

# Strategic Plan 2023-2027

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**International Orthoptic Association**  
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INTERNATIONAL  
ORTHOPTIC  
ASSOCIATION

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# A message from the IOA

The International Orthoptic Association (IOA) is a structured, volunteer-based organization that achieves a wide range of outcomes, under limited financial resources. It relies on people contributing their time and expertise in a voluntary capacity for the development of the profession. The IOA Council of Management, comprised of representatives from each member national orthoptic association meets annually (and virtually in-between annual meetings) to achieve the aims and objectives of the Association.

It is hard to believe that at the beginning of 2020, our Association, and our world operated in an environment without COVID-19. Since the virus's onset, our volunteers have coped with the pandemic and continued their practice. During this period, the IOA and all international working orthoptists have adjusted our priorities and focus to meet the immediate needs of responding to the pandemic while also continuing to work on long-term strategies to advance orthoptic care. Recognizing the unique environment, we are in, the IOA has developed a four-year strategic plan that we believe will get us closer to achieving our vision of a global advocate for orthoptic learning, research and professional excellence.

The IOA 2023-2027 Strategic Plan includes five strategic objectives or pillars that will guide the association's work as we advance orthoptics all over the world. These include:

- ▶ International Cooperation
- ▶ Promotion and Development
- ▶ Education and Research
- ▶ Standards and Quality
- ▶ Operations Management

For each of these goals, missions and agendas are defined to provide greater clarity and focus for aligning the IOA programs and their activities. Although presented separately, these goals are interrelated. The successful achievement of one goal can impact the success of others.

The IOA Strategic Plan will help inform the Program Coordinators and the IOA council of Management and resource allocation decisions over the next four years. It aligns with the previous Strategic Plan and will directly support the priorities of our Articles of Associations. Finally, the IOA Strategic Plan reinforces principles of organizational

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efficiency and effectiveness to better meet the needs of all members of the IOA and all orthoptist or future orthoptists worldwide.



***‘The best time to plant a tree was 25 years ago. The second-best time to plant a tree is today.’ Eliue Kipchoge, Kenyan Marathon world record holder***

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# Organizational Profile

## Registered Address of the Association

RPG Crouch Chapman LLP  
62 Wilson Street London  
EC2A 2BU  
United Kingdom  
Homepage: <http://www.internationalorthoptics.org>

## Formation

The British Orthoptic Society initiated and organized the first International Orthoptic Congress in London on July 3rd, 1967. At the conclusion of the Congress, the BOS proposed the formation of the International Orthoptic Association. Representatives from Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Holland, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom formulated the IOA's Constitution.

## Charitable Status

The IOA is established for charitable objects and purposes only according to the laws of England and Wales for the benefit of the public. In 1970, the Association was granted charitable status by the Charity Commission of the United Kingdom and was thus exempted from the payment of most United Kingdom taxes.

## Legal Entity

The Association was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on April 16th, 1974, according to English Law under the Companies Act 1948 to 1967 of the United Kingdom. Incorporation confers many desirable advantages upon the Association including the right to own property, to function as a legal entity for the purpose of enforcing and defending its rights and assets and defining and regulating the conduct of its affairs. In other words, the Association has, under English law, the same rights, and liabilities as any other registered company.

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## