**American Printing House for the Blind**

**Handheld Video Magnifier**

**Request for Proposal**

**March 21, 2025**

**American Printing House (APH) seeks a potential partner to create a Handheld Video Magnifier that will be sold by APH. This Handheld Video Magnifier will meet the unique learning needs of APH’s target customers. APH will consider all proposals for existing, modified, or new devices, with the goal of making an affordable, effective, quality device available to customers on or before March 1, 2026. This RFP does not guarantee a contract will be awarded.**

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# Overview of American Printing House for the Blind (APH)

American Printing House for the Blind (APH) was founded in 1858 and today is the largest manufacturer in the world of educational and daily living products and services for students K – 12, as well as adults, who are blind or low vision.

APH elevates the achievements of students and people who are blind or low vision by providing braille products, materials, support services, and specialized technology. We develop innovative solutions that create a gateway to lifelong successful employment, productivity, and independence.

Executive management recognizes that APH has an excellent growth opportunity in its domestic and international sales, and this partnership and resulting product will enhance these efforts as well.

Learn more about APH at [APH.org](http://www.aph.org).

# Our Audience

APH has a very wide range of consumers including students of all ages, service providers, teachers, parents and family members, professionals, adult consumers, organizations, government agencies, and employed personnel. For the purposes of this project, the target markets for the requested Handheld Video Magnifier are as follows:

**Primary market: Students ages 5-18**

The Handheld Video Magnifier’s primary market is comprised of school-age students aged 5 to 18. This dynamic audience encompasses low vision students in school settings, each possessing varying degrees of familiarity with technology, ranging from blooming young novices to tech-savvy teens. Additionally, the educators who guide these students, including Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs), general education teachers, and teacher aides, mirror this spectrum of technological proficiency.

Designed with inclusivity in mind, the Handheld Video Magnifier caters to the unique requirements of this multifaceted demographic. As young learners navigate their educational journeys, the device should provide a versatile platform to access educational materials. For those students with multiple disabilities, the Handheld Video Magnifier's adaptability ensures an accommodating experience.

Teachers and teacher aides, who play a pivotal role in facilitating technology integration, find support in the magnifier's user-friendly, intuitive design, which promotes efficient and organic learning for all degrees of proficiency.

In embracing this primary market, the Handheld Video Magnifier serves as a catalyst for educational opportunities. By prioritizing designs that cater to an array of needs, the device becomes a cornerstone of learning, ensuring young learners of all abilities can explore, engage, and thrive in the classroom and beyond.

**Secondary market: Mature Adults**

The Handheld Video Magnifier also caters to a demographic of mature adults aged 65 and older who are navigating the challenges of vision loss. This audience encompasses individuals who may be encountering vision impairment for the first time, requiring solutions that prioritize ease of use and comfort. The technical proficiency within this group often ranges from novice to moderately experienced, reflecting diverse backgrounds and experiences.

As these mature adults strive to maintain their independence and quality of life, the Handheld Video Magnifier becomes a trusted companion. The device's user-friendly design, including the glare-resistant matte screen, intuitive controls, and high-contrast color modes, ensures a seamless experience for individuals who may not have extensive technical training. With varying degrees of access to support systems, the Handheld Video Magnifier's intuitive interface empowers them to navigate technology confidently, fostering a sense of autonomy.

The Handheld Video Magnifier is not just a tool; it's an instrument of empowerment that facilitates tasks such as reading, staying connected, and engaging with the world. By catering to the specific needs and experiences of older adults, the magnifier becomes an essential bridge between technology and the desire to maintain an independent and fulfilling lifestyle.

**Tertiary market: College Students and Working Adults**

The Handheld Video Magnifier also serves college age and working adults who are seeking innovative solutions to navigate challenges posed by low vision. This demographic, typically ranging from their late teens to mid-thirties, encompasses a range of individuals who are actively engaged in pursuing education, professional growth, and personal development. Many within this group may be juggling multiple responsibilities, such as attending classes, working, and managing personal commitments.

