

**20
24**

RNIB See Differently Awards

Supported by players of



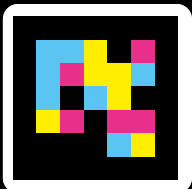
Awarded funds from



**Celebrating outstanding
achievement as we create
a more equal society for
people with sight loss**

Tuesday 21 May 2024

8 Northumberland Avenue, London



The RNIB See Differently Awards 2024



“RNIB is delighted to congratulate all our finalists, winners and everyone who should be recognised for outstanding achievement in building a better world for people with sight loss.”

It's been a very busy couple of years since we last held these awards. Tonight, you'll hear how our nominees have been working hard – in so many different areas – from healthcare to social media influencing to business and employment – to improve things individually and collectively.

Since we last met in this room, RNIB has been working hard too. We've launched the biggest ever advertising campaign in RNIB's history to raise awareness and address misconceptions about people with sight loss.

RNIB Connect Radio has had its own unique celebration; dedicated to blind and partially listeners, it is now in its twenty-first year of keeping people informed, educated, entertained and connected.

Nobody should face a diagnosis alone, we want everyone to have support throughout their sight loss journey – so we've been leading the development of an eyecare support pathway with many key partners from the healthcare sector and VI charities.

Our campaigning is making a real difference. Big successes include the recent abandonment of the rail ticket office closure plan.

All of this will lead to a more inclusive world for people with sight loss, as symbolised by RNIB's new accessible central London office in King's Cross.

Thank you to everyone who is supporting us and to everyone who has made tonight possible; our sponsors, supporters and partners and our expert panel of judges.

Congratulations to all our finalists and winners and everyone who recognised the outstanding efforts we are going to hear about tonight and sent in a nomination. Tonight's event is a way we can acknowledge and showcase real achievement, but we also want it to be a platform for everyone to go forward and continue building a better world with us.

Matt Stringer, CEO of RNIB and Chair of the RNIB See Differently Awards 2024 judging panel

A message from tonight's headline supporter



Players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised more than £10 million for RNIB to boost the lives of people with sight loss, their wellbeing and their communities since 2018.

As we celebrate this funding milestone, we are delighted to be the headline supporter of the RNIB See Differently Awards 2024 and to seize this opportunity to celebrate all the amazing finalists and winners – and their astonishing contributions – tonight.

Everyone should be extremely proud of what they have achieved on behalf of the sight loss community.

We also want to take this chance to raise awareness of the positive impact of the funding raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery. During the time we've supported RNIB – over the last six years – we have seen RNIB's employment service flourish; more people with sight loss than ever before have entered the workforce for the first time. They have been supported as they continue to do the work they want to do and learn new skills.

Players also support frontline services, including RNIB's mental health counselling for people experiencing difficult times; also, they support its community-based teams which connect people with local sight loss communities, providing vital practical and emotional support and helping them build a better future.

Player support has powered RNIB's Reading Services as it has undergone a digital revolution; free for readers, more than 44,000 titles are now available on Talking Books and over one million titles are currently available via the RNIB Bookshare platform.

If you are one of the millions of players of People's Postcode Lottery, you should be proud of the difference you're making to the lives of blind and partially sighted people. For our part, we're very proud to be sharing this celebration with you all.

Laura Chow, Head of Charities at People's Postcode Lottery and member of the RNIB See Differently Awards 2024 judging panel.

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



About the RNIB See Differently Awards

The RNIB See Differently Awards gives us all an opportunity to celebrate the people and organisations who are making the world a better place for people with sight loss. The awards and tonight's event are one way we bring RNIB's mission to life as it places emphasis on the hard work and dedication of people who are using their time and skills to create a better world for blind and partially sighted people.

Each year we run these awards, we receive nominations featuring hundreds of inspiring stories from individuals and organisations across the UK.

And through the awards, all of their stories raise awareness of how so many individual and collective contributions are breaking down barriers within communities and organisations and making everyday life more accessible and inclusive for thousands of people living with sight loss.

Our nominees and winners show how everyone can have an impact – through both big and small actions; we can all do our bit to create a better world for people with sight loss.

Everyone here tonight has played their part and we hope you enjoy the event as well as take this opportunity to grow relationships within the sight loss sector and meet more of our donors and supporters; more of our influencers and ambassadors.

The RNIB See Differently Awards 2024 features seven categories – with winners decided by a panel of judges – recognising and celebrating the time, skills, passion and dedication of people who strive to improve the lives of blind and partially sighted people.

The final category – 6th Duke of Westminster Lifetime Achievement Award – acknowledges an individual for a lifetime of dedication towards breaking down barriers for people with sight loss.

Award categories

- Campaigner of the Year – sponsored by Microsoft
- Eye Care Professional of the Year – supported by Roche
- Best Content Creator of the Year – supported by Netflix
- Team of the Year – sponsored by Meta
- Employer of the Year – sponsored by T&Pm
- Volunteer of the Year – sponsored by Woods Valldata
- Design for Everyone Award – sponsored by Red Bee Media
- 6th Duke of Westminster Lifetime Achievement Award

Meet tonight's host

Jamie MacDonald is an award-winning blind Glaswegian stand-up comedian writer and voice over artist.

