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2022 Champalimaud Vision Award recognises Gerrit Melles and Claes Dohlman for the research and treatment of Corneal Diseases

- The world's largest award in the field of Vision, worth 1 million euros, recognises fundamental work on the treatment of diseases of the cornea, the transparent outer layer of the eye;
- Gerrit Melles (Netherlands) and Claes Dohlman (Sweden) are the winners of the 2022 edition of the award;
- The winners' work has allowed the treatment of blindness for millions of people across the world.

Lisbon, Portugal – September 15, 2022 – The 2022 edition of the Champalimaud Vision Award recognises Gerrit Melles (Netherlands) and Claes Dohlman (Sweden) for their groundbreaking research and treatment of corneal diseases, resulting in the restoration of vision for millions of people, while also preventing others from going blind in the future.

For many years, corneal injuries or disorders have been one of the leading causes of blindness across the world. The two physician-scientists have decisively changed and accelerated the path to the treatment of these problems. A deeper understanding of the transparent outer layer of the eye, as well as the possibility of ensuring an improved and more cost-effective approach to corneal surgery and transplantation, are essential to tackle this plight.

Gerrit Melles, from the Netherlands Institute for Innovative Ocular Surgery in Rotterdam, has revolutionised the surgical treatment of corneal disease. The work developed by the medical scientist has brought extraordinary contributions that have transformed corneal surgery, giving hope and quality of life to millions of people. Until alternative approaches were developed, complications that required additional treatments often appeared, which in turn caused glaucoma among other serious problems. His surgical approaches greatly accelerated visual rehabilitation and lowered the risk of complications. The techniques developed by Dr. Melles in the last 20 years represent the majority of these surgeries in different countries and are expanding all over the world.

Claes H. Dohlman, M.D., Ph.D. of Massachusetts Eye and Ear, Harvard Medical School Department of Ophthalmology, has transformed the way medicine understands the cornea, by developing several innovative treatments. The long-term research of Dr. Dohlman to develop an artificial cornea, especially for patients whose eyes were too damaged to benefit from a traditional donor transplant, led to the development of the so-called “Boston Cornea” (“KPro”), which is now used globally. It is estimated that over 700 of the world's leading corneal specialists have been trained by Dr. Dohlman, who has made major contributions to nearly every aspect of today's understanding of the cornea.



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About the António Champalimaud Vision Award

The António Champalimaud Vision Award was launched in 2006 and is supported by the World Health Organisation's 'Vision 2020 – The Right to Sight' program. The award, worth 1 million Euros, is the largest in the world in the area of Vision. In odd-numbered years, the Award recognises work developed on the ground by institutions in the prevention of and fight against blindness and vision disorders, mainly in developing countries. In even-numbered years, the Award goes to far-reaching scientific research in the area of vision. The Award Jury comprises international scientists and prominent public figures involved in the fight against the problems experienced in developing countries.