

# A VISIONARY PARTNERSHIP, CONTINUED

Headquartered in Germany, Heidelberg Engineering's imaging technologies are used around the world to assist in disease detection, management and the prevention of the most common causes of blindness.

When the late Dr. Gerhard Zinser, Heidelberg Engineering's Co-Founder, learned of the world-class ophthalmological research happening at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine nearly 30 years ago, he knew this was something he and his company had to get behind. A strong partnership ensued almost immediately between DMRF and Heidelberg Engineering, when Dr. Zinser and the company made a donation to Dr. Balwantray Chauhan's leading-edge research in clinical and experimental glaucoma at Dalhousie. After years of steadfast support, DMRF was thrilled to announce last year that Heidelberg Engineering had pledged another five-years of support to Dr. Chauhan's lab.



“With continued efforts, we are working to be able to image individual neurons in the eye with unprecedented resolution. This will have wide-ranging benefits not only for the field of ophthalmology, but for neuroscience as well, with the eye being a very important part of the brain.”

– Dr. Balwantray Chauhan, Mathers Professor and Research Director of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences; Professor of Physiology and Biophysics, Dalhousie University



“The eye is an exquisitely complex organ, but is also easily accessible for imaging. This allows us to follow changes in diseases over time without performing invasive procedures. My research interest is developing imaging techniques, for better disease detection and prevention.”

– Dr. Corey Smith, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, Dalhousie University

Already, Heidelberg Engineering’s renewed support has helped drive two major projects in Dr. Chauhan’s lab. The first project is related to progression in glaucoma—a pervasive eye disease that involves damage to the optic nerve—while the second aims to define phenotypes of the normal optic nerve head in a global study, with collaborators around the world. Gains are being made everyday in Dr. Chauhan’s lab, including the discovery of new imaging targets in the eye that have unraveled an important series of risk factors to explain why patients progress.

Beyond fostering the growth of existing research, support from Heidelberg Engineering has also expanded research capacity by providing funding for new trainees. In particular, the company’s recent pledge has allowed for the creation of the Dr. Gerhard Zinser Postdoctoral Fellowship in Ophthalmology, a prestigious position in honour of the man who contributed much to the field, and who championed this wonderful partnership many years ago. Dr. Corey Smith, a former PhD trainee in Dr. Chauhan’s lab, will take up this position beginning September 2019. In this role, Dr. Smith will build on his impressive PhD work involving new techniques to image the eye, while bringing a unique perspective to vision and eye research through a multidisciplinary background in biophysics, engineering and physiology.

As they work to uncover the wealth of data that lies in the eyes through advanced imaging techniques, Dr. Chauhan and his team are grateful to Heidelberg Engineering and DMRF for their tremendous and continued support.