Learn more. Research deeper. Become the best.
We are AO Spine, the leading global academic community for innovative education and research in spine care, inspiring lifelong learning, and improving patients’ lives.

Welcome

I welcome every one of you to join AO Spine and become a part of the largest international network of spine surgeons. Why? Take the leap and you will find a world of advantages waiting for you.

With AO Spine you will be recognised: we are the only truly international, multicultural spine society in the world. AO Spine is known for our state-of-the-art educational and academic programs, from well-structured courses and hands-on training workshops to mentors-hip facilities and fellowship opportunities. We drive research through our Knowledge Forums dedicated to trauma, spinal cord injury, deformity, tumor, and degeneration. And we offer numerous clinical tools for your practice: the AO Surgery Reference, the #myAO platform, the Global Spine Journal, or the AO Global Data platform, just to mention a few.

But, most of all, I want to show you how AO Spine is more—with AO Spine you literally connect with the “Who’s Who” in spine surgery, participate in academics and research and collaborate with them. You will develop close professional relationships and friendships. You will be exposed to pathology and treatment strategies and philosophies worldwide. You will find a constantly evolving dynamic society, always innovating. Recent examples are the ‘Global Spine Diploma Program’, which provides accreditation and recognition of spine training for surgeons worldwide, and the ‘Clinical Expert Advice Forums’, which collects the crystalized experience of experts on challenging clinical situations.

You will see that—no matter what stage of your career you are in, from trainee to senior professor—AO Spine has a multitude of opportunities. So why not? And why wait? Join the AO Spine family today!

Shanmuganathan Rajasekaran
AO Spine International Chairperson
Join the leading global academic community in spine care

“AO Spine is the number one organization for keeping up to date with innovative spine procedures, state-of-the-art education, latest research findings, and lifelong global friendships.”

Dan Riew
Professor Orthopedic Surgery, Columbia University

What we do

Learn
We are passionate about improving patients’ lives by making sure you stay at the forefront of spinal care.

We continuously integrate the latest research advances and treatment outcomes into our educational programs. Our competency-based Curriculum ensures you have the skills and knowledge required for your clinical practice. The AO Spine Global Diploma Program provides the pathway and the AO Spine Global Diploma Exam certifies your knowledge. Our members can apply for fellowships and observership programs at all stages of their careers. Our faculty training programs and teaching opportunities are there for you to become the best and give back, train the next generations, giving them the same and even better opportunities.

Connect
We are passionate about improving patients’ lives by advancing your professional career.

Our collaboration tools and palette of events allow you to share knowledge, network, and talk to your peers and colleagues around the world, virtually anytime, anywhere. The Global Spine Congress and AO Davos Courses are the place to be, where you will connect and discuss your cases with your peers and key opinion leaders in person, make lifelong friendships, plant seeds for novel ideas, and build professional collaborations.

Research
We are passionate about generating new knowledge that matters to you and your patients.

We sponsor innovative preclinical and clinical studies adhering to the highest standards. Members can participate through open calls and apply for grants and awards. The Regional AO Spine Young Investigator Researcher Grant Awards and global Discovery and Innovation Awards are specially targeted at scientist in the early stages of their career. The AO Spine Knowledge Forums are the engines of our evidence-based clinical research. They develop AO Spine classifications, staging of the disease, treatment guidelines, and outcome measures—meaningful research to support you in your practice.

Practice
Our clinical tools, research outcomes, and learning assets are developed by spine surgeons for spine surgeons.

They can improve spine patient care and outcomes, and most are available as open access for the global spine community.

All AO Spine activities are based on our combined knowledge. It is the foundation of our state-of-the-art innovative education and research activities, our treatment guidelines, AO Spine classifications, as well as the AO Surgery Reference, the #myAO platform, and the AO Global Data PROMs platform.
Learn

Based on the **philosophy of lifelong learning**, every year AO Spine provides over 200 educational opportunities to over 13,000 spine surgeons and spine specialists worldwide.

AO Spine events are based on regular needs and are organized locally, regionally, globally, and virtually. Learning is more and more blended combining online learning modules at your own pace with hands-on in-person training courses, and introducing virtual and augmented reality into reality.

AO Spine educational events 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Educational events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>1,174</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe and Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe and Southern Africa</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AO Spine Curriculum

The AO Spine curriculum is based on competency and encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It is a learning framework based on entrustable professional activities (EPAs). This is an activity that can be entrusted only to surgeons who have proven they can work independently in the given situation to achieve a desired outcome. The AO Spine curriculum aims at a final level of autonomy, fully independent practice.

AO Spine Global Diploma Exam

The AO Spine Global Diploma Exam is a formal assessment of competencies required to manage patients with spinal disorders. It is designed for experienced spine surgeons who want to certify their knowledge. Exam level is minimum of 5 years in spinal surgical practice after graduating in orthopedic or neurosurgery.

Clinical Expert Advice Forums

Evidence based medicine and randomized prospective controlled trials are the basis of clinical medicine. While we strongly rely on this evidence, the practicing surgeon frequently encounters clinical scenarios for which solutions from such trials are not possible. The AO Spine Clinical Expert Advice Forums aims to fill that void, by documenting expert advice on everyday clinical scenarios, from diagnosis and management decisions to intra-op events and post-operative complications.

