

AOSpine Latin America Fellowship Program - Call 2019

Program description

1. Purpose

The purpose of the "AOSpine Latin America Fellowship Program" is to provide an additional improvement experience for orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons interested in spine surgery. The Fellow is trained to learn the principles, designations, planning, techniques, and complications related to spine surgery. The Fellow is expected to take advantage from all aspects and benefits offered by the program throughout the AOSpine centers network in Latin America and worldwide.

2. Program standards

2.1 Fellowships modalities

2.1.1 Long-term

Description: Training aimed for surgeons (orthopedic or neurosurgeon) who had recently finished (up to one year) the medical residence and are interested in spine surgery as specialty. Financial support will be provided only for 6-months fellowships. Candidates for 12-months fellowships are enrolled as Associate Fellows with free membership and other benefits. No financial support provided.

Requirements: The candidate must have up to one-year experience in spine surgery and must have been accepted in the regular selection process of the chosen institution for 12-months fellowships.

Length: Six months to one year.

Stipend: 6-months fellows will receive a fixed stipend of CHF 6,000.00 (six thousand Swiss francs). There is no financial support for 12-months fellowship.

2.1.2 Short-term

Description: Training aimed for surgeons with more than one year of experience in spine surgery who want to improve a specific technique or deepen its knowledge in some of the spine pathologies. Financial support provided.

Requirements: Candidates must have already finished the spine specialty and have at least three years of AOSpine membership by the deadline of the subscriptions.

Length: One to three months (according to each spine center regulation).

Stipend: Fellow will receive a fixed amount of CHF 1,000.00 (one thousand Swiss francs) per month, regardless of region or country.

2.1.3 Observership

Description: Training in which the candidate is assigned as a visitor to follow surgeries and specific procedures. This fellowship does not have financial support for the candidate.

Requirements: The candidate must have at least three years of experience in spine surgery and one year of AOSpine membership by the registration date.

Length: Three to 15 days (according to each spine center availability).

Stipend: There is no financial support.

2.2 Educational standards

- The Fellowship Program provides wide experience in treating patients of spine diseases so the participant can better handle the daily practice with professionalism and responsibility by the end of the Fellow activity.
- Fellows are expected to attend surgical procedures of every kind of spine disease performed in the selected spine center. The responsibility level will gradually increase according to the knowledge and skills shown by the fellow.
- By the end of the program, Fellows are expected to have achieved full command of the surgical techniques and surgical instrumentation used in the spine center where they attended the activity.
- By the end of the program, fellows are expected to have the capacity to properly select patients for surgery. Therefore, Fellows will be permanently under the supervision of the spine center staff and evaluated on their clinical and radiologic analysis capability, medical and surgical treatments of patients

** In case of any fellow presents behavior problems, lack of punctuality or any other attitude that may be harmful to the proper progress or conclusion of the fellowship, the spine center and/or AOSpine may immediately finish his/her program.*

2.3 Activities

Throughout the training Fellows must be fully dedicated to the assigned activities by the spine center director, besides finishing the following activities to achieve an AOSpine certification:

- **Continued Education Program (CEP):** every Fellow is automatic enrolled in an exclusive virtual environment within the Continued Education Program as soon as he/she is approved for the fellowship. In order to be certified, all fellows must attend and conclude the online modules according to the selected program. In the unlikely event of non-compliance with the fellowship duties and/or fellowship cancelation, the fellow in question will be automatically excluded from the virtual environment.
 - **Short-term:** participants must have finished Level I before starting the fellowship and complete Level II in order to be certified.
 - **Long-term:** complete Level I and Level II are required in order to be certified.
- **Logbook:** fellows must fill in a monthly report regarding their activities in the spine center and upload it timely (month by month) in the system.
- **Research project:** long-term fellows must take part in at least one clinical research project developed by the spine center in accordance with the center director orientation.
- **Fellow feedback:** by the end of the program all fellows must fill in and depose a confidential form evaluating the spine center and its training.

** All the activities listed above are mandatory for receiving the financial support and program certificate.*

3. Program terms

- The fellowship program must take place in one of the AOSpine centers in the region or worldwide (see the list in the website).
- When necessary, the spine center director may refer the fellow to a partner institution in order to complement its training.
- No financial support will be given to fellows doing fellowship in the same institution they did their medical residence.
- Fellow must provide their own health and travel insurance valid in the country of destination for the whole length of the fellowship with full assistance and medical coverage. Fellows in institutions in their home country may have just a health insurance with national coverage.
- Candidates may apply for fellowship while still medical residents. However, they will be required to present an official letter from the institution confirming the end of their training before the fellowship starts.
- No financial support will be provided to ex-fellows for at least two years after their last AOSpine Fellowship certificate with stipend. The aim is to encourage new applications while supporting new members in the program.
- Visas and licenses: while attending programs outside their home country all Fellow will be subjected to the local laws and restrictions applied to medical practice by foreigners. Fellows must have in mind that without specific medical licenses, there is no guarantee (that) they will be allowed to practice surgical procedures during their training and may be restricted to observational activities.
- 12-months fellows who accept the proposal and agree to the terms will be named **Associate Fellows**, gaining automatic access to the following benefits:
 - AOSpine fellowship certificate after completing the activities and criteria defined in this document;
 - One-year free membership at the start of the fellowship followed by an additional one-year free membership once they have completed the program;
 - Free access to all AOSpine Educational Events throughout the fellowship program as observers and with special discounts if they want to be participants;

