



AO Foundation
Education

Exchange Programs

Your gateway to the AO network



AO Fellowships

- International
- Region
- Starter

AO CAS Fellowship

You visit an Expert
Expert visits you (Visiting Professorship)
Expert visits Expert

Dear reader

Since 1971 more than 5,700 general surgeons, orthopedic surgeons, CMF surgeons, Vet surgeons, and ORP worldwide have completed a Fellowship in clinics specifically selected by the AO. The classic Fellowship continues to be in great demand. However, the development of new operation techniques dictates that training in special techniques also be available to our Fellowship participants.

The AO CAS Fellowship was developed in cooperation with BrainLAB. In particular, this enables those interested in navigated Op-methods to have the opportunity to acquire expertise and further their knowledge at medical training establishments specializing in these techniques. A precondition for the applicants to this AO CAS Fellowship is that participants can immediately use and apply this new knowledge in their practice in their own clinics.

The rapid developments in traumatology and orthopedic have led to a multitude of new implants and operative procedures. Experienced operators realize that it is sensible to shorten the learning curve for a new operation technique and learn the methodology from an expert. This is possible by the Expert (Professorship) Program that includes three options: 'You visit an Expert,' 'Expert visits you,' and 'Expert visits Expert'.

The AOE will continue to enhance the successful Fellowship Program with new programs meeting the evolving needs and special requirements of AO surgeons. This booklet gives further information about the AO various Fellowship and Expert Visit programs. For AOSpine Fellowships, please contact AOSpine.

We look forward to receiving your enquiry in the near future.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joachim Prein".

Prof Joachim Prein,
Vice-Director AO Education
Nurse Education
Davos, Switzerland



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ulrich Pfister".

Prof. Ulrich Pfister, MD
Coordinator Fellowship Program
Karlsruhe, Germany



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Bäuerle".

Susanne Bäuerle, RN
Director ORP
AO Education
Davos, Switzerland

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The International AO Fellowship

The AO Fellowship provides additional experience in AO techniques for fully trained orthopedic surgeons, general surgeons, CMF surgeons, and ORP interested in trauma treatment. The purpose of these fellowships is to make fellows familiar with indications, planning, techniques, and pitfalls of osteosynthesis, as judged by AO experts. This applies not only to fractures but also to polytrauma management, pseudarthroses, osteotomies, arthrodeses, and so on. AO Fellowships are not organized courses and the knowledge acquired will depend a lot on the initiative of the fellow.

Worldwide reach

Fellowships are offered by more than 120 hospitals in various countries, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and the USA.

Fellowships for ORP are offered in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Great Britain. A regular AO Fellowship lasts 4–8 (exceptionally 12) weeks.

Fellowship offer

The Fellowship usually covers accommodation and living expenses. Travel costs are funded entirely by the participant. Most clinics provide basic accommodation for one person only. AO Education strongly recommends that you do not bring your family along. If alternative accommodation is required, the Fellow has to organize and pay for this himself/herself. Fellowship eligibility has a prerequisite which involves previous attendance at an AO Principles course. Due to high demand, it may not be possible to accept every Fellowship application.

Requirements and qualifications

The main requirement is that applicants are very motivated in increasing their knowledge of trauma treatment, with particular emphasis on AO techniques and philosophy, and also interested in becoming actively involved in further AO activities. In addition, applicants for an AO Fellowship must fulfill the following criteria:

- Graduation from a training program in general surgery or orthopedics.
- Previous participation in an AO Principles course.
- Previous experience with AO principles and techniques (for ORP applicants, at least 5 years).
- The maximum age limit is usually 40 years. Exceptions in particular situations are taken in to account.

Letters of recommendation

Applicants should submit a letter of recommendation from the chair of their local AO Alumni chapter (whose address is on the AO Website: www.aofoundation.org), an AO Trustee, or a representative from the local/regional AO Education Committee. A letter from the Head of your own institution is also mandatory.

Application form

In addition to the completed application form, applicants should submit the following documents:

- Curriculum vitae
- Copy of medical school diploma
- Copy of AO Basic/Principles Course certificate
- Two letters of recommendation (as mentioned)
- List of publications and major lectures given by the applicant
- One recent passport-size photograph
- Health certificate (see page 6 in brochure)

If English is not the applicant's native language nor the language used by the host clinic, evidence of attendance at an English-language course or a course of the language of the host clinic should be enclosed.

Language concerns

Language is a common problem when placing a Fellow. In many European hosting hospitals, German is the working language. We strongly recommend a good knowledge of the working language of the host country or a good command of English. Fellows must be aware that the staff of the host country is able to communicate in English, but will more likely feel at ease speaking their native language; thus, a Fellow may not always be included in the ongoing discussions.

Family and accompanying people

AO Education recommends all Fellows come alone so they are able to derive maximum benefit from the expert instruction available and the Fellowship experience as a whole. Having the family nearby may be a distraction; hence, the need to work long hours and be on call for emergencies is frequently reduced.

