

Exchange Programs

Your gateway to the AO network



AOTrauma Fellowship

- International
- Regional

You visit an Expert

- Expert visits you (Visiting Professorship)**
- Expert visits Expert**

Dear reader

Since 1971 more than 5,700 general surgeons, orthopaedic 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 rapid developments in traumatology and orthopaedic 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'.

AOTrauma 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 various AOTrauma 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 cursive script that reads "Steven Schelkun".

Steven Schelkun, MD
Chair, AOTrauma Education



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Höntzsch".

Dankward Höntzsch, MD
Consultant AOTrauma
Fellowships



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Bäuerle".

Susanne Bäuerle, RN
Director ORP
AOTrauma

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The International AOTrauma Fellowship

The AOTrauma Fellowship provides additional experience in AO techniques for fully trained orthopaedic surgeons, general 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. AOTrauma Fellowships are not organized courses and the knowledge acquired will depend a lot on the initiative of the fellow.

Worldwide reach

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

Fellowships for ORP are offered in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Great Britain. A regular AOTrauma Fellowship lasts 4–8 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. AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma activities.

In addition, applicants for an AOTrauma Fellowship must fulfill the following criteria:

- Graduation from a training program in general surgery or orthopaedics.
- Previous participation in an AOTrauma Principles course.
- Previous experience with AOTrauma 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.
- Be a member or affiliate of AOTrauma.

Letters of recommendation

Applicants should submit a letter of recommendation from an active AO member, an AO Trustee, or a representative from the local/regional AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma 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

AOTrauma 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. Most clinics provide only simple accommodation for the Fellow. If other accommodation (e.g. family) is requested, the Fellow must organize, and cover this expense personally, or find other sponsorship.

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 AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma Fellow is requested to update during his/her Fellowship and which must be submitted to get an AOTrauma Fellowship 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 AOTrauma and is based on availability (and the individual preconditions).

Coordination

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

Confirmation of acceptance

AOTrauma 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, AOTrauma considers itself free to assign the place to another candidate.

Changes of place and date

Any last minute changes of dates or places may inconvenience 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 AOTrauma. 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 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 AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma Regional Fellowship

In some areas (Asia Pacific and 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 AOTrauma Principles course is a prerequisite. In general, the regulations for an AOTrauma Regional Fellowships are the same as for AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma CAS Fellowship

To keep abreast of developments AOTrauma 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 only 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. AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma 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 an active AO member, an AO Trustee, a representative from the local/regional AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma International Fellowship.

Family and accompanying people,

Feedback—Logbook,

Logbook on operations,

Regulations and procedures

(see AOTrauma International Fellowship page 5–7)

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 AOTrauma and accepted before being arranged by the visitor and the Expert.

Duration

2–5 days

Prerequisites

The visitor must be either an AOTrauma member.

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

Fellowship offer

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

Feedback

A report to AOTrauma 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: AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma and accepted before being arranged by the unit and the expert.

Prerequisites

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

Reimbursement

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

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

Note: AOTrauma 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 AOTrauma.

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. AOTrauma will support this program financially. If the meeting is taking place, the decision has to be pre-approved by AOTrauma.

Specific details of the visit have to be submitted to AOTrauma for approval before being arranged by the experts.

Prerequisites

Both experts should be at least international AOTrauma Faculty members.

Offer

AOTrauma 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: AOTrauma 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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