For college students, the Handheld Video Magnifier offers a discreet and portable tool to enhance their learning experiences. Whether in lecture halls, libraries, or study sessions, the features ensure they can comfortably access and review course materials. The Handheld Video Magnifier becomes a valuable ally in their pursuit of knowledge, fostering independence and confidence in their studies. Working adults also benefit from the Handheld Magnifier's ability to facilitate productivity and independence in various professional settings.

Purchasers of the Handheld Video Magnifier are often not the market end users and may include schools, instructional materials centers, non-profit organizations, and ex-officio trustees, as well as disability offices and vocational rehabilitation programs.

# The APH Low Vision Roadmap

APH is pioneering a Low Vision Roadmap built on the philosophy that accessible technology is not one-size-fits-all. We are committed to serving users from all aspects of life. To fulfill the requirements of a modern userbase, we are developing an array of cutting-edge tools, from spot reading solutions to comprehensive learning management systems and software suites. Our products are designed to push the boundaries of accessibility and inclusion, targeting users of all ages and catering to the needs of both low vision users and those with multiple disabilities.

APH supports the creation of a global low vision technology community where companies, agencies, and educators work together to provide students and adults with quality low vision magnification products that meet and anticipate their needs, are affordable, and employ technology and innovation to improve the likelihood of school, college, work, and lifetime success.

The roadmap for the future of low vision technology seeks to provide our customers with a user experience that is customized, anticipates their current and future needs, meets their present and future learning goals, and considerably improves quality of life.

## APH Low Vision Roadmap Impacts

* Positively impact overall student educational performance in the classroom
* Improve student access and mainstream technology skills
* Improve timeliness and quality of student low vision assessment
* Improve teacher low vision understanding and access technology skills
* Engage more students with multiple disabilities in utilizing low vision technology
* Advance low vision magnification technology
* Influence pricing in the low vision market
* Influence innovation in the design of new low vision tools
* Develop a low vision platform that can seamlessly integrate with the online tools used today and, in the future
* Contribute to improved education, employment, and independent living outcomes

## Educational Impacts

* A student’s low vision device, while providing essential magnification, should also teach valuable transferable skills in using many aspects of access and mainstream technology, giving them tools and skills they need to be successful in college and employment.
* A student’s low vision device, by utilizing cutting-edge technology, should also be able to collect, analyze, and report data about the student’s visual acuity changes, providing the teacher or professional with timely essential assessment information that allows for technology plan adjustments before there is learning interruption.
* A student’s low vision device should utilize technology to customize the magnification and learning experience to their visual condition, providing use that is efficient, comfortable, and intuitive. It should also be ergonomically comfortable during periods of extended use.
* A student’s low vision technology device must provide a range of features that are useful for K-12 and college students and provide included access for students with multiple disabilities. Support tools and training for students are a necessity.
* A student’s low vision device, while containing a number of technological features to meet individual needs, must be simple enough for teachers new to access technology to understand and explain. APH is committed to developing an intuitive experience and proper support/training opportunities to ensure that technology is highly usable and has the greatest possible impact.

## Employment Impacts

Adults in vocational rehabilitation programs and students in transition programs must have access to the most sophisticated low vision magnification technology tools available, allowing them to be as efficient in the workplace as their present and future. Adults with low vision seeking employment must be able to demonstrate to potential employers their ability to complete the work required for the job through the ease of use of the advanced low vision magnification technology. Customization options for ease of job performance is essential. Support tools and training for adult consumers are a necessity, as well as on-demand and on-device training.

## Independent Living Impacts

Older adults using low vision technology for independent living should have a variety of options to customize their experience to meet their unique lifestyle. This includes personalized management of the technology experience, portability, and adaptations for physical needs, as well as other identified needs.

## Long-Term Goal

The long-term goal of this road map is to create a portfolio of magnification tools that are flexible and simple enough to be used by anyone. This road map ultimately culminates in the ideal wearable for a hands-free dynamic magnification access experience.

# Proposal Requirements and Preferences

APH is committed to providing our customers with choices in low vision technology to meet individual needs, challenges, and desires. We seek out partners who share our conviction that technology is a tool for empowering individuals to meet their potential in the classroom and beyond. As such, these specifications are meant to illustrate the Handheld Video Magnifier product’s vision, but we welcome creative solutions for realizing this vision. A successful proposal will prove an understanding of the problems faced by low vision users and offer innovative solutions to overcome them.

