



Lions Clubs International Foundation

Core 4 Low Vision Initiative

Grant Criteria and Application Form

The term low vision describes vision disorders that cannot be corrected with medical treatment, surgery or conventional eyeglasses. Causes of vision impairment include diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, macular degeneration and other conditions associated with aging. However, low vision also affects a growing number of children. Treatment of low vision involves the provision of special optical aids and adaptive devices, combined with rehabilitation services, to help individuals maximize their remaining vision.

Unfortunately, the rapidly aging global population and other factors are contributing to a growing prevalence of permanent vision loss. For instance, one in four adults over age 75 in the United States now reports some form of significant vision impairment. The problem of low vision will only worsen because of global increases in life expectancy. Steps to expand low vision care and vision rehabilitation services must be taken now to prevent needless disability for millions of individuals in the coming decade.

Programming Strategies

LCIF's Core 4 grants program offers Lions clubs around the world the opportunity to expand their commitment to supporting low vision services for the visually impaired. Core 4 grants will support projects that pursue one or more of the following program strategies:

➤ **Expanding Low Vision Care and Services to Under-Served Populations**

Improving access to low vision services outside of larger metropolitan areas is a growing concern. Development of traveling low vision services and establishment of community low vision clinics are often necessary to reach under-served populations.

➤ **Increasing Output of Existing Low Vision Clinics**

Many low vision clinics can increase the number of clients served by expanding clinic space, training additional low vision specialists, and strengthening outreach efforts.

➤ **Improving Availability of Affordable Low Vision Aids and Devices**

Advances in computer technology and electronics have resulted in new types of adaptive technologies (e.g., electronic readers) and existing devices have also become more user friendly. Development of equipment loaner pools and low-cost distribution programs will become an ever-important need as the number of visually impaired increases.

➤ **Raising Awareness**

Public education efforts are necessary to inform health care providers and the general public of available low vision services. Quite often, many seniors and children who would benefit from low vision services are not being referred for appropriate care.

➤ **Reaching out to Children**

Children are increasingly impacted by permanent vision loss. Special initiatives are needed to identify children in schools and other institutions in need of low vision therapy and devices.

Programming Criteria & Regulations

In addition to the specific criteria associated with the five strategies above, the following are criteria and regulations that apply across all programming strategies:

Criteria:

Grants shall be considered for projects that:

- a. promote improved access to affordable low vision care and services.
- b. address the specific problems of low vision care and services in the geographic region to be served; projects must benefit a large population.
- c. work closely with established low vision agencies and organizations serving the visually impaired to ensure coordinated and cost-effective approaches.
- d. include the active participation of Lions in several different capacities including, but not limited to: community needs assessment, patient identification and transport, program publicity, fundraising, relations with project partners and management of grant funds.
- e. involve the financial and logistical support of Lions throughout the multiple, single or subdistrict.
- f. possess a high degree of sustainability and reasonably ensure continued operation upon conclusion of LCIF funding.

Regulations:

1. Grant will be accepted from Lions clubs organized at the multiple, single and subdistrict levels; priority will be given to higher-impact projects at the regional or state/province level.
2. Grants can be requested up to US\$200,000, not to exceed more than 75 percent of the total project cost. Priority will be given to projects that employ cost-effective strategies, and thus the upper limit of grant funding should only be requested for projects that will impact a large region (e.g., state or province) or serve a large number of beneficiaries. Applicants must also raise local funding equivalent to 25 percent of the budget.
3. Grants are not available for the operational expenses and salaries of existing low vision programs or services. However, funds are available for the *expansion* of services, including the hiring of low vision specialists, provided that a measurable increase in client caseload will result and that expanded services will continue once grant funding is exhausted.
4. Grants are not available for constructing new low vision clinics at the community level. Space for such clinics can often be made available in existing medical facilities and centers serving the visually impaired. In such cases, grant funds may be used for renovation, equipment and initiation of services. Construction of new low vision clinics will only be considered for larger clinics that will serve as referral centers for a large region, state or province. In all cases, grant funding will only be considered for clinics operated by, or with assistance from, medical or rehabilitation agencies.
5. Requests for LCIF funds must be submitted on a Core 4 grant application form. In the case of multiple district projects, the grant application is to be approved by the council and signed by the council chairman. Applications from single-districts and subdistricts require cabinet approval and the district governor's signature and endorsement.
6. Applications should detail project objectives, operational procedures, time schedules, personnel, volunteer commitment, project partners, publicity and grant management.
7. The multiple, single or subdistrict must ensure the widespread and continued involvement of participating Lions clubs.
8. The appointment of a steering committee, consisting of Lions, local health authorities, and community leaders is required. This committee will oversee and ensure successful implementation of the program.
9. Grants are to be administered by the council chairman or district governor in office at the time of approval. He/she will be responsible for the disbursement of funds and reporting of their use.
10. Grants are not available for clinical or laboratory research.
11. In order to be placed on the agenda, the grant application must be received by LCIF at least 60 days before a scheduled meeting of the board of trustees. The dates of the board meetings and submission deadlines are available from LCIF.

