

The Swiss Society of Ophthalmology (SSO)  
Commission for Ophthalmology in Developing Countries (CODC)  
Fellowship Guidelines



GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Funded and supported by the Swiss Society of Ophthalmology (SSO)

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### *Background to the Fellowship*

The Fellowship is an initiative of the SSO Commission for Ophthalmology in Developing Countries (CODC). The CODC has been founded in the 1970s by leading Swiss ophthalmologists in the field of international ophthalmology with projects in Africa, Asia and India among other places on this globe. The CODC remains a well-supported committee by the Swiss Society of Ophthalmology (SSO) and its members.

### *Aim of the Fellowship*

The Fellowship aims to provide resources to train such Fellows in areas of ophthalmology that are unique to developing countries. It will provide an opportunity for successful candidates who are committed to the practice of international ophthalmology to experience in-country work including service delivery and capacity building in developing countries.

The aim of such a Fellowship is to establish long-term relationships between ophthalmic professionals in both countries.

## **ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP**

The Fellowship will run for approximately 2-6 months and will be structured as following:

- a two to six months period in a developing country program supported by the CODC (Timor Leste, Haiti, Africa among others) where the successful candidate will have the opportunity to work at local eye clinics as well as accompany teams delivering out-reach services to the districts.
- The Fellowship will commence according to availability of a vacant position and, of course, some flexibility in dates depending on the successful candidate's requirements are possible.

The Fellowship will be administered by CODC and will include provision for:

- travel costs to the place of engagement/work
- a stipend aiming to cover to some extent current home salary
- expenses such as in country accommodation.

## **CRITERIA**

The aim of The SSO-CODC Fellowship is to award a Fellowship to a final year registrar, senior registrar or a younger Fellow.

Successful applicants will:

- be a final year resident/registrar/ senior registrar or younger Fellow of the Swiss Society of Ophthalmology
- be able to establish their ongoing commitment to and interest in learning about and engaging in international development work;
- demonstrate leadership, teaching and personal skills. This includes a respect for cultural differences and an understanding of appropriate conduct/attitudes when working in the developing world;
- be able to establish the ongoing benefits of the Fellowship on both a personal level as well as to the practice of international ophthalmology.

Further information about the selection criteria for this Fellowship is set out below.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for consideration for Fellowship you must:

- be a qualified medical practitioner
- be member/resident member of the SSO
- be at least in your last year of resident training
- be a permanent resident or citizen of Switzerland or EU.
- good English language knowledge

### *Application Format*

The Application Form is attached to these guidelines and may be found on SSO website

Completed applications can be sent to

Dr. Andreas J. Kreis, President of the CODC.

- Post – to Cabinet d’Ophtalmologie de la Planta, Rue de Lausanne 35, 1950 Sion
- Fax – to 027 323 60 93
- Email – [andreas.kreis@unige.ch](mailto:andreas.kreis@unige.ch)  
(please send PDF files only and please ensure your PDF copy is signed).

All applicants will be advised of the final decision of the IOC as soon as possible after a decision has been made.

Successful applicants will most likely be presented at the Gala Dinner of the SSO Conference of the current year.

### *Funding (Period, Amount and Purpose)*

- one Fellowship will be awarded for the current year; and
- funding for successful applicant is provided for a max six month period

Note: if the started fellowship has to be cancelled for whatever reason, the applicant has to reimburse that amount not used as per month(s) not worked!

The Fellowship aims to cover the successful applicant's:

- travel costs to the place of engagement/work
- a stipend aiming to cover to some extent current home salary
- expenses such as in country accommodation.

The successful applicant must make sure their Medical Indemnity Insurance and Travel Insurance is extended to cover them for their time working overseas under this scholarship.

### **OTHER CONDITIONS**

The provision of a Fellowship to an individual Fellow does not give rise to an employment relationship between SSO affiliated institutions and that individual. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a written agreement with CODC recording the terms and conditions of the Fellowship. Successful applicants will be required to adhere to and comply with both, SSO and CODC policies relevant to this Fellowship.

