



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Hearing Industry Research Consortium Announces First Grant Recipients

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***Two Winners Will Receive \$150,000 Each for Research on  
Advancing Interaction of Cognition and Hearing Aids***

**MINNEAPOLIS, May 20, 2013** – The **Hearing Industry Research Consortium** (IRC) is excited to announce the results of its first public Request For grant Proposals (RFP). Piers Dawes, Ph.D., Research Fellow at the University of Manchester, and Andrea Pittman, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Arizona State University, were selected to each receive \$150,000 for their research proposals that are aimed to advance the understanding of the interaction between cognition and hearing aids.

Formed in 2012, the IRC is made up of the heads of research from the top hearing aid manufacturers in the world with the purpose of creating research that will benefit the hearing aid industry as a whole.

The IRC received more than fifteen outstanding grant proposals after **announcing** the grant and formation of the consortium last August at the International Hearing Aid Research Conference in Lake Tahoe, California.

Dawes' research will focus on "Tuning of auditory attention: the importance for hearing aid acclimatization and benefit." "Hearing loss is very common and leads to difficulties with communication, social isolation, depression, poor general health and possibly cognitive decline," said Dawes. "One reason for the low use of hearing aids is problems adjusting to listening with hearing aids. We are very excited by our new IRC-funded research because we think this research will address a key reason why some people

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struggle to adjust to hearing aids. The research could have a big impact in improving adjustment to hearing aids, increasing benefit and improving quality of life.”

Pittman’s research will examine “Assessing advanced hearing aid features using behavioral tasks that vary in cognitive demand.” “We believe that the formation of an Industry Research Consortium is a bold and innovative move by the major hearing aid manufacturers to advance the science and outcomes of hearing technology,” said Pittman. “We look forward to collaborating with these companies as we examine the benefits of advanced hearing aid features to the cognitive demands of children and adults with hearing loss.”

“Our field is just beginning to understand how hearing aids can positively affect cognition and how cognitive ability affects hearing aid benefit,” said Stefan Launer, the 2013 chair of the IRC. “We are excited to be able to advance this important research area through the funding of projects by these two outstanding researchers at world-class universities.”

The IRC will repeat the funding of new research projects every year, with different research goals for each RFP. A new RFP for 2013 will be released this coming summer.

### **About the Hearing Industry Research Consortium**

The Hearing Industry Research Consortium (IRC) is made up of the heads of research from the top hearing aid manufacturers in the world, which include **GN ReSound**, **Oticon**, **Phonak**, **Siemens**, **Starkey Hearing Technologies** and **Widex**. The IRC was created to promote a non-competitive, mutually agreed upon research agenda benefitting the hearing aid industry, its customers and end users. For more information about the Hearing Industry Research Consortium, visit [www.hearingirc.com](http://www.hearingirc.com).

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