Core 4 Low Vision Initiative Grant Application/Proposal Format Guideline

Instructions:

- Please read the Core 4 Grant Criteria and Regulations for Low-Vision programs before initiating a grant proposal.
- A grant proposal should follow the format below, making reference to the numbered sections as shown below.
- Submit application to the LCIF Grants Department at least 60 days before a LCIF Board of Trustees meeting.
- Send completed grant application, **including the approval signature page**, and supporting documentation to:

Lions Clubs International Foundation
Sight Programs Department
300 22nd Street
Oak Brook, Illinois 60523-8842

Application Format

1. Date prepared:
2. Project title: (e.g. Expansion of Low-vision services MD_____)
3. Multiple District/Single/Sub District:
4. Amount of funds requested (US\$):

Needs Assessment/Current Situation:

5. Please elaborate on critical issues regarding low vision services in the project area, including such issues as barriers to low vision services, resource constraints, lack of awareness, and also any obstacles concerning geographic coverage of services. This section should include a brief overview of existing services in the project area.
6. Provide any available data on the number individuals affected by low vision as well as future forecasts (if available).
7. If the Lions in the region are presently involved in low vision clinics or services, please provide a brief overview of such activities.

Goals and Objectives:

8. Please outline the goals and objectives for the district's plan for expansion and/or enhancement of low-vision services. Ideally, applicants should commit to quantifiable targets for increasing the number of individuals receiving various types of low vision care or education as a result of the project.
9. Review action steps and strategies to reach the above-stated goals and targets. Please be sure to include information on the all aspects of the project, including: planning, staffing, infrastructure and equipment needs, delivery of services.

In addition to the above, the plan should include a time table and schedule for the various action steps.

10. Project management and oversight: Please explain the management structure and responsibilities of Lions and also any non-Lion partners involved in the project. Lions multiple districts or districts that are working in partnership with another organization should complete a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or similar agreement, or sign a letter indicating that an agreement will be executed upon approval of any LCIF funding.
11. Lions involvement and identity: Highlight the various ways in which the volunteer resources of local Lions and clubs will be used to reach the project's objective. Also include plans for for Lions recognition and publicity.

Financial Requirements:

12. Attach project budget that shows both income and expense. Please be sure to list individually all separate sources of funding for the project (e.g., clubs, district, community, other organizations, etc.) Also indicate the status of local funding (e.g., collected, pledged or anticipated amounts). If the budget covers more than one year of activity, then please provide a budget broken down by each year.
13. Budget narrative:
 - Expense: Please list and explain the cost estimates for all project expenses. The explanation or narrative can be included as an attachment to the expense budget.
 - Income: Provide an overview of local sources of funding, including funds anticipated or currently available from Lions clubs, as well as possible non-Lions funding sources.
14. Budget documentation: The grant application should also include appropriate invoices and and cost estimates for equipment items or other capital outlays.

Application Endorsement and Approval Signatures

15. Application endorsement: Applications submitted from a multiple district must be endorsed by the council of governors, and by the district cabinet in the case of subdistrict proposals. Please submit a copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the application was certified. The council chairman/single district governor at the time of grant approval serves as grant administrator. The district/multiple district must also appoint a project chairman to help oversee project implementation.

16. Approval signatures:

To the best of my knowledge, the information submitted is accurate and the need for the project exists as indicated. I endorse this proposal and will do everything in my power to ensure proper and efficient administration of any funds granted, proper accounting and regular reporting to the Lions Clubs International Foundation.

District Governor (only signed in the case of subdistrict grant proposals)

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------------|
| Signature | Print name | District Number |
|-----------|------------|-----------------|

Address

Telephone, fax and e-mail contact information

Council Chairman (must sign for both a subdistrict or multiple district application)

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Signature | Print name | MD Number |
|-----------|------------|-----------|

Address

Telephone, fax and e-mail contact information

Project Chairman

Project Chairman

Address

Telephone, fax and e-mail contact information