

Media release

Basel, December 15, 2020

**Botond Roska receives Sanford and Susan Greenberg Visionary Prize to End Blindness**

*Professor Botond Roska, Director at the Institute of Molecular and Clinical Ophthalmology Basel (IOB) and Professor at the University of Basel, Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Science, received a Sanford and Susan Greenberg Visionary Prize to End Blindness “for uniquely valuable research having the greatest impact toward advancing restoration of vision in human patients.”*

“I am very honored to have been selected by the Prize committee as a representative of what they regard as «*the most major breakthrough in restoration of vision in human patients*»”, says Botond Roska. “I am proud that our molecular and clinical researchers at IOB are part of this community of purpose. Here in Basel, we keep accelerating progress towards novel therapies for several blinding diseases. The Greenberg Prize helps us in this endeavor and further enlarges our worldwide collaboration with experts working towards the same goal.”

The prize is part of the international [END BLINDNESS BY 20/20 campaign](#), and Greenberg’s life-long mission to prevent people from losing their sight. “I believe that we are so much closer to achieving that goal,” says Sanford D. Greenberg, co-organizer of the prize and chair of the board of governors for the Johns Hopkins University’s Wilmer Eye Institute. “It’s quite extraordinary.”

**About the END BLINDNESS BY 20/20 campaign and award ceremony**

13 pioneering scientists share \$3 million in prizes, for their groundbreaking scientific and medical contributions to eradicate blindness. Prize recipients are being honored in two categories: the Outstanding Achievement Prize, highlighting profound strides toward treating and curing blindness, and The Visionary Prize, providing funding for scientists whose research exhibits significant potential for ending blindness.

Sanford D. Greenberg went blind in 1961 at the age of 19. He then made a vow that for the rest of his life, he would do everything he could to make sure that no one else should go blind. Together with friends he established the award in 2012.

The video of the **award ceremony** is available on [www.EndBlindness2020.com](http://www.EndBlindness2020.com). It features several artists (among them the musicians Art Garfunkel and Diane Schuur), Michael Bloomberg (the former mayor of New York), and footage of the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg (US Supreme Court judge and a longtime supporter of the End Blindness movement), reading from «*Hello Darkness, My Old Friend*», the memoir of END BLINDNESS BY 20/20 co-founder Sanford D. Greenberg, who was a college roommate of Art Garfunkel.

[Read more in National Geographic magazine](#)

[View more videos on the END BLINDNESS BY 20/20 website](#)

**About IOB**

At the **Institute of Molecular and Clinical Ophthalmology Basel (IOB)**, basic researchers and clinicians work hand in hand to advance the understanding of vision and its diseases, and to develop new therapies for vision loss. IOB started its operations in 2018.

The institute is constituted as a foundation, granting academic freedom to its scientists. Founding partners are the University Hospital Basel, the University of Basel and Novartis. The Canton of Basel-Stadt has granted the institute substantial financial support. [www.iob.ch](http://www.iob.ch)

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