Most recently Jamie has been a contestant on BBC One's 'Celebrity Mastermind'. He's been a panellist on BBC 2's 'QI' and appeared multiple times on BBC One's 'Have I Got News for You'. He can be seen as Ronnie Scott in all three series of the hit BBC One Scotland sitcom 'The Scotts'. In 2022 he won the prestigious Grierson award for Best Presenter for the BBC 2 documentary he fronted called 'Blind Ambition'.

He's written and performed a range of BBC Radio 4 and Radio 4 Extra shows. He's spoken at the Oxford Student Union, for the Moth podcast and written articles for The Guardian and Evening Times.

He has brought seven critically acclaimed shows to the Edinburgh Fringe and is currently writing his eighth. He appears in comedy festivals and clubs up and down the country.



Meet the Judges



Matt Stringer,
CEO, RNIB and
chair of the judges

Matt Stringer
joined RNIB as
CEO in 2019.
Over the last five

years he's led the charity through
challenging times, including the
COVID-19 pandemic and cost of
living crisis.

Previous to his role at RNIB, Matt
spent 30 years working in the retail
sector where he held senior leadership
roles for well-known high street
brands including Marks and Spencer,
Carphone Warehouse and Mothercare.

Matt says: "Our See Differently
Awards are a great way to recognise
and celebrate the individuals and
organisations who have dedicated
their skills, passion and time to
improving the lives of blind and
partially sighted people."



Gus Alexiou,
Disability Inclusion
Journalist

Gus Alexiou is a
disability inclusion
journalist for
Forbes covering
everything from assistive technology
to social policy and the arts.

He developed sight loss at the age of
25 due to a medical condition that
damaged his optic nerve. During this
time of transition to living with low
vision, he says RNIB played a critical
role in showing him technology that
could help him – and in introducing
him to other people who had been
through similar experiences.

Gus has also written about disability
for many UK newspapers including The
Times, The Telegraph, The Guardian and
The Independent.



Dr Halima Begum,
CEO, Oxfam GB

Halima has spent
much of her
career working
in international
development
with DFID (now
the Foreign Commonwealth and
Development Office), the British
Council and LEGO Foundation.

Prior to joining Oxfam, Halima was CEO
of the Runnymede Trust think tank and
ActionAid UK.

She serves on the board of Demos and is a member of both ITV and Burberry's Cultural Advisory Councils. Halima is also a recent serving member of the board of the National Council for Civil Liberties (Liberty) and the IPPR Commission on Health and Prosperity, as well as an expert advisor to Cambridge University and Institute for Government's Review of the UK Constitution.



Laura Chow, Head of Charities at People's Postcode Lottery

Laura Chow is a specialist in grant making, non-profit partnerships,

fundraising and volunteer programmes having worked in both non-profit and private sector community roles for more than 20 years in the UK and Asia Pacific.

She is a 2021 Blossom Award Winner (Community category) and was highly commended in the Finance category of the Asian Women of Achievement Awards 2014.

Laura has been Head of Charities at People's Postcode Lottery since 2016. People's Postcode Lottery has managed society lotteries on behalf of charitable bodies since 2005. Players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised more than £1.2 billion for more than 12,000 good causes.



David Clarke, CEO, Paralympics GB

In March 2023, David was appointed as the first disabled CEO of the British Paralympic

Association after spending nearly five years at RNIB where he was Chief Operating Officer.

David joined RNIB as Director of Services in a role which focused on its consumer and commercial services as well as giving people with sight loss access to the information, advice and guidance they need. Previously, David had a highly successful career in the banking sector spanning 24 years.

He is also a former international footballer having represented Great Britain and England's blind football team 144 times – scoring 128 goals.



Professor Leon Davies, President of The College of Optometrists

Leon is an optometrist, Professor of

Optometry and Physiological Optics and Head of the School of Optometry at Aston University and President of The College of Optometrists. He is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company

of Spectacle Makers, and Fellow of The College of Optometrists, the American Academy of Optometry and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Leon is a recipient of the College of Optometrists Research Fellowship Award and the inaugural Neil Charman Medal for research excellence, while also a past Clinical Editor of Optometry Today, and a past Editor-in-Chief of the peer reviewed journal OiP.



Debbie Miller,
Director of
Customer Advice
and Support, RNIB

Debbie is Director of Customer Advice and Support at RNIB and has put customers and their experiences at the heart of organisations for 22 years.

She joined RNIB two years ago and is determined to ensure people affected by sight loss don't feel like they should limit their expectations about the lives they can lead.

Debbie was diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and Uveitis, an associated eye inflammatory condition, when she was five years old; these conditions have led to complex eye conditions and sight loss.

Debbie started her career in online retail before moving to commercial services. She is experienced in Customer Relationship Management.