Please be aware that this is a learning experience and not a vacation.

Feedback—Logbook

We are extremely grateful to those involved in training and guidance during a Fellow's stay. The reports we receive at the AO Clinic from the consultant physicians confirm that the relationship is reciprocal. If Fellows are enthusiastic and willing to learn during an AO Fellowship, they will benefit enormously as will the host clinics. However, if the medical staff feels that the fellow has come as a tourist rather than for experience, instruction and discussion will rapidly fade out. In every case, it is valuable for us to receive open feedback from both sides. These confidential reports help us to continuously evaluate and improve our program.

Therefore, we have introduced a logbook which each AO Fellow is requested to update during his/her Fellowship and which must be submitted to get an AO certificate.

Logbook on operations

Every Fellow is requested to keep a logbook or diary to document all activities that occur during the Fellowship. It must list all operations that were followed or attended, either as an observer or as a scrubbed assistant. We expect also some follow-up comments on every surgery attended. This list must be submitted, together with the questionnaire, at the end of the Fellowship. Fellows should be aware that the host clinic is also requested to answer questions regarding participants.

Regulations and procedures

Application date

Applications must be sent at least 8–12 months before the requested period of the Fellowship.

Preferences

The candidate may express a preference for a continent, country, or clinic. If possible, the candidate's preference is granted; however, the final decision lies with AO Education and is based on availability (and the individual preconditions).

Coordination

Due to the large number of applications receive, AO Education exclusively coordinates all arrangements. No direct arrangements between a prospective Fellow and a specific clinic will be accepted or supported.

Confirmation of acceptance

AO Education must receive confirmation of acceptance within 1 month of offering a Fellowship. Hence, the arrangement is considered a binding contract. If no response is received within that period, AO Education considers itself free to assign the place to another candidate.

Changes of place and date

Any last minute changes of dates or places may inconvenient the entire Fellowship. If a Fellow is unable to fulfill the conditions stated in this document, the Head of the clinic may propose to the Fellowship Coordinator a premature termination of the stay.

Health certificate

On arrival at the host clinic a certificate proving negative test results for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV has to be presented. If this is not presented, the Fellow will not be authorized to scrub in at surgery.

Working hours

The Fellow is expected to follow the daily routine of the clinic and be available for emergencies at night and on weekends. Active participation as a scrubbed assistant is possible in most clinics, but not in the USA.

Leave or absence

Temporary leave or absence needs approval from the Head of the clinic. If for some reason the Fellow wishes to change placement or leave before completion of the allotted period, he/she must seek permission from both the Head of the clinic and AO Education. The stipend will be cut accordingly.

Introductory presentation

Some clinics suggest, as an introduction, that the Fellow gives a brief presentation to the staff. This can be on a subject matter that the Fellow is familiar or actively involved in. We recommend that Fellows contact the clinic to enquire about these presentations. (Does not apply to ORP.)

Feedback

The Fellowship can only maintain or raise its high standards if we receive feedback from Fellows. Following completion of the Fellowship, a confidential report is requested. This evaluation form should be returned to the Fellowship Coordinator or the Director of ORP Nurse Education with open comments and/or criticism.

Reporting

A confidential report is also submitted by the host clinic. This will be used as reference for any further communication or information.

Insurance

During your stay you will not be insured against any illness or accident through either AO Education or the host clinic. Please check whether your medical insurance also covers medical treatment in foreign countries. Furthermore, you will not be covered by malpractice insurance. If you have no insurance for these risks, we strongly recommend arranging this before leaving for your Fellowship.

The AO Regional Fellowship

In some areas (Asia Pacific, Latin America) regional Fellowships are available. Applicants get the opportunity to study at Fellowship units within their region. As with International Fellowships, the attendance of an AO Principles course is a prerequisite. In general, the regulations for Regional Fellowships are the same as for International Fellowships see pages 4, but please note the additional information below:

Language

Good knowledge of the language of the host clinic, or English is required.

The Starter Fellowship

This Fellowship enables young orthopedic surgeons from Asian countries, where so far few AO teaching has taken place, to travel to regional Fellowship units in the area. These fellows will get first-hand experience on theoretical and practical surgical management of musculoskeletal injuries.

Duration

4 weeks, including an AO Principles Course.

Fellowship offer

Airfare in economy class, accommodation, and meals paid by AO Asia-Pacific.

Application form

The application form is available on request from AO Asia-Pacific (see last page).

Preferences

The candidate may express a preference for a country or a host clinic. If possible, the candidate's preference is granted; however, the final decision rests with AO Asia-Pacific based on availability.

Duties of starter fellow

Attend ward and preoperative rounds, case presentations, and staff meetings.

Attend conferences, seminars, and workshops.

Assist in surgery (subject to local laws and practice).

Pay registration fee and accommodation for the AO Principles Course.