Fellowship and observership programs

As an AO Spine member, you can benefit from our investments into various long- and short-term fellowship programs and observation opportunities. These programs offer additional experience in surgical techniques for fully trained orthopaedics and neurosurgeons. Program are designed according to regional needs.

Faculty development

The AO Faculty Education Program (FEP) provides a framework to explore a variety of teaching methods. It concentrates on practical skills and guides you through the specifics needed to deliver high impact lectures. It demonstrates how to lead interactive discussion groups and helps you effectively run practical exercises for your participants.

“AO Spine brings orthopedic and neurosurgery spine specialists together to improve surgical outcomes. AO Spine Education combines mentor’s surgical experience, instructional technology, and validated learning theory to provide learners with a personalized experience.”

Michelle Clarke
Neurosurgeon specializing in complex spine and oncology, Mayo Clinic Rochester, Minnesota
AO Spine is the only truly global academic spine society. There are more ways you can benefit and get involved than in any other spine organization.

AO Spine Global Diploma Exam
The AO Spine Global Diploma Exam is a formal assessment of competencies required to manage patients with spinal disorders. (→ p. 7)
www.aospine.org/gde

Global Spine Journal (GSJ)
The official journal of AO Spine is an international, peer-reviewed journal, and the only open access spine journal with an impact factor—2.683. It provides an integrated, balanced view on clinical and basic science studies of spinal disorders.
www.aospine.org/gsj

Global Spine Congress (GSC)
The annual highlight of the spine world brings together thousands of professionals from around the world. At the GSC, spine surgeons and practitioners, health care professionals and researchers exchange ideas, network, and learn about the latest research, techniques, and technologies in spine surgery. (→ p. 11)
www.aospine.org/gsc

AO Global Data
The world’s largest orthopaedic outcomes database with over a billion datapoints offers valuable insights to compare performance, determine indicators for patient outcomes, make informed decisions, and conduct multinational research. (→ p. 5)
www.aofoundation.org/ao-global-data

AO Spine Tools
Advance patient care and your career with clinical tools and learning assets (→ p. 5)

Courses and events
Attend AO Spine educational events (→ p. 6)

AO Spine International Board
Contribute to the future of the spine surgeon community on a global level (→ p. 14)

Fellowships
Benefit from fellowship programs and observation opportunities (→ p. 7)

AO PEER
Develop your research skills (→ p. 13)

AO Spine Governance
Start shaping future local and regional strategies (→ p. 14)

Grants and Awards
Apply for research and funding opportunities (→ p. 13)

Research
Participate and take the lead in spine studies and share your results (→ p. 13)

AO Spine Knowledge Forums
Do high quality collaborative research and improve the care of spine patients around the world (→ p. 13)

Faculty Training
Learn to lead peers in a variety of different learning methods (→ p. 7)

AO Spine Tools
Educational Advisor
Help many more patients by educating the next generations of surgeons and faculty (→ p. 7)

Learn
Connect
Research

Have your say
Vote and participate in elections (→ p. 14)

www.aospine.org/gde

www.aospine.org/gsj

www.aospine.org/gsc

www.aofoundation.org/ao-global-data
“AO Spine is a unique and innovative intellectual platform, allowing you to interact with the most renowned spine surgeons from around the world and learn cutting edge skills and latest practices in spine care.”

Yan Wang
Chief Surgeon of 301 Orthopedics, Beijing

Connect

Membership is the key that unlocks all that AO Spine has to offer: access to free or discounted education, opportunities to receive grants or become faculty, voting or becoming an officer to shape the direction of our society, and more.

Members find a lot more than “member benefits”. They also enjoy belonging and being part of the world’s leading academic spine society.

Global Spine Congress
This annual meeting is unique in its ways of sharing knowledge and developing new approaches to the treatment of spinal disorders. It offers members an enhanced experience through members-only sessions led by key opinion leaders, and the Members Assembly, where the community takes the leading role. It’s the only truly international scientific spine congress in the world, and you can be part of it! Submit your abstract and get the chance to present your work to the world’s best spine experts.

AO Davos Courses
The AO Foundation flagship event offers an in-depth program for surgeons, which is directly related to their daily practice. Take part in an extraordinary and ambitious learning experience from Advanced to Master’s Level, and network with global key opinion leaders in an exceptionally inspiring environment. The AO Davos Courses is the place to learn and make lifelong friendships.

Diversity and inclusion
Under the umbrella of Access—the program through which AO delivers its diversity, inclusion, and mentorship initiatives—AO Spine aims to empower female surgeons, as well as surgeons from underrepresented minorities, to provide strong and diverse mentors and role models, and greater leadership opportunities. We invite you to join our active members in their efforts to address the imbalance of surgeons working in spine.
AO Spine sponsors innovative preclinical and clinical studies adhering to the highest standards. We encourage our members to participate through open calls and to apply for our grants and awards.

