

Quick Facts

Mission

The International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) works with ophthalmologic societies and others to enhance ophthalmic education and improve access to the highest quality eye care in order to preserve and restore vision for the people of the world.

Commitments

- Enhance ophthalmic education, particularly in developing countries
- Define clinical guidelines and standards for vision and eye care
- Help ophthalmologists meet the needs of their communities
- Advocate for increased support for eye care
- Stimulate research to prevent visual loss
- Support development of ophthalmologic societies and leaders

Program and Initiative Subjects

- Refocusing Ophthalmic Education: Examinations for ophthalmologists, International Fellowships, educational programs (residency, subspecialty, medical student, allied health, continuing medical education, e-learning), Regional Ophthalmic Training Centers, and more.
- Enhancing Eye Care: Participate in Advocacy/VISION 2020; offer clinical guidelines, standards for eye care and vision, and research
- Advancing Leadership: Support for ophthalmological societies, leaders and educators
- World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC): First held in Brussels in 1857, the International Congress of Ophthalmology, now the World Ophthalmology Congress, is the longest continuing international medical meeting. The WOC is held every second year in a different geographic region. WOC 2010 is in Berlin, WOC 2012 in Abu Dhabi (February 16–20), and WOC 2014 will be in Tokyo (April 2–6).

Leadership

The ICO guided by the Board of Trustees—a group of 40+ members representing countries all over the world. It is composed of four officers that form the Executive Committee, five Ex-Officio members (presidents of supranational societies), up to ten presidents of other ophthalmologic and vision organizations and up to 20 general members.

ICO Members

ICO members are 120 national ophthalmologic societies and subspecialty societies from every corner of the globe. The ICO stimulates and supports communication and collaboration among ophthalmologic societies and ophthalmologists globally, particularly through initiatives to preserve and restore vision in developing countries.

History

The ICO was established in 1857 in Brussels when 150 ophthalmologists from 24 countries met in the first International Congress of Ophthalmology (now the World Ophthalmology Congress - WOC). The Advisory Board (executive body) was created in 1927 in Scheveningen, Holland. Member societies were added in 1933 in Madrid, Spain. The above names for the separate parts of the group are now combined under one name, The International Council of Ophthalmology.