## General Requirements

* An MSRP of $750 or less to APH; **preferably less**
* Minimum 1-year manufacturer warranty and ongoing maintenance commitment
* Ideal weight of 1.5 lbs. or less

# Specifications

## General

* **Robust casing and durability**: A large portion of users of the Handheld Video Magnifier will be young students of grades five and below. As such, the device will be required to be sleek, yet exceptionally durable. This requirement can be achieved through a robust build of the device itself, an included protective casing, or a combination of the two. Additionally, the screen should be durable and resistant to scratches and cracks. This requirement can be achieved with the screen itself, a protective covering, or a combination of the two.
* **Lightweight, portable, and discreet:** This device will support users on the go and will serve as a point of access for students and adults in their daily lives. To meet these use cases, the magnifier should be lightweight and unobtrusive during travel. Furthermore, it should not draw unwanted attention to the user.
* **Long battery life:** Because this device will accompany students between classes and activities, often without reliable means of charging, the battery life should support periods of extended use. The internal battery should maintain charge for a full school day, allowing the use of the device throughout a school day.
* **Ergonomic grip and control:** Through a combination of on-device grips, a stand, and/or fold out handles, users of all sizes and abilities should have a comfortable experience when using the magnifier with a high degree of fine control. The device should ideally also be suitable to meet the needs of students with lowered physical dexterity and motor control.
* **Affordability:** APH is committed to offering choice in low vision devices to accommodate diverse user needs. Recognizing that cost can be a barrier to access, the handheld video magnifier product line serves as a low-cost, low barrier to entry part of our low vision roadmap. A successful proposal will demonstrate a high degree of value while targeting the cost requirements.
* **Customizable:** This device, while low cost, may have optional accessories available to extend its features and functionality, its appearance, and its ability to accommodate more specific and diverse user needs. Please see “Additional Accessories” section below for some examples.

## Hardware

* Durable, sleek, low-profile outer shell
* 5-inch matte, glare resistant screen
* High contrast physical buttons
	+ Power
* USB-C charging port
* Built in grips and/or a fold out grip handle
* Long battery life with built-in power saving features such as screen dimming and sleep timer
* 16gb or more internal memory; potential expandable with external storage device input
* Weight of less than 1.5 lbs.

## Software

* 2x-30x magnification minimum
* High-contrast live color modes
* Intuitive user interface with easy access to the following:
	+ Zoom level
	+ Brightness level
	+ Color contrast modes.
	+ LED lights
	+ User settings
	+ Line
	+ Mask
	+ Image gallery

## Included Accessories

* Protective carrying case with a strap and extra pocket to store charging cable
* User manual (large print and digital)
* Charging cable
* Screen protector

## Additional Accessories

* Handwriting stand for longer handwriting tasks, for fine motor control, and better stability.
* Replacement cases and other accessories

# Sample Use Cases

Please note that these use cases are based on an ideal vision of a Handheld Magnifier. We recognize that all the features presented may not be incorporated in the first version. Nevertheless, we are committed to working toward this vision and are open to ideas and approaches to solving these problems and more.

## Scenario 1: Ella’s Exploration Adventures:

## Ella, a curious 10-year-old with low vision, embarks on a journey to a science museum with her school. Armed with her Handheld Magnifier, Ella confidently navigates the exhibits. She points the device at intricate dinosaur fossils and marvels as the magnifier lets her zoom in close, revealing minute details, and Ella's newfound confidence in exploring the world shines through.

## Scenario 2: Empowering Academic Excellence

Rachel, a university student with low vision, thrives in her academic pursuits with the support of the Handheld Video Magnifier. During lectures, she discreetly utilizes the magnifier to follow printed PowerPoint presentations and take notes. Its unobtrusive design and long battery life ensure she remains engaged throughout the day. With the magnifier as her ally, Rachel confidently navigates the demanding academic landscape, fulfilling her ambitions.

