



Vodafone Americas Foundation™ Announces Call for Entries for Seventh Annual Wireless Innovation Project

Total Prizes of \$600,000 Awarded to Mobile and Wireless Solutions for Global Community Impact

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — Nov. 19, 2014 – The [Vodafone Americas Foundation](#) today announced its seventh annual Wireless Innovation Project™ (WIP), offering applicants the opportunity to win a total prize fund of \$600,000 for innovative mobile solutions that have high potential to solve critical global issues. The Director of the Vodafone Group Foundation, Andrew Dunnett, officially announced the opening of the competition at the Social Innovation Summit in San Francisco.

Andrew Dunnett said: “Vodafone Americas Foundation’s Wireless Innovation Project recognizes and supports cutting edge mobile and wireless technologies that address critical global community needs. Vodafone invests in 27 foundations and programs across the globe with the goal of improving quality of life and spreading the ‘mobile for good’ message.”

Since its creation in 2009, the Wireless Innovation Project (WIP) has provided funding for a range of mobile and wireless innovations, awarding close to \$3 million in prizes to winners from universities, not-for-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations. Previous winners have gone on to receive additional funding, defined their intellectual property strategy, filed for patents, and commercially launched their innovations, among other notable advancements.

Vodafone Americas Foundation Board of Directors Chairman and President Chuck Pol said: “Vodafone Americas Foundation is seeking the next wave of mobile advancements from multiple sectors – non-profit, academic and business. The distinctive and disruptive ideas can come from anywhere in the world and we hope that our Wireless Innovation Project will kick-start their growth and move them even closer to global impact.”

Vodafone Americas Foundation Director June Sugiyama explained: “Over the past six years, roughly 500 teams have participated in this competition with innovative solutions focusing on education, health, economic development, access to communication, the environment and disaster relief. We’re proud to witness so many of the winning innovations strive to improve economic opportunity and quality of life for people around the globe, especially in developing countries.”

The 2014 WIP winners were [MobileOCT](#), a technology that converts any digital camera into a device that can help early detection of cancer cell growth; [Soko Enterprise Project](#), a mobile tool that enables rural artisans and small businesses manage production and operations, as well as accessing global consumers; and [eyeMITRA](#), a mobile imaging device for the retina that is designed to dramatically improve eye care and reduce cases of blindness, but also help with early detection of disease like diabetes.

The 2011 winning team of SMART Diaphragm, a wireless monitoring system for high-risk pregnancies from the University of California San Francisco, Ob/GYN Dr. Larry Rand, MD, and bioengineers, Drs. Shuvo Roy and Mozziyar Etemadi, was able to utilize the WIP award to further develop their solution. The SMART Diaphragm team went on to win \$2.7 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to expand their study into South Africa, home to one of the highest preterm birth rates in the world.

Dr. Larry Rand, MD stated: “The early support of the Vodafone Americas Foundation helped us begin work on refining and incorporating high-tech sensors into the SMART Diaphragm to detect infection-initiated preterm birth. Globally, nearly one in ten babies are born prematurely, consequently with less chance of survival, but this is often preventable with early detection and treatment.”

Applications will be accepted up until midnight PST on February 27, 2015 and finalists will be announced on March 16, 2015.

Application information

- Applicants compete for first, second and third-place prizes worth \$300,000, \$200,000 and \$100,000, respectively.
- Projects must be at a late stage of research, advanced prototype or field/market test; these can occur during the award period.
- A panel of expert judges from the fields of wireless engineering, international development, social entrepreneurship and business will evaluate the applications.
- The mobile or wireless solution must have the potential to solve issues in the fields of education, health, access to communication, economic development and the environment/disaster relief.

For details about eligibility and the application, visit vodafone-us.com.

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About the Vodafone Americas Foundation

The Vodafone Americas Foundation is part of Vodafone’s global network of 27 foundations. It is affiliated with Vodafone Group. In addition the Wireless Innovation Project, the Vodafone Americas Foundation provides grants in the United States within the three-pillared approach to *Improve People’s Lives, Support the Development Sector and Spark Innovation*.

About Vodafone

Vodafone is one of the world’s largest telecommunications companies and provides a range of services including voice, messaging, data and fixed communications. Vodafone has mobile operations in 26 countries, partners with mobile networks in 55 more, and fixed broadband operations in 17 markets. As of 30 September 2014, Vodafone had 438 million mobile customers and 11 million fixed broadband customers. For more information, please visit: www.vodafone.com.

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