Stuart Pearce,
Volunteer at RNIB

Stuart is a dedicated full-time volunteer at various charities, including RNIB, where he has volunteered since 2018 giving talks on the various services that RNIB provides.

Stuart has diabetic retinopathy, detached retinas, advanced cataracts and Charles Bonnet Syndrome; he was a heavy goods vehicle driver for 10 years – a job he thoroughly loved – until he had to give it up due to his deteriorating sight.

He is married with four children and six grandchildren. In his spare time, Stuart loves playing cricket and golf; he gets around supported by Olivia, his beloved guide dog. Stuart's voice can be heard in RNIB's new sonic logo.



Fiona Sandford,
CEO, Visionary

Fiona is Chief Executive of the Visionary membership organisation which has more than 110 local visual impairment charities across the UK. Visionary supports its members as they strive to be "the best they can be" ensuring people with sight loss can access information, advice and support locally.

Previously, Fiona was Chief Executive of visual impairment charity Visibility in Scotland. Fiona is also a Trustee of two grant-giving trusts – The Corra Foundation and The Blindcraft Trust.

Fiona has been Chief Executive of Visionary for four years.



Emma Tracey, producer and co-presenter on BBC's Access All: Disability News and Mental Health

Emma hosts Access All, the weekly disability and mental health podcast from BBC News. She can often be heard on The BBC World Service, Radio 4 and 5 Live too.

Moving to London, Emma joined the BBC in 2005 as a researcher and has been producing and presenting podcasts and radio ever since. Emma, who is blind, now lives with her husband and two young boys in Fife, Scotland. She loves wild swimming, singing and a good book.



Our National Finalists

Campaigner of the Year

This award recognises an individual who has campaigned on an issue(s) to improve the day-to-day lives of people with sight loss. Their efforts have positively impacted blind and partially sighted people in the UK.

Sponsored by
Microsoft



Rory McCartney

Rory McCartney is a campaigner living with sight loss in Londonderry, Northern Ireland. He volunteers with RNIB as a Visual Awareness Facilitator, providing training to staff and students at North West Regional College as well as to local businesses. Rory's campaigning includes organising events to raise awareness of the challenges faced by blind and partially sighted people and, in 2023, he got a motion passed by Derry City & Strabane District to make the city a more "visually aware space". Rory is now working with a local stakeholder to make Derry an even safer place for people with sight loss to live, work and visit.



Margaret Rees

Margaret is a campaigner living with retinitis pigmentosa (RP). She has campaigned to improve the accessibility of health information, sharing her experience with the Welsh Government and taking part in patient panels and surveys.

Margaret has also been featured on BBC Cymru, highlighting the difficulties people with sight loss face when accessing public transport. Margaret's campaigning has helped secure commitments from both the Welsh Government and Cardiff City Council to improve the way they support blind and partially sighted people.



Choon Tan

Choon Tan is a campaigner for Glaucoma UK. He raises awareness of glaucoma and the importance of eye care among young people and those of East Asian heritage. Choon has shared his story across a range of media, including a radio broadcast which was heard by more than 42,920,000 people across more than 170 national and regional radio stations. Choon was the 'face' of Glaucoma UK's Glaucoma Awareness Week campaign in 2023, helping it to raise more than £20,000 – its most successful appeal to date. Choon won an award at the Diversity Power List 2023-24.

Our National Finalists

Eye Care Professional of the Year

This award recognises an outstanding health and social care professional. The winner has delivered best quality care supporting each individual's sight loss journey demonstrating commitment to collaboration, and actively engaging others to promote a person-centred approach.

Supported by
Roche



Roche has provided financial support toward the organisation of the 2024 RNIB See Differently Awards, but has had no input into the creation of it.



Dr Zac Koshy

Dr Zac Koshy is a consultant ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal surgeon for Ayrshire & Arran Health Board and Golden Jubilee National Hospital in Glasgow. He helped establish the ECLO service in Ayrshire & Arran and champions a "one stop model for cataract surgery" to truncate the care journey for patients. He chaired the Healthcare Improvement Scotland's Working Group for standards in treatment of cataracts, which aims to improve the delivery of care.

Zac has significant roles in training the next generation of ophthalmologists and, also, provides surgery and training in Ethiopia, Nepal and Belize.



Dr Jane Macnaughton

Dr Jane Macnaughton is a Specialist Optometrist at Leicester Royal Infirmary and a Senior Lecturer at Anglia Ruskin University. She has played a key role in the development of low vision clinics across the UK and supports her NHS patients to live safe and independent lives. She helped create the first training course for ECLOs and has written well-known textbooks for optometry students. At Anglia Ruskin University, Jane teaches 80 students a year. She recently gained a PhD in vision rehabilitation and is currently writing a book about a visually impaired dragon.



Catherine Smith

Catherine Smith manages the Bradford Sensory Needs Service. Catherine oversees a large team, including five vision rehabilitation specialists, supporting them to provide needs assessments, one-to-one support and create non-statutory services to help visually impaired people live well. She has created an accessible grant scheme for peer support groups and is currently creating a grant scheme to enable people with sensory loss to purchase items such as household aids.

