



**New rules have been established for the submission and acceptance of clinical/scientific abstracts towards fellowship candidacy**

New rules have been established to address the myriad of candidate applications submitted with abstracts having widely variable scientific rigor, evaluation, and presentation. For the purpose of this document and policy, the term "abstract" includes those describing either a scientific or clinical poster or paper presentation at an accepted organization's meeting. In hopes of standardizing the process and reducing the burden on Regional Chairs and members of the Admittance Committee, a new acceptance process and formation of a new subcommittee is being proposed.

**Formation and operating conditions for the acceptance of posters/papers abstracts from other organizations beyond the American Academy of Optometry**

First and foremost, abstracts presented at the American Academy of Optometry will be the gold standard for those accepted toward candidate points in the fellowship process. The Admittance Committee will consider awarding the same points for abstracts accepted and presented at other professional meetings given reasonable similarity to the present abstract policies and processes used by the Academy.

Towards that end goal, the Admittance Committee will establish a subcommittee for the purpose of reviewing a given organization's peer review process, presentation requirements, and archival system for abstracts presented at their meeting. The subcommittee will compile a catalog of acceptable scientific or clinical organizations and meetings that are well-recognized by the members of the Academy. The subcommittee may collect needed information from the named organization, the candidate making a request, or both. They will disseminate the catalog and any updates to the Admittance Committee Chair, who will in turn distribute to the Regional Chairs and Admittance Committee members; the Board of Directors and appropriate staff will be updated as well. The Board of Directors will make the final decisions on accepting organizations for this catalog. Organizations may lose their "accepted" status if their policies and processes change and no longer conform to the guidelines specified by the Academy.



Criteria for organizations/meetings and responsibilities of the candidate:

1. Abstracts must have been peer reviewed by a committee established by said organization and must be: (i) uniquely and unambiguously searchable; (ii) available in perpetuity, in unchanged form; (iii) accessible to the public; (iv) self-contained and complete, and (v) have attributable authorship.
2. Presentations must have been made by the candidate as part of the organization's meeting. The candidate must be the first author and primary investigator and/or clinician. A required element is an opportunity for interaction with meeting attendees, such as discussion with attendees in a poster session, or in the case of an oral presentation, responding to questions.
3. A copy of both the abstract and the poster or paper itself in an appropriate electronic form must be submitted to the Admittance Committee.
4. The organization where the abstract was presented must be a major scientific and/clinical organization, well recognized by members of the Academy. The organization must have a regional, national or international profile, leadership, and membership, and not be restricted to a single institution or locality. The peer review of abstracts (see criterion #1 above) must be the responsibility of a committee that reflects the broad membership of the organization.
5. Submitted abstracts from non-approved organizations will not be accepted. Abstracts from approved organizations are not automatically accepted; the Admittance Committee makes the final determination.