

ATIC nomination for: WITSA's "Emerging Digital Solutions Award"

Solution: .lumen – Empowering the Blind

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Our nominee for the 2022 WITSA Award is .lumen – Empowering the Blind.

.lumen is a Romanian research start-up that builds glasses which empower the blind to live a better life.

The company offers a scalable, innovative digital solution capable of transforming the lives of millions of visually impaired individuals worldwide.

About .lumen

There are 40 million blind people today, and despite all the technological advancements, the most used mobility solutions are still the walking cane and the guide dog.

The guide dog is unanimously seen as a good option. Their ability to navigate the world around us and understand contextual information makes them the perfect caretakers for a person with visual disabilities. But we need to consider a few drawbacks.

It costs between \$30-\$60K to train a single guide dog. It is a complex process that begins a few days after birth, and caring for such a companion can become a great responsibility for a blind person.

As a result, there are only 28,000 guide dogs to 40 million individuals with visual disabilities.

Using Robotics and advanced Artificial Intelligence technologies, .lumen behaves like a virtual guide dog in the form of a pair of glasses. Once the user puts them on, they become capable of acknowledging their position and movements in 3D; they understand where they are and how they can interact with the environment around them.

If the dog guides their owner by pulling their hand, the .lumen glasses will do the same, except the focus will shift from hand to forehead.

This way, the company offers a solution that mimics the benefits of a guide dog without the drawbacks that make it a non-scalable solution for the other 39.972.000 blind individuals.

User Feedback

.lumen's work is at the forefront of technological advancement. The feedback from blind users is incredible.

"I believed something like this would exist, but not in our lifetime."

Acknowledgements

- .lumen partners with Kaufland Romania to empower the blind ([source](#))
- .lumen wins The Red Dot: Luminary Award – the highest level of recognition for Industrial Design ([source](#))
- The first Romanian company to win EIC funding ([source](#))
- Innovators for healthy aging: .lumen wins at Healthy Longevity Catalyst Awards ([source](#))
- .lumen, wins the "Ethical AI" award at the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021 ([source](#))
- Featured on the “10 promising Romanian startups to watch in 2021” list by EU Startups ([source](#))
- Recognized by Techcelerator as one of Romania's most promising startups in its [100 AI startups: mapping the Romanian landscape report](#).
- Featured on the Amazon Web Services Startups Blog ([source](#))
- .lumen Founder and CEO, Cornel Amariei received several distinctions for his work. Most recently, he was featured in Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe, Global Business Hall of Fame and JCI's Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the World.

About the Company

.lumen was founded by Cornel Amariei, a renowned Romanian inventor, speaker and entrepreneur. Cornel was born in a family where his parents and sister lived with disabilities, severely limiting their mobility. Growing up in such an environment allowed Cornel to understand how vital assistive technology can be and inspired his work.

The mission to empower the blind started as a research project at the end of 2018 and transformed into a start-up at the beginning of 2020.

Today it gathers over 40 engineers, professors, disability experts, designers, and scientists. The team is recognized globally for achievements such as The Red Dot: Luminary Award – the highest level of recognition for Industrial Design.

Contact Information

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