Reporting

A report to AO Education and AO Asia-Pacific is mandatory.

The AO CAS Fellowship

To keep abreast of developments AOE has decided, together with the Brainlab Company, to offer 6 fellowships per year each to surgeons from Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America in the field of Computer-Assisted Surgery. These fellowships are offered in units where personnel already have specific experience with CAS and regularly use this technique.

Applicants should have extensive surgical experience and the possibility to practically implement the newly acquired knowledge.

Location, duration

A CAS Fellowship generally lasts 6–8 weeks (and can be attended in specialized clinics).

Fellowship offer

The Fellowship covers accommodation and living expenses. Travel costs have to be funded entirely by the participant. Most clinics provide basic accommodation for one person only. AO Education strongly recommends that you do not bring your family along. If alternative accommodation is required, the Fellow has to organize and pay for this himself/herself. Fellowship eligibility has a prerequisite which involves previous attendance of an AO Principles course. Due to high demand, it is not possible to accept every Fellowship application.

Requirements and qualifications

The main requirement is extensive experience in trauma treatment, with emphasis on AO techniques and philosophy. The fellow should have a particular interest regarding the application of CAS methods and should be able to use this newly gained knowledge on returning to his/her home unit.

Letters of recommendation

Applicants should submit a letter of recommendation from the chair of their local AO Alumni chapter, an AO Trustee, a representative from the local/regional AO Education Committee, or Brainlab.

Application form

In addition to the completed application form, applicants should also submit the following documents:

1. Curriculum vitae
2. Copy of medical school diploma
3. Copy of AO Basic/Principles course certificate
4. Two letters of recommendation (as mentioned)
5. List of publications and major lectures given by the applicant
6. One recent passport-size photograph
7. Health certificate (see page 6 in brochure)

Language concerns

Most of the participating specialized hospitals are in German-speaking countries.
For further information see International fellowship.

Family and accompanying people,

Feedback—Logbook,

Logbook on operations,

Regulations and procedures

(see International Fellowship page 5–7)

CAS Expert Program (Visiting Professorship)

This program is for AO members who have a navigation system from Brainlab Company and want to take advantage of the experience of an Expert. Here a CAS specialist visits the unit for a few days and offers theoretical and practical support. For further information, interested surgeons are invited to contact AOE.

You visit an Expert

This program is for experienced surgeons who want to stay with an expert for 2–5 days to gain expertise in a specific field of trauma treatment.

Precise details of visits must be initially submitted to AOE and accepted before being arranged by the Visitor and the Expert.

Duration

2–5 days

Prerequisites

The visitor must be either an AO Alumni or an AO member.

The expert to be visited must be at least an AO Faculty member.

Fellowship offer

Regional travel expenses (train or economy flight) will be covered by AOE. If the visit is “intercontinental,” the accumulation of the travel expenses (economy) will be decided individually by the AOE board. In both cases AOE will pay for accommodation. No per diem is available.

Feedback

A report to AOE about the experience gained is mandatory.

Application process

The interested surgeon should submit:

- Completed application form
- Detailed outline of the educational aim
- Letter of agreement by the Expert to be visited

Note: AOE will not reimburse expenses if a visitor is invited to lecture at a meeting or symposium.

Expert visits you (Visiting Professorship)

This program is for the high level AO expert who visits a unit where he will work with the staff for about 2–3 days. The stay involves surgery, lectures, discussion groups, patient evaluation, patient rounds, and presentations.

Specific details of the visit must initially be submitted to AOE and accepted before being arranged by the unit and the expert.

Prerequisites

The Expert should at least be an International AO Faculty member. The unit should at least have an AO Faculty member.

Reimbursement

The expert receives a per diem and travel expenses according to the AOE guidelines. Accommodation should be provided by the unit being visited.

The expert is requested to submit his/her original receipts to AOE for reimbursement.

Note: AOE will not reimburse expenses if a visitor is invited to lecture at a meeting or symposium.

The visit will only be reimbursed if it is pre-approved by AOE.

Application process

Interested host institutions should submit:

- Completed application form
- Outline of the desired goals
- Format of the planned program
- Letter of the visiting Expert confirming willingness and agreement with the proposed program

Feedback

A report about the visit from both sides is mandatory.

Expert visits Expert

We are launching a program that enables experts or senior surgeons to visit other experts to exchange experiences and ideas. AOE will support this program financially. If the meeting is taking place, the decision has to be pre-approved by AOE. Specific details of the visit have to be submitted to AOE for approval before being arranged by the experts.

Prerequisites

Both experts should be at least International AO Faculty members.

Offer

AOE will pay for travel costs according to individual locations and distances. Accommodation should be provided by the visited institution.

Application process

The visiting expert should submit:

- Application form
- Goal of meeting
- Agreement of expert to be visited

Note: AOE will not reimburse expenses if a visitor is invited to lecture at a meeting or symposium.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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