Highly commended

Harry Petrushkin



Mr Harry Petrushkin is a consultant ophthalmologist, specialising in uveitis, a type of inflammatory eye disease. He works at Moorfields Eye Hospital and Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Described as “the driving force behind a new treatment for patients with hypotony (low pressure),” Harry has been commended for creating new solutions for existing eye problems, its innovation and impact.

Our National Finalists

Best Content Creator of the Year

This award recognises someone who has created inspiring content using social media to raise awareness and influence social change, making a positive impact on the lives of blind and partially sighted people.

Supported by
Netflix

NETFLIX



Emily Davison

Emily Davison is a journalist and content creator, covering topics such as health and beauty, disability and accessibility. Emily also uses social media to raise awareness of Septo-Optic Dysplasia and Optic Nerve Hyperplasia, both of which she lives with. Emily has thousands of followers across social media and has written for publications such as Cosmopolitan and The Guardian. She has also been featured on broadcast media including Channel 4. Emily receives positive feedback, with one follower stating that Emily's content has "given her a new lease of life".



Seren Jaye

Using the social media handle Otters Have Pockets, 20-year-old Seren Jaye is a TikTok and Instagram influencer. She has more than 740,000 followers on TikTok and around 27,000 Instagram followers. Seren uses social media to challenge misconceptions around sight loss. Her videos have encouraged blind and partially sighted people to take part in parkruns and sighted people to become guides. One of her videos received around 3,800,800 views. Seren has appeared in the media and hopes to become a children's TV presenter.



Molly Watt

Molly Watt is a social media content creator who is living with Usher Syndrome. Using the handle mollywatttalks, Molly has over 40,000 followers across Facebook, X, TikTok and Instagram.

Molly's content documents her life as a deafblind person and highlights the need for – and the benefits of – assistive technology. She uses her platform to tackle misconceptions about deafblindness.

She has also given a TedX talk on the barriers faced by disabled people in the NHS and been retweeted by Apple's Phil Schiller. Molly has appeared in the media numerous times.

Our National Finalists

Team of the Year

This award recognises a team that has made a significant contribution to improving the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted. The winning team has demonstrated excellent teamwork, leadership, collaboration and achievement.

Sponsored by
Meta



SeeAbility's Special Schools Eye Care Team

SeeAbility's Special Schools Eye Care Team holds eye clinics in special schools across London. The team's service was the first of its kind in the UK and last year it performed 2,800 eye tests on children with additional needs. The team's research and practice provided the proof of concept for the Government's roll out of an eye care service for children at special schools across England.



Red Bee Media Audio Description Team

Red Bee Media's Audio Description Team provides audio description for live and pre-recorded television shows and content. In 2023, the team provided more than 10,000 hours of pre-recorded content and live described every episode of the BBC's Strictly Come Dancing as well as Channel 4's Stand Up To Cancer telethon on 3 November. They have also started to recruit people with sight loss to the team. The team won an Entertainment Globalisation Award in 2023 for their audio description of the BBC's Frozen Planet II.



Wolverhampton Wanderers F.C. Access Team

The Wolverhampton Wanderers F.C. Access Team supports fans with sight loss to enjoy football at home and away games. They run guided cane sessions, supports guide dogs in navigating the stadium and has introduced braille and large print into their kiosks and Megastore. Created by the team, the club's matchday audio description commentary packs and audio matchday programme enable fans to enjoy matches and feel "like part of the pack". Wolverhampton Wanderers partnered with RNIB on See Sport Differently, a campaign promoting accessibility and inclusion in sport. The team also gives advice to other clubs seeking to improve accessibility.

Our National Finalists

Employer of the Year

This award recognises an organisation which has demonstrated commitment to providing an accessible and inclusive workplace for blind and partially sighted employees. The winner has demonstrated that they have instilled clear values as an inclusive employer.

Sponsored by
T&Pm



Cadent Gas

Cadent Gas is the UK's largest gas distribution network. Working in partnership with Blind in Business, Cadent has established a pathway into the gas industry for students and young people with vision impairment, involving work experience placements, as well as coaching and mentoring. The partnership is now in its third year.

Working with a visually impaired gamer, Cadent has created a Minecraft game to build safer roadworks. One of the characters has sight loss. The company is working toward achieving RNIB's Visibly Better Employer quality standard.



Tesco

Tesco achieved RNIB's Visibly Better Employer quality standard in April 2022. Since then, it has seen an increase in the number of blind and partially sighted employees working across the business. The company helps colleagues thrive by providing specialist equipment such as tablets and tactile aids. Tesco has a Disability Network to help sighted colleagues understand the lived experience of colleagues with sight loss, as well as a Diverse Talent Community to help blind and partially sighted employees "own their own careers".



Unique Home Care NI

Unique Home Care NI is a domiciliary care provider based in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Nominated by Margaret Taggart, an employee with sight loss, Unique has made its interview process accessible and has tailored training sessions to meet Margaret's needs. By staying in regular contact with Margaret's Employment Advisor, instigating regular catch-up meetings and adapting the way clients are assigned to carers, Unique has helped Margaret grow in confidence and thrive in her career.