## Scenario 3: Magnifying the Classroom

Mark is in 2nd grade. He is completing his morning board work using his Handheld Video Magnifier with the handwriting stand to fill in the blanks on the assigned worksheet with this week’s vocabulary words. The magnifier’s simple to use interface allows Mark to work independently and complete his schoolwork just like his classroom peers.

## Scenario 4: Navigating the Urban Landscape

Emily, a visually impaired university student who recently relocated to a busy metropolitan area, navigates the bustling city streets with the help of her Handheld Video Magnifier. Equipped with the lightweight device, she reads bus schedules, street signs, and restaurant menus. The long battery life ensures she can confidently move about without worrying about the device's power running out. The sleek, unassuming device blends in seamlessly with Emily’s sense of style. As she explores new neighborhoods, Emily's independence and confidence grows, and she embraces urban life with open arms.

## Scenario 5: Rose’s Morning Routine

Every so often, Rose sits by her window with her cup of tea. With her Handheld Video Magnifier, she reads the newspaper or gazes at family photos in a photo album. The high-contrast color modes help her see every word and make out ever face clearly, and the ergonomic grip ensures a comfortable hold. She chuckles as she flips through the old photos, thankful to remain connected to cherished memories.

## Scenario 6: William’s Monthly Finances

Throughout his adult life, William has used handwritten checks to pay monthly bills, but after being diagnosed with macular degeneration, this habitual and calming task has become progressively more difficult. Utilizing the Handheld Video Magnifier, William can magnify individual segments of invoices to quickly isolate necessary payment information. He can then position the device to enlarge checks to handwrite the appropriate amounts. William can switch seamlessly between documents and orient them for magnification with both hands available. William finds the simplicity and precision of the Handheld Video Magnifier has made this monthly ritual something he once again enjoys.

# Responses

## Questions and Proposals

Questions may be submitted to Michael Wood at mwood@aph.org and Lee Huffman at lhuffman@aph.org. Questions and answers will be made public on [the APH Business Opportunities webpage](https://www.aph.org/business-opportunities/). Clarification questions by respondents will be posted anonymously on aph.org/business-opportunities/. **All clarification questions must be submitted by April 15, 2025**

APH is looking for detailed proposals of how a respondent would accomplish the goals set forth and prove a willingness to innovate and push magnification technology to new heights. **Written proposals must be submitted by the close of business on April 30, 2025.** No other written proposals will be accepted after this date.

Submit your informational proposal to both: Michael Wood at mwood@aph.org and Lee Huffman at lhuffman@aph.org

Response expectations include:

* Company overview
* Manufacturing process
* How your company would accomplish the goals set forth
* Any omissions made in this RFP
* Additional innovations
* Business terms

**Note**: A successful proposal will not limit its scope to meet the outlined specifications and expectations above but will iterate on these foundational guidelines to prove thoughtful consideration of the difficulties faced by low vision users and offer innovative technological solutions.

## Presentations

At the conclusion of the RFP written proposal process, respondents will be selected based on the quality of their proposal and invited to provide further details of their product via a presentation.

Presentation dates and times may be arranged either virtually or in-person.

Arrangements may need to be made to ship APH staff any technology a respondent feels would supplement their presentation. Accommodations will need to be made to ensure technology arrives prior to the presentation date.

At the conclusion of the presentation process, APH will provide feedback to the respondents on their presentations and technology. If there is mutual interest in pursuing a potential business partnership, those possibilities and next steps will be discussed at this time.

## Estimated Timeline

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| --- | --- |
| April 1, 2025 | RFP issued |
| April 15, 2025 | Respondent questions due to APH (Michael Wood & Lee Huffman) |
| April 25, 2025 | Answers to questions sent to respondents and posted on APH website |
| April 30, 2025 | Written informational proposal due to APH (Michael Wood & Lee Huffman) |
| May 15, 2025 | Vendor and technology presentations/demonstrations |
| May 30, 2025 | Response from APH |

**Any business partnerships which may result from this RFP or an eventual request for quotation, are subject to negotiation and legal review.**

APH looks forward to the opportunity to partner on this incredibly innovative endeavor. Answers to the questions below are appreciated, and APH thanks you for your time and efforts in responding to this RFP. Any responses are not legally binding.