

## ACO Travel Grants Information Sheet

The Australian College of Optometry (ACO) Travel Grants are provided with the aim of giving members an opportunity to travel overseas in order to gain knowledge of international best practice or to contribute their time and skills to a disadvantaged community either in remote Australia or overseas.

Travel grants range from \$200 - \$1000, depending on the category. They are available throughout the year but must be applied for at least **6 weeks prior to the travel, for the best chance of success.**

### Travel Grant Categories

#### 1. Conferences – National and International

Attend a national or international scientific or professional meeting in order to present a paper or a poster, or to take some substantial official role (other than chairman of a session) in the meeting; or

#### 2. Overseas Study Tour

Undertake an overseas study tour to develop knowledge of best practice in optometry through visiting one or more centre(s) of excellence; or

#### 3. Voluntary Optometry Service

Provide voluntary optometry services to a disadvantaged community, either in remote Australia or overseas, under the auspices of a recognised aid agency or program.

### Eligibility

Travel grants are available for award each calendar year to:

1. Financial Members of the College of at least 12 months' standing at the time of application.
2. Associate and Affiliate Members of the College of at least 24 months' standing at the time of application.
3. PhD students with a supervisor who is a Financial Member of at least 12 months standing at the time of application for the Conference Category. If applying under this category, the Financial Member waives their right to apply.

### Grant Amounts

Grant Category	Grant Amount (excluding GST)
Conference	\$200 – Conference requiring national travel
	\$500 – Conference requiring international travel
Overseas Study Tour	Up to \$1,000
Voluntary optometry services	Up to \$1,000

## Terms and Conditions

1. Travel Grants may only be provided for travel that is yet to occur and should apply at least 6 weeks prior.
2. Travel must occur within the calendar year. Funds will be paid to successful applicants providing all appropriate documentation is provided, including evidence of travel arrangements and provision of receipts.
3. The ACO may request further information from applicants and reserves the right to contact organisations cited in the application to verify information.
4. Generally, members may only receive one Travel Grant in a three year timeframe. Applicants applying under the Conferences category may receive one Travel Grant in a one year timeframe.
5. Recipients of grants are required to provide a brief written report to the ACO within 6 weeks of returning from their travel, detailing the professional elements of the travel experience. In the case of conference presentations, recipients should include a copy of their abstract and will acknowledge the support of the ACO on their conference presentation or poster.
6. In the event that the proposed travel is cancelled or postponed, the recipient is required to immediately inform the ACO in writing. If the proposed travel is cancelled, and if the Travel Grant has already been paid, the recipient must reimburse the ACO of the grant, within 2 weeks of the cancellation being known to the recipient. If the proposed travel is postponed and is planned to occur later than 9 months from the date of notification of successful application, the ACO will determine if the Travel Grant shall continue. Applications can be resubmitted in the following calendar year in the event that travel plans are cancelled or postponed
7. Applicants shall be responsible for paying any taxes incurred or arising from the receipt of a Travel Grant. In the event that a successful applicant is registered for GST, the ACO will pay the grant and associated GST. Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from the Australian Taxation Office regarding possible tax implications of the Travel Grant.

**All enquiries and completed application forms should be forwarded to:**

Membership Division  
Australian College of Optometry  
374 Cardigan Streets  
CARLTON VIC 3053

Tel: 03 349 7578  
Email: [membership@aco.org.au](mailto:membership@aco.org.au)