Our National Finalists

Volunteer of the Year

This award recognises someone who has selflessly dedicated their time to support the sight loss community with their skills and knowledge-sharing. Their tireless efforts have a positive impact on enabling people with sight loss to live the lives they want to lead.

Sponsored by
Woods Valldata



Anna Cofone

In 2019 hairstylist Anna Cofone founded Hair & Care, an organisation which provides free monthly haircare workshops for blind and partially sighted women and girls.

Anna has sought pro-bono support from large haircare brands so that workshop participants have the tools they need, such as hairdryers. Since becoming a Community Interest Company, Hair & Care has secured several charitable donations. Hair & Care became an affiliate of the British Beauty Council in 2023. This year Anna sponsored an accessible event at London Fashion Week which included audio description. Vogue magazine covered the event.



June Little

June is Chair of Trustees at the Cotswold Listener, a talking news provider serving Gloucestershire and the North Cotswolds, and a Talking News Federation (TNF) Trustee. At the Cotswold Listener, June oversees a team of 60 volunteers who read and distribute the news 51 weeks a year. She runs training workshops and acts as a mentor to volunteers at both the Cotswold Listener and the TNF. June organises TNF roadshows to bring together local talking news providers to share ideas and support one another. She regularly speaks at community events.



Suzie Simons

Suzie Simons is the founder and CEO of Eye Matter, a peer support organisation for blind and partially sighted people. She volunteers full time with Eye Matter, organising hundreds of online and in-person events each year, supporting members and raising awareness and funds for the organisation. In 2023 Suzie secured charitable status for Eye Matter. The charity helps to educate, empower and entertain its members.



Highly commended

Judith Barton

Judith Barton has volunteered with SeeScape (formally Fife Society for the Blind) since 1988. As well as being a volunteer braille teacher, Judith also volunteers as a SeeScape Rehabilitation Specialist, supporting adults with sight loss to live independently.

She has been commended for almost 40 years of volunteering in numerous roles - across many charities – including rehabilitation and teaching people braille.



Our National Finalists

Design for Everyone Award

This award recognises an individual or organisation that has demonstrated a commitment to the development of accessible design, use of technology or simple solutions that improve everyday experiences and make the world more inclusive for blind and partially sighted people.

Sponsored by
Red Bee Media



Lincoln Jopp MC for BBC

A businessman and former member of the British Army, Lincoln Jopp MC co-hosted the BBC's enhanced audio descriptive coverage of the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III in a first for a royal event covered by the broadcaster. The hybrid coverage married live audio description with visuals as they were broadcast on screen. Lincoln undertook extensive preparation ahead of the day and engaged widely with blind and partially sighted people to understand their needs. Feedback from the coverage has been extremely positive.



Rebecca Atkinson for Mixmups

Created by Rebecca Atkinson, who has retinitis pigmentosa (RP), Mixmups is a Channel 5 Milkshake! show for children. Two of the show's main characters live with disabilities, including one, Pockets the Bear, who has sight loss and uses a guide dog and cane. It was developed in conjunction with children with disabilities and seeks to normalise life with a disability. All 52 episodes are audio described by an actor with sight loss. Mixmups is due to launch in Canada, Ireland and Australia this year. It has been featured in The Guardian and on BBC News.



Dr Nicolas Bonne for Tactile Universe

Based at The University of Portsmouth, Tactile Universe is a public engagement project that seeks to make astronomy accessible to children with vision impairment. Led by Dr Nicolas Bonne, who was born with a visual impairment, the Tactile Universe team has developed tactile models enabling students to feel how galaxies develop. They take models and accompanying resources into schools where the team holds workshops for students with visual impairment and their sighted classmates. The team also train other organisations to deliver workshops within their own communities. Tactile Universe has been featured on the BBC's Sky at Night programme.

6th Duke of Westminster Lifetime Achievement Award

Sir Robin Millar CBE

Sir Robin is an internationally renowned British music producer, businessman and disability rights campaigner.

As one of the world's leading record producers and has won every major international music award. He has more than 160 gold and platinum discs, including 44 No. 1 hits, representing over £400 million of sales worldwide and bringing more than £300 million in overseas income to the UK.



In 2010, Robin stepped away from full-time music production to concentrate on disability rights helping employers to unlock potential in disabled applicants.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to someone who has had a long-term impact on the lives of people with sight loss.

Keith Valentine, CEO of the Vision Foundation and former director of External Affairs at RNIB, explains why Sir Robin is a worthy winner in his nomination:

“Robin’s fame and success in the music industry is unparalleled, but his lifetime dedication to influential voluntary work, fundraising and taking his role as a role model for other visually impaired people seriously, is unique too. Not only that, I can personally attest to the impact that he has had on my life and my prospects as a blind person seeking to pursue a senior career.”

Sir Robin, who has retinitis pigmentosa and was registered blind at 16, is a music industry legend, producing some of the most iconic albums in the last 40 years, including Sade’s Diamond Life.