Please note that CODC wishes to meet with you, ask you to deliver a presentation and/or write an article to discuss your experiences. At the conclusion of your Fellowship, you will also be required to provide a report to CODC.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Applicants will be judged on the following criteria:

- be able to establish their commitment to and interest in international development work;
- demonstrate leadership, teaching and personal skills. This includes a respect for cultural differences and an understanding of appropriate conduct when working in the developing world;
- be able to establish the ongoing benefits of the Fellowship both personally and to the practice of international ophthalmology.

An example of how these criteria may be addressed is set out below.

a) Be able to establish their commitment to and interest in international development work.

You may, for example, wish to:

- outline any international development work that you have engaged in which has inspired your commitment to such work; or
- detail any other experiences that you may have had which have inspired your interest in international development work.

b) Demonstrate outstanding and appropriate leadership, teaching and personal skills. This includes a respect for cultural differences and an understanding of appropriate conduct when working in the developing world.

For example:

- your contribution to the ophthalmic and medical community, your university, place of work, general community and/or family in the last five years;
- any teaching experience that you may have had or other examples of your aptitude for teaching;
- any other experience that may be able to demonstrate your excellence in communication skills, both oral and written;
- any other personal skills that you consider relevant e.g. resourcefulness, ability to work within a team and independently, adaptability, resilience, and ability to cope when outside your comfort zone;
- a demonstration of your understanding of cultural issues, sensitivities and appropriate conduct/attitudes e.g. gender awareness, environmental issues, when working in the developing world.

c) Be able to establish the ongoing benefits of the Fellowship both personally and to the practice of international ophthalmology.

For example:

- demonstration of the benefits of the Fellowship to you;
- other than the benefits flowing on from the Fellowship, details of any other benefits that may flow to the practice of ophthalmology in the developing world (i.e. what you could bring to the practice of international ophthalmology whether in Switzerland or internationally that has not already been covered in your application e.g. presentations, ideas and /or involvement in the SSO-CODC or other such committees

## **THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

All applications submitted to the SSO-CODC by the due date will be assessed against the criteria outlined above by a Committee made up of at least 3 representative from CODC.

The decision of the Committee is final.

The SSO-CODC will endeavor to advise all applicants of the success or otherwise of their applications as soon as possible after the due date for applications.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP**

### *Discretion of the Committee*

The Committee has complete discretion to decide whether or not to award the Fellowship in any one year. It also has full discretion to award the Scholarship in any way it sees fit.

### *Finality of the Committee's Decision*

The decision of the Committee is final and is not subject to any appeal process.

### *Fellowship Agreement*

The provision of the Fellowship is conditional upon SSO-CODC Agreement being signed by the Applicant.

### *Completion of Evaluation Form, Publication of Paper and General Cooperation with SSO-CODC*

Successful applicants will be required to complete an evaluation form at the end of the Fellowship. It is envisaged that successful applicants will publish a paper on their experience at the conclusion of the Fellowship and cooperate with SSO-CODC generally in areas of public relations and marketing. For further details, please see the Fellowship Agreement.

### *Payment*

Payments will be made as per the written agreement.

### *Confidentiality and Privacy Obligations*

The Applicant agrees to comply with SSO Privacy Policy. Neither the Applicant nor SSO-CODC (except in the proper course of their duties or as required by law or by the other party) will disclose to any person any confidential information relating to the other party, of which it has become possessed as a result of applying for this grant including, but not limited to, these terms and conditions.

Nothing in these terms and conditions prohibits disclosure of information which:

- (a) is in the public domain;
- (b) after disclosure to a party becomes part of the public domain otherwise than as a result of the wrongful act of that party;
- (c) is received from a third party provided that it was not acquired directly or indirectly by that third party from a Party to this Agreement; or
- (d) is required to be disclosed by law or any government or governmental body authority or agency having authority over SSO-CODC or the Applicant.