



AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards for Excellence in Engineering Design To Improve the Quality of Life of People Living with ALS**

- **Principal Award (\$5,000)**
- **Award of Distinction (\$2,500)**
- **Innovation Award (\$1,000)**

The ALS Society of British Columbia ('the Society') has established three Awards to encourage and recognize innovation in technology to substantially improve the quality of life of people living with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease). Students at the undergraduate or graduate level in engineering or a related discipline at a post-secondary institution in British Columbia or elsewhere in Canada are eligible for the Awards. Students may be considered individually or as a team. Mentor Awards may also be given to faculty supervising students who win awards.

Award winners will be selected by an independent Selection Committee established by the ALS Society of BC and may include: two people living with ALS; one ALS caregiver; one ALS therapist; one ALS specialist physician; one executive from the medical device industry; one engineering design professor; and one director of the ALS Society of BC. Awards will be made at a special meeting of the Society, to which winners and mentors will be invited.

ALS is a rapidly progressive, neuromuscular disease. It attacks the motor neurons that transmit electrical impulses from the brain to the voluntary muscles in the body. When these muscles fail to receive messages, they lose strength, atrophy and die. ALS can hit anyone at any, time regardless of age, gender, or ethnic origin. The average life expectancy after diagnosis is 3 to 5 years. ALS does not affect the senses; only rarely does it affect the mind. In 90% of cases, it strikes people with no family history of the disease. Further information about ALS and about the Society can be found by visiting [www.alsbc.ca](http://www.alsbc.ca)

Several high-priority areas of need for innovation have been identified, and they are summarized in a companion document entitled "ALS Design Project Ideas and Outlines- August 1, 2009" These suggestions are not meant to be exclusive, but do represent important areas of need for new designs and new technologies to improve the quality of life of those living with ALS.

## **Terms and Conditions:**

1. Although the Awards are intended to appeal primarily to engineering design students, any non-engineering or non-student group or individual may independently apply for an Award in any of the the three above areas of needed innovation.
2. For interested engineering students and student design teams, upon request the Society is prepared to act as the client, and in that capacity may provide assistance including the following. In-depth descriptions of the need for innovation in the three identified areas may be provided. ALS specialists and patients may be made available for discussions, progress reviews and ongoing evaluations. Draft functional specifications and background materials assembled by the Society in each of the three areas may also be made available upon request. Access to related equipment may also be provided as practicable. Funds for needed materials and supplies, to a reasonable level agreed in advance, will be provided by the Society.
3. **Applications for Awards** must be received by **March 31, 2010**, and must relate to a prototype suitable for demonstration and use by a person living with ALS, to show how it may improve the quality of life. The demonstratable prototype must be associated with technical specifications and a detailed engineering description to be made available for review by the evaluation committee prior to demonstration. Demonstrations of prototypes to the Selection Committee must be completed by **April 30, 2010**.
4. **Award winners** will be selected by the Selection Committee before April 30, 2010. The Selection Committee reserves the right to make no Award in one or more categories. Decisions of the Selection Committee are final and cannot be appealed.
5. The Society wishes to have winning innovations disseminated widely within the ALS community. To enhance the likelihood of such dissemination, the Society agrees that any group or individual submitting an application for an Award retains all rights to intellectual property associated with their innovation if the Society has not acted as the client as described above. Where the Society has acted as the client for students as described above, students must agree to assign to the Society all intellectual property rights associated with their innovation. The Society will make best efforts to involve the students in any further development, evaluation and dissemination of winning innovations, and will acknowledge and recognize the students' role in those innovations.

### **For General information, Contact:**

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### **For Technical Information, or, to submit an application, Contact:**

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