He is very clear on how the initial diagnosis affected him: "My sight loss diagnosis was on my sixteenth birthday. I'd travelled to Moorfield hospital on the bus and arrived at 10 o'clock. I left at midday with a White Cane and a pair of dark glasses, having been told you will lose your eye sight completely in the next 20 years."

"And, on the bus journey home I changed from absolute shock – to the beginnings of a plan - and that plan was I've got 20 years to become independent, to become successful and to try to remain cool – and I mean cool as in not a figure of fun."

Immense success followed, as his work with Sade, Spandau Ballet, "Everything But The Girl and many, many more has shown. His plan wasn't all smooth sailing but his love of music remains.

Sir Robin says: "It didn't go without hiccup but that's broadly the plan I stuck to. I love and value the part that all music plays in cheering up the mundane, in taking us out of ourselves and, in the way, that sometimes a four minute song can that a novel cannot."

After moving away from full-time music production to give more time to his charitable work, in 2010 he co-founded Blue Raincoat Music which bought Chrysalis Records in 2016, with its prestigious back catalogue, including Blondie and Sinead O'Connor.

Blue Raincoat Music works on principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Sir Robin explains why: "The reason is obvious, the business is more successful because of it. The more diverse your workforce, the more inclusive your business, the more money you will make."

In September 2020, Sir Robin was appointed Chair Designate of disability charity Scope, after serving eight years as Global Ambassador for Leonard Cheshire Disability.

He mentors musicians who are starting on their careers too. Sirine Jahangir, a musician and singer-songwriter, reflects on his support: "Sir Robin has not only become a phenomenal mentor, he has also become a friend to me. Experience has painted him a generous man with a humble heart and that is truly the best way I can describe him."

Sir Robin explains his motivation: "I think I used to feel that I was somehow exceptional, that I'd made my way in the world and, you know, beaten the system and beaten the hostility. But, of course, I'm not it. The default position of people with disabilities is determination. Being knocked, picking yourself up.

"That's what defines disability in an amazing, amazing way."

He says he is "absolutely delighted" to accept the lifetime achievement award: "More than anything else because I'm waving at everyone else, young, middle aged or old and I'm saying there's nothing special about me. If I can do it, you can do it."



Congratulations to all the finalists in the **RNIB See Differently Awards 2024**

The 2024 See Differently Awards is supported thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery.

RNIB has received **over £10 million** in funding, raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery and awarded by Postcode Care Trust.

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



Everyone needs to take action to make a real difference



Campaigning for change is a big part of tonight's awards and not just in the Campaigner of the Year category.

We need everyone across the UK to do their bit to create lasting change and build a better world for people with sight loss. That's why, RNIB – and our many valued campaigners and supporters – is doing its best to mobilise communities and campaign for policy, system and legislative changes.

We've seen success, but we need much more to change. Whether you can be a great employer for blind and partially sighted people or join our current campaign to make vision rehab available, every single individual can make a difference.

Anyone who thinks otherwise, should look to our wonderful nominees and winners for evidence.

Vivienne Francis, Chief Social Change Officer at RNIB

Want to make a difference today?

Make sure your social media is accessible with these tips

ALT

Add descriptions to photos and graphics

Alt Text is a description of an image and should include all text in your image, as well as describing the visual elements.

#

#UseCamelCase in hashtags

Always use CamelCase by capitalising the first letter of every word #LikeThis. This way, screen readers will read out the words correctly.

:)

Only use one emoji

Text-to-speech software reads out a description for every single emoji so be careful how many emojis you use.

 Sight Loss
Advice Service

R N I B


See differently

**We're
just a
phone call
away.**

Our sight loss advisers
can help you deal
with the uncertainty
of living with sight loss.

Talk to us today.

**0303 123 9999
rnib.org.uk**

Say, **"Alexa, call
RNIB Helpline"** to
an Alexa-enabled
device.