The AO Spine Knowledge Forums are the engines of our evidence-based clinical research and have been singled out for being behind AO Spine’s unique academic status among the spine societies. They develop AO Spine classifications, staging of the disease, treatment guidelines, and outcome measures—meaningful research to support you in your practice.

Clinical research
Contribute to clinical studies that will impact how we manage our patients in the future.

The AO Spine Knowledge Forums are expert-driven global study groups generating knowledge in the spine pathologies of tumor, deformity, spinal cord injury, trauma, and degenerative disease. AO Spine members are invited to participate through open calls and expert surveys.

The AO Spine Knowledge Forums are each led by a Steering Committee of up to 10 world-renowned researchers and have over 150 Associate Members representing all AO Spine regions. Membership is based purely on merit.

Through research, you have the potential to change how people are diagnosed and treated in the future.

Preclinical research
Novelty comes from where clinicians meet basic scientists and vice versa, where there is real collaboration between all contributors.

AO Spine performs preclinical research in collaboration with the AO Research Institute Davos (ARI). Focus is on intervertebral disc degeneration and repair and postoperative spinal infections. To make innovation happen, we support collaboration between clinicians and basic scientists.

We encourage AO Spine clinicians to participate in discussions and to interact with basic scientists.

Research training
Benefit from the wealth of research expertise within the AO.

The AO Program for Education and Excellence in Research (AO PEER) offers training in all phases of clinical research. If you have gaps in your knowledge, need to know more about the principles of research, or want to apply for grant funding but don’t know how, you can profit from AO.

The AO PEER platform provides an array of trusted resources and online learning opportunities, including guidelines, courses, e-learning modules, articles, checklists, and templates covering all aspects of clinical research.

"We aspire to provide simpler solutions for complex spinal problems via international research and global educational collaboration. Excellence through evidence."

Jeremy Reynolds
Spinal Lead, The Oxford Sarcoma Service, UK, Regional Lead, Thames Valley Spinal Network
AO Spine operates under its own governance model managed by the AO Spine International Board. As a voting member you can vote for your Country Council representatives and participate in the Member Representative elections.

**Governance**

- **Shanmuganathan Rajasekaran**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine International Board

- **Asdrubal Falavigna**
  Chairperson-Elect
  AO Spine International Board

- **Norman Chutkan**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Community Development Commission

- **Emre Acaroğlu**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Education Commission

- **Dino Samartzis**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Research Commission

- **Manabu Ito**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Asia Pacific

- **Lorin Benneker**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Europe and Southern Africa

- **Mohammad El-Sharkawi**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Middle East and Northern Africa

- **Juan Emmerich**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine Latin America

- **Michael Daubs**
  Chairperson
  AO Spine North America

**Membership**

Get involved and make a difference!

- **Membership**
  - European Spine Journal
  - Journal of Neurosurgery: Spine
  - Spine
  - Curated articles

- **Membership Plus**
  - In addition to all Membership benefits
  - Access to 3 online journals
  - Access to a list of curated articles

  - **Membership**
    - 1 year: 100 CHF
    - 2 years: 180 CHF
    - 3 years: 250 CHF
    - 5 years: 400 CHF

  - **Membership Plus**
    - 1 year: 230 CHF
    - 2 years: 410 CHF
    - 3 years: 585 CHF
    - 5 years: 920 CHF

  Students and residents, save 50 percent today on our one- and two-year Membership and Membership Plus packages. Surgeons and researchers from low-income countries also enjoy a significantly reduced flat fee rate (discount does not apply for Membership Plus).

**The AO Spine Commissions**

The AO Spine Commissions in Education, Research, and Community Development are responsible for programs, strategies, and tools for implementation by the AO Spine Regions. They leverage and share resources across the AO Spine Regions, enforce AO Spine’s brand, and manage alliances between AO Spine and other academic bodies.

The Commission consists of a Chairperson, who is an Executive Member of the AO Spine International Board, and representatives of the AO Spine Regional Boards. The AO Spine Research Commission also includes the Chairpersons of the 5 AO Spine Knowledge Forums.

**The Regional Boards**

The Regional Boards are the operational bodies of AO Spine and focus on activities within their Regions. They have responsibility and accountability for delivering valued products and services to members. The Regional Boards are elected by the members of the AO Country Councils.

**Membership Plus benefits**

- **Learn**
  - Discounts on registration fees, including Global Spine Congress and AO Davos Courses
  - Access to the AO video hub with a wealth of recorded webinars, lectures, and training videos
  - Discounts on e-books and books
  - Access to AO Spine Fellowships
  - Access to Faculty development opportunities

- **Practice**
  - AO Global Data
  - myAO

- **Research**
  - Opportunities to participate in AO Spine studies
  - Access research grants and awards
  - Global Spine Journal publication fee waiver
  - Access to AO PEER-Program for Education and Excellence in Research

- **Connect**
  - Invitation to exclusive member sessions and networking events
  - Full access to the AO Spine Member Directory
  - Participate in elections

For more information, email us at membership@aospine.org or visit us at www.aospine.org/membership

* Low income countries according to the World Bank list
Join the leading global academic community in spine care