder partnerships** (private/private; public/private), to leverage resources and enable research that no single funder could undertake alone
- **coordinating information**, for the benefit of vision research funders and fundees
- **coordinating and supporting advocacy**, to raise the profile of vision research, increase federal funding for eye research, and drive education of policymakers and the public. Federal funding is a far greater resource than all private funding taken en masse.
- **supporting interdisciplinary research** from within and outside vision research, to promote and accelerate innovation

The convening ended with an expressed interest in exploring collaborative potential. Next steps are:

- preparation of a meeting summary, by RPB and consultant firm Richman Associates, LLC
- envisioning of actionable steps, by subgroups of meeting participants
- coordination of a 2015 follow-on meeting to coincide with advocacy events