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## **Courses, Programmes and Fellowships in Ophthalmology**

Experience-based knowledge acquired during practice in ophthalmological work needs to be consolidated by evidence-based continuing education. Therefore this article focuses on current national and international courses, programmes and fellowships in the field of ophthalmology that are relevant for students, residents or expert ophthalmologists.

### **Courses and Programmes – How to find the right one**

The aim of courses and further education programmes is to provide the participants with solid intellectual grounding and additional skills which they will need for their further career, in order to bridge the gap between basic research and applied clinical work and to widen their understanding of ophthalmology in general. An example of such a course (summer school) is the Lancaster Course in Ophthalmology, USA ([www.colby.edu](http://www.colby.edu)). However, there are many other courses and programmes available worldwide. One major problem is to find them and to get the necessary information about the training they will provide. Beside advertisements in journals, recommendations by colleagues and course catalogues like “medicine & health”, the Internet provides the largest amount of information. So as not to get lost, it is advisable to begin your search on homepages of ophthalmological societies or universities. ([www.augen.at](http://www.augen.at); [www.dog.org](http://www.dog.org); [www2.hin.ch](http://www2.hin.ch); [www.docguide.com](http://www.docguide.com)).

### **Fellowships - Financial Support**

Going abroad for ophthalmological research or education is supported by several national and international foundations. In Austria these include, for example the “Erwin-Schrödinger-Auslandsstipendium” ([www.fwf.ac.at](http://www.fwf.ac.at)), the “Max-Kade-Stipendium” ([www.oeaw.ac.at](http://www.oeaw.ac.at)), and the “Fulbright Stipendium” ([www.fulbright.at](http://www.fulbright.at)), as well as the “Dr. Adele Rabensteiner Preis” ([www.augen.at](http://www.augen.at)), ASCINA ([www.ascina.at](http://www.ascina.at)), several scientific societies ([www.ffg.at](http://www.ffg.at); [www.grants.at](http://www.grants.at)), the Austrian Exchange Service ([www.oead.ac.at](http://www.oead.ac.at)), the Austrian government ([www.stipendien.at](http://www.stipendien.at)), and several clinics or medical departments. For the European Union one can consult the homepage of the Marie Curie Fellowships ([www.mariecurie.org](http://www.mariecurie.org)).

### **Capacity building – The transfer of know-how to developing countries**

Several national and international organisations and programmes (e.g. the International Commission of the Austrian Ophthalmological Society) are committed to preserving vision and preventing blindness in developing countries. The best means for achieving these important aims apart from financial and technical support are the training and education of young ophthalmologists from the countries in question. Fellowships ([www.icoph.org/fellow](http://www.icoph.org/fellow)) have been created in order to help promising young ophthalmologists to improve their practical skills, to broaden their perspectives in ophthalmology and to apply their acquired professional experience in their own countries.