

CALL FOR POSTERS—2026

65th Annual Heart of America Eye Care Congress February 20-22, 2026, at the Sheraton Hotel at Crown Center, Kansas City, MO 64108

INTRODUCTION

The Heart of America Eye Care Congress (HOAECC) is pleased to invite you to participate in the Clinical and Scientific Poster Session at the 2026 HOAECC meeting. The poster session will be an interactive poster session on Friday, February 20, 2026 (5:45 PM—7:00 PM) where presenters will be present for questions and answers.

CALL FOR POSTERS

Abstracts based on unique clinical cases and all aspects of optometric research are currently being accepted. All case reports and research must be complete at the time of submission. All abstracts must be submitted online by November 15, 2025 (11:59 PM CT). The abstracts can be submitted online at <http://hoaecc.org/posters> beginning October 1, 2025.

POSTER SELECTION CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

Authors will be notified by e-mail of the acceptance of their poster by mid-December. Only accepted posters will be displayed. Late or walk-in posters will not be allowed.

All abstracts must meet the following requirements:

- a) The complete abstract must be submitted online to <http://hoaecc.org/posters> by November 15, 2025
- b) A primary author may only submit **ONE** poster.
- c) The online abstract submission form must be filled out completely. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.
- d) The abstract must be no more than 250 words (not including the keywords, title and authors).

- e) The information conveyed must be of sufficient general interest to the optometric community.
- f) The abstract must be clear, concise, and well-written in anticipation of publication.
- g) The abstract must contain sufficient detail for evaluation.

h) Acceptable format for Clinical Case Posters:

- a. Case History
- b. Pertinent Findings
- c. Differential Diagnosis
- d. Diagnosis & Discussion
- e. Treatment & Management
- f. Conclusions

i) Acceptable format for Scientific Research Posters:

- a. Abstract Purpose
- b. Abstract Methods
- c. Abstract Results
- d. Abstract Conclusions

Scientific abstracts must meet the following additional requirements:

- The abstract must be based on original research.
- The abstract must describe a scientific investigation of the idea or product being studied.
- The abstract must demonstrate a clear and soundly tested hypothesis.
- The conclusions in the abstract must appear to be justified by the results presented.
- The abstract must contain evidence of a significant new result and the significance must be clear from the abstract.
- The abstract may contain preliminary results.

Clinical Case report abstracts must meet the following additional requirements:

- The case report must highlight timely or essential information, not just a review of information already in the literature.
- The case report must be unique

- The case report must demonstrate complete follow through of patient care.
- The clinical significance of the case report must be clear from the abstract.

SELECTED POSTERS

Optometric residents who are the primary poster author are eligible for the following benefits if the poster is selected:

- 1) One of five \$2,000 grand prize awards for outstanding student/ resident submissions as selected by the HOAECC Board of Directors. The five winners will receive free transportation and lodging for the 2026 Congress.
- 2) Publication of their poster on the HOAECC website.
- 3) Free registration is provided for students, and residents, who have an accepted poster to HOAECC if registered by December 31, 2025 (travel and lodging not included). **DO NOT** register for the meeting before your abstract is accepted. You will receive the FREE registration details after your poster is accepted. You will not be refunded if you register prior to your acceptance to the posters.
- 4) Doctors who are educators, and have an accepted poster, will receive \$100 off the normal practitioner registration fee. Registration must be completed before December 31, 2025, to receive the discounted registration.

Please note that authors of selected posters (other than the five grand prize winners) will be responsible for hotel & transportation and all other fees associated with attendance at the HOAECC meeting. Posters are peer-reviewed, and only those that meet the acceptance criteria will be selected for presentation.

ATTENDING THE POSTER SESSION

On acceptance, registration information for the 2026 HOAECC meeting will be sent to the primary author email. You will be given a code for your free, or reduced registration at that time. Students and residents must use the code for FREE registration by December 31, 2025. If you paid for your registration prior to the notification, no refund will be issued.

Details about the meeting and hotel reservations can be found on the HOAECC website at <https://www.hoecc.org/> **Presenting authors must register for the meeting by December 31, 2025.** Authors must arrive at the HOAECC meeting in time to set up their posters on Friday, February 20, 2026, between 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM, and must be present with their poster at the interactive session from 5:45 PM—7:00 PM.

Beginning January 1, 2026, residents pay \$125.00 (late fee) and \$155 (on-site fee). Those practitioners in academia that present an accepted poster, will get \$100 off practitioner registration before December 31, 2025, but pay normal registration fees on January 1, 2026. Only the primary author receives the \$100 off registration discount. Doctors who have accepted posters, but are not educators, will pay normal registration fees.

POSTER SPECIFICATIONS

The HOAECC will be using a 48" vertical X 96" horizontal tackboard. All text on the poster should be in type no smaller than 18 pt. and must be legible from 3-4 feet. Each illustration should contain a caption. Each author is responsible for printing their own poster. There is NO digital display of posters. We will provide push pins to hang the posters.

DIGITAL POSTER SUBMISSION is due January 15, 2026

After a poster has been accepted, a link for online submission will be emailed to each primary author. Digital images of posters must be submitted by January 15, 2026. Digital submission is only for HOAECC archives and are NOT for digital display at the HOAECC. Authors are responsible for bringing a printed poster to HOAECC.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPTOMETRY FELLOWSHIP POINTS

All graduates of schools or colleges of optometry who present an original poster during the 2026 Poster Session will be eligible for points toward Academy fellowship. The poster must be **original content** and not presented at other major meetings. The primary author must be present during the entire poster session from 5:45 pm to 7:00 pm. American Academy of Optometry will determine which posters meet the criteria for Fellowship points.

Important Dates:

October 1st, 2025: Abstract Online submission opens

November 15, 2025: Abstract online submission closes

December 31, 2025. Registration deadline for presenters to receive discounted registration.

Students, Residents, and Educators will be sent a code by email once their abstract is accepted.

January 15, 2026: Digital copy of poster must be submitted online

February 20, 2026, HOAECC Meeting

February 20, 2026 (3:00 PM—5:00 PM) Poster Setup

February 20, 2026 (5:45 PM—7:00 PM) Interactive poster session

HOAECC CONTACT PERSON INFORMATION

Poster questions should be sent to:

Eric E Polk, OD, FAAO

8012 Gannon Ave.

St. Louis, MO 63130

(314) 706-5342

E-Mail: *Education1@hoaecc.org*

Registration questions can be sent to *Registration@hoaecc.org*