

2nd CHALLENGES Workshop – December 6th, 2013 - Boston

Within the program CHALLENGES, the Andrea Bocelli Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have organized a workshop to answer the following question: “Is it possible for visually impaired people, through technology and science, to live, work and socialize more independently?”

The objective of the workshop is to catalyze a dialogue among Italian and American scientists of Neuroscience and Information Technology who have been invited to participate in this multidisciplinary group of excellence in order to exchange their achievements, lay new bridges among the two cultures and find a new understanding to the complex challenge of enabling blind people to increase their independence and social inclusion. This workshop has been included in the 2013 Year of Italian Culture in United States and sponsored by the Italian Foreign Affairs Ministry.

It will be an opportunity to exchange scientific ideas and a stimulus for the development of technological solutions that can help visually impaired people in their daily lives by facilitating their independence and integration into the world of work and social activity with greater autonomy. The 2nd ABF CHALLENGES Workshop will bring together multi-disciplinary scientists that are outstanding in their fields and enable them to share results and ideas and together find a new understanding.

Researchers have taken a variety of approaches to enabling greater independence and social participation among blind people. At the workshop, each scientist will give a short lecture on his/her efforts and perspective. Several studies will be presented concerning: the neurological aspects of vision; retinal prostheses; assistive technologies to help blind people move safely through the world, read signs, and be more aware of who is around them; and games and tools to help blind children. Furthermore answers to the questions of what is vision without sight, and what is vision in terms of perceptual and cognitive function for the blind, will be discussed. Each scientist approaches the problem from a particular perspective, but each is answering some aspect of these questions.

During a final panel section, the group will discuss how to achieve a new and unique multidisciplinary understanding of the issue. An international group of scientists will discuss the importance of technology and neuroscience to the prospects of greater integration of people with disabilities into society.



Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology



The results of the multidisciplinary MIT Fifth Sense project will be presented. This project, developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, led by Professor Seth Teller of the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL), and founded by ABF, has the ambitious goal of providing key functions of the vision to blind people, increasing the independence with which each blind user can safely move through the world, work, find offices and shops, read signs, and recognize and find people, in short, to enjoy a more independent life and set of social relationships.

The opening will be entrusted to master Andrea Bocelli who is the creator and the inspired soul of the Foundation and who has proposed several possible directions in which technology, research, and finally commercial development may be directed.

As special guests, several Research Organizations will exhibit their work.

For further information and detailed workshop and panel materials, please contact: <mailto:segreteria@andreabocellifoundation.org> or office@andreabocellifoundation.org

The event web site is www.abfmit2013.com.