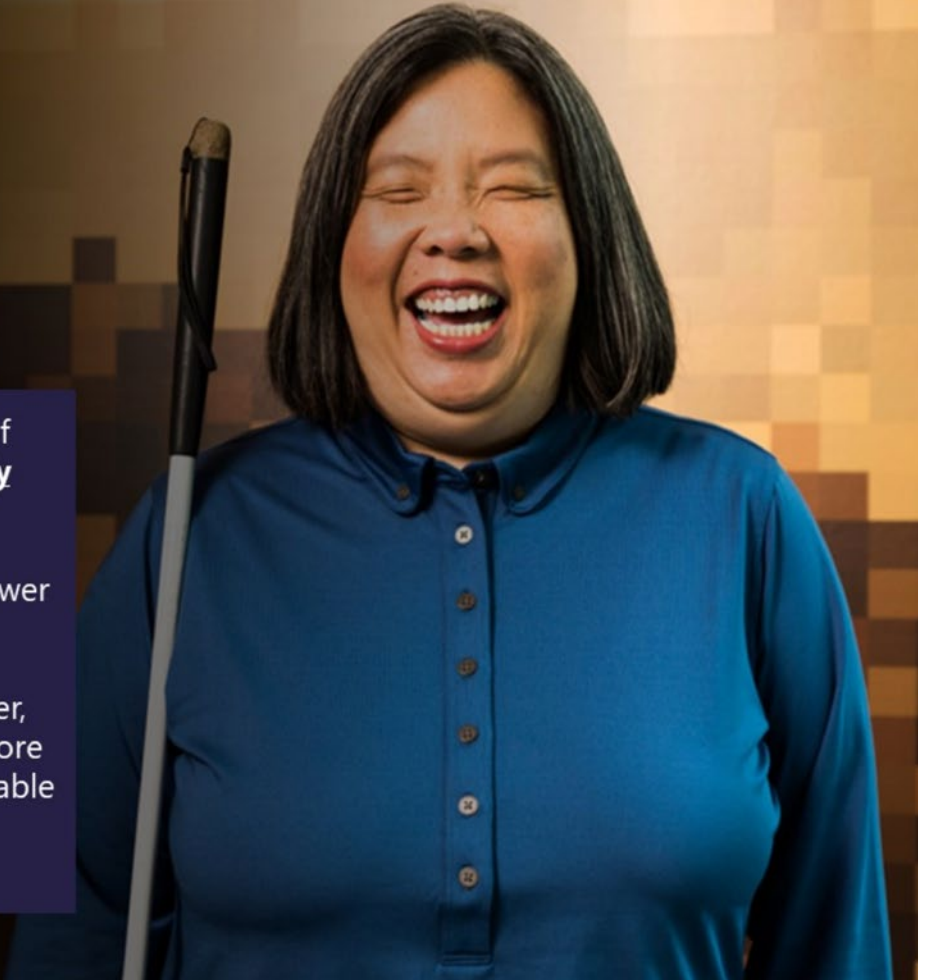


RAISING THE BAR

Microsoft is a proud sponsor of the 2024 **RNIB See Differently Awards**.

Microsoft's mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Working together, we can create a world that's more inclusive, accessible, and equitable for everyone.

Microsoft.com/accessibility



Congratulations to all of
the nominees and winners
this evening.

NETFLIX ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT
RNIB SEE DIFFERENTLY AWARDS.

NETFLIX



RED
BEE

ACCESS SERVICES

Enriching Content Through Increased Accessibility



AUDIO
DESCRIPTION



AUTOMATIC LIVE
CAPTIONING (ARC)



CAPTIONING



SIGN
LANGUAGE



SUBTITLING &
TRANSLATIONS

Contact us to learn more about our Access Services:
www.redbeemedia.com/products/red-bee-access

What makes
this seven year

relationship possible is partnership.

At T&Pm we've listened to the experts on sight loss and RNIB have trusted us to make work that stands out.

From brand campaigns that
have changed perceptions

and informed the public to see the person
and not the sight loss, from creating innovative work
that has changed

the way brands operate and
even lobbied government in the Covid crisis.

Brand awareness has risen, reaching millions
and 61% of people felt more

knowledgeable about
what visually impaired people can do.

T&P^m

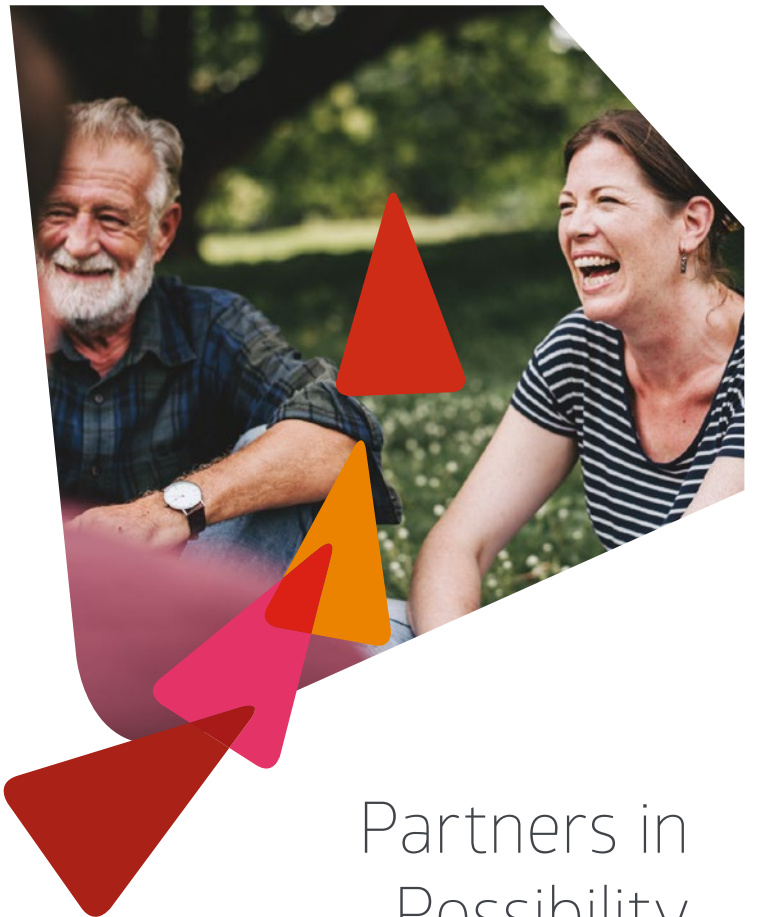
The Power of &, connecting talent and tech to fuel brand growth. Get in touch: hello@tandpgroup.com

Celebrating our **Partnership** with **RNIB**

Woods Valldata are proud to have worked in partnership with RNIB for **over 20 years**, supporting RNIB to make a difference for blind and partially sighted people.

