



## **BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership demonstrates your commitment to the enhancement and development of eye and vision care worldwide.

### **Membership Benefits include:**

#### *Access to a Worldwide Network*

- WCO represents 200,000 optometrists from 75 member organisations in 40 countries.
- Membership gives you access to a worldwide network of leaders, experts, peers and resources dedicated to promoting optometry as a learned healthcare profession.
- Our six world regions provide you with dedicated local support and easy access to WCO colleagues.

#### *The Global Voice for Optometry*

- WCO is the first and only optometric organisation in official relations with the World Health Organisation.
- We also maintain the highest level of membership of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness which entitles WCO to a seat on the IAPB Board. Additionally the Chairman of WCO's Education Committee is Chairman of the IAPB Africa region, a significant achievement for optometry.

#### *Vision 2020 - the Right to Sight*

- Vision 2020 is the global initiative for the elimination of avoidable blindness, launched jointly by the IAPB and WHO.
- As a benefit of WCO's level of IABP membership, WCO members can use the Vision 2020 logo on their own communications.

#### *Setting World Standards*

- WCO recognises the unique needs of each country within a framework of global standards.
- Our Global Competency-Based Model for the Scope of Practice in Optometry promotes greater global harmonisation in optometric education and practice.
- Our standards assist in the creation of teaching syllabi and statutory definitions of scope of practice.

#### *Influence and Action*

- WCO's goal is to facilitate, and enhance the development of eye and vision care worldwide.
- Our influence in working with national Governments can achieve significant outcomes in areas where there are unmet needs for quality eye care.

#### *Fellowship Programme*

- Our Fellowship Programme provides financial support for individuals and organisations to support work in countries needing assistance with optometric education, patient care, community service and organisational development.

#### *Access to Financial Support*

- The World Optometry Foundation (WOF) is our charitable partner, complementing WCO's work by financing service projects that foster self-sufficiency and long-term independence amongst developing nations.

#### *Programme of Events*

- An extensive programme of events, hosted around the world enables members to meet and discuss global optometric issues and share knowledge.
- The *World Conference on Optometric Education*, held every 4 years, brings together 300 educators from 40 countries to discuss issues, solutions, and practice advice affecting the delivery and quality of optometric education.
- The *World Conference on Optometric Globalisation* unites worldwide representatives from professional associations, regulatory groups, assessment agencies and academia every 4 years to discuss the strategic position of the global optometric profession.
- The *WCO General Delegates Meeting* brings the membership together every 2 years to discuss eye care issues, establish policies and determine global protocols.

#### *Developing Communications*

- WCO's key publication, *World Focus*, was launched in 2009 and will keep members up-to-date on global optometric news, developing issues and the latest events.
- The WCO website at [www.worldoptometry.org](http://www.worldoptometry.org) has been enhanced to provide a global source of optometry data and an extensive resource centre for members.

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**Note to Editors:**

1. The World Council of Optometry (WCO) is an international organisation dedicated to the enhancement and development of eye and vision care worldwide. Representing 250,000 optometrists from 80 member organisations in over 45 countries, the WCO serves as a forum for member organisations to respond to public health needs and opportunities around the world. The WCO is a unifying voice and catalyst for international projects and services that meet the needs of the optometric profession, ophthalmic industry and the public they serve.
2. The World Council of Optometry is administered and hosted by the College of Optometrists in the UK.

World Council of Optometry

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