* *The access will depend on vacancy availability and previous demonstration of interest by the candidate. The fellow in question must indicate the event he/she wants to attend and await confirmation. Participation will be as observer with no certificate in hands-on trainings.*

4. Registration process

4.1 Long-term Fellowship

Every long-term fellow in an AOSpine center program will be invited to join the community as **Associate Fellows** with the benefits and obligations listed in this document. If not already enrolled in a program, candidates may apply through the system. However, they must be accepted in the fellow program of each institution in accordance with the institution selection process.

Candidates for 6-months must fulfill the following criteria:

- Be an AOSpine member for at least **one year** by the subscription deadline.
- Have a specialization in orthopedic or neurosurgery.
- Had attended at least one AO academic activity (any division attends this criterion).
- Register to the program in due time.
- Have sent the following documents:
 - AOSpine registration form filled in (see in: aospine.org);
 - Resumé with published papers (if applicable);
 - Letter of acceptance or letter of intention from the selected AOSpine center (recommended);
 - Copy of the medical university certificate or diploma;
 - Copy of the orthopedic or neurosurgery specialization certificate (medical residence);
 - Copy of an AO event certificate (certificates from any of the divisions accepted);

4.2 Short-term Fellowships (National, Regional and International)

In order to be selected for a Short-term fellowship, candidates must fulfill the following criteria:

- Be an AOSpine member for at least **three years** by the subscription deadline.
- Have a specialization in orthopedic or neurosurgery.
- Had attended at least one AO academic activity (any division attends this criterion).
- Register to the program in due time.
- Have sent the following documents:
 - AOSpine registration form filled in (see in: aospine.org);
 - Resumé with published papers (if applicable);
 - Letter of acceptance or letter of intention from the selected AOSpine center (recommended);
 - Copy of the medical university certificate or diploma;
 - Copy of the orthopedic or neurosurgery specialization certificate (medical residence);
 - Copy of an AO event certificate (certificates from any of the divisions accepted);

4.3 Observership

Candidates to Observership fellowship must attend the following criteria:

- Three years minimum of experience in spine surgery
- Be an AOSpine member for at least **one year** by the subscription date.
- Have attended at least one AOSpine advanced course.
- Enroll in the program at least three months before its scheduled starting date.
- Have sent the following documents*:
 - AOSpine registration form filled in (see in: aospine.org);
 - Resumé with published papers (if applicable);
 - Letter of acceptance or letter of intention from the selected AOSpine center (recommended);
 - Copy of the medical university certificate or diploma;
 - Copy of the orthopedic or neurosurgery specialization certificate (medical residence);
 - Copy of an AO advanced course;
 - Foreign language certificate**.

* *Applications for spine centers outside Latin America are to be in English*

** *Applicants in countries with language other than their own must formally attest advanced knowledge in English or in the local language (depending upon the center requirements). Proficiency in English is to be attested by an international recognized certificate such as IELTS, TOEFL, or equivalent.*

5. Selection process

The selection process of the candidates will be as follows:

- 1) Documentation review according to the described criteria and deadlines;
- 2) Submission of the approved registrations to the National Country Councils;
- 3) Submission of approved registrations and council evaluations to the spine center directors; Interview with the spine center director when necessary (e-mail, phone/online communication or in person);
- 4) Final approval by the spine center director;
- 5) Allocation according to financial availability.

6. Financial support

6.1 Short-term and 6-months fellowship

Short-term fellowships and 6-months long-term fellowships have a fixed stipend monthly value of CHF 1,000 (one thousand Swiss francs), regardless of the fellowship model and/or destination country (national, regional or international).

6.2 Payment conditions

- Stipends will be paid within four weeks after the fellowship starting date;
- The first payment will only be made after the official confirmation of the fellow arrival at the spine center and confirmation of his/her health insurance documentation;
- When asked, all fellows must pass on to AOSpine their bank data so as payments can be properly made;
- Bank transfers can only be made to a bank account in the fellow's name. AOSpine will not transfer money to a third party account;
- All payments will be conditioned to the fellow participation in the Continuing Education Program (CEP) and monthly reports (Logbooks);
- In accordance with its cash flow policy, AOSpine will decide on the number of payments throughout the fellowship program to be paid to each fellow;
- Fellows will be the sole responsables for their own travel and housing cost and expenses.

Support and office contact

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