R N I B

**WOODS
VALLDATA**



Partners in
Possibility

RNIB Helpline **Just a phone call away**

Every day, 250 people begin to lose their sight. RNIB is here to make sure that losing your sight doesn't have to mean losing out on life. We provide practical and emotional support so people with sight loss can live the lives they want to lead.

Our expert advisers are on hand, ready to listen and offer guidance on everything from money matters and emotional support, through to accessing practical solutions to live independently.

We rely on your support to help make all of this possible. **Scan here to donate to RNIB**



How to get more involved with RNIB

Looking for more ways to get involved with our mission to build a better world for people with sight loss? We have some ideas.

There are many ways you can support our work, from volunteering, to fundraising, or one of our exciting challenge events. Here are a few ways you can get involved:

Volunteering

We're always looking for volunteers to support our work and make a difference. There are plenty of opportunities available, including communication and administration, or technical and research-based roles. No matter what role you choose, you'll learn new skills and make a direct impact.

Fundraising

Fundraising is vital to make sure we can reach the 250 people who start to lose their sight each day in the UK. Organising your own fundraiser is a great way to be creative and gather friends, family, or colleagues to raise money for an important cause. Find our free fundraising guide on our website for ideas to inspire you.

Challenge Events

Feeling adventurous? Join #TeamRNIB and take on a challenge event to break down barriers for people with sight loss. We have many sponsored events to raise funds and get your blood pumping, including runs from 10K all the way through to marathons, as well as virtual events you can complete at your own pace, and even skydiving, for those ready for the thrill of a lifetime.



To discover more ways you can be involved with RNIB, visit our webpage at [rnib.org.uk/get-involved](https://www.rnib.org.uk/get-involved)

Sight loss didn't stop me getting a job



Leo Peters

Customer Service Specialist

**YOUR APPLICATION
PROCESS DID.**

Work History

2018-02 - present

Customer Service Specialist

AdviseOwl, Redcar

- Regularly built product knowledge to educate and advise customers about our products and services. Became team's go-to person.
- Processed over 200 requests for repair or replacement.
- Correctly escalated client complaints or feedback for a thorough review.
- Set standards for quality and professionalism. Met and exceeded goals every week for two quarters in 2020.

Key achievement: Identified a bottleneck in the shared process with the sales department, saving £4K in transactional costs fortnightly.

With simple changes your business
could have more diverse talent.

Visit rnib.org.uk/business for ways to
make your business more accessible
for people with sight loss.

R N I B

See differently

Become a more inclusive employer



Only one in four people with sight loss of working age are in employment, resulting in 11,000 people with sight loss actively seeking work.

Sign up to become an RNIB Visibly Better Employer and we can help your company widen your talent pool, increase diversity and innovation and draw on the value blind and partially sighted employees bring to an organisation.

To find out more, please contact the RNIB Employment Team:



VisiblyBetterEmployer@rnib.org.uk



0303 123 9999

R N I B

Visibly Better

Employer

Thank you

We'd like to thank all our generous supporters and partners who have contributed to making the RNIB See Differently Awards a memorable evening.



Congratulations to all the nominees, finalists and winners of the RNIB See Differently Awards. Places Leisure is delighted to have partnered with RNIB's See Sport Differently programme exploring ways we can better support blind and partially sighted people. Through our accessible leisure facilities nationwide and our online virtual studio, we are passionate about helping our communities stay physically active and emotionally engaged in fitness, wellbeing and sport.

Thank you for the winners' prizes.



Thank you for your contribution to the Book of the Night



Deliciously unsquare since 1932. Tap it, unwrap it and enjoy it.

Thank you, Terry's.



Thank you for the prizes, Google



Thank you, TPT

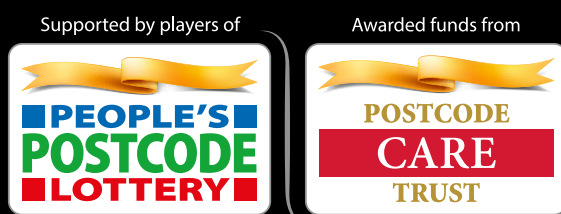


Thank you for contributing to the prizes



Thank you to all our supporters and sponsors who have helped make the RNIB See Differently Awards 2024 so special.

Supported by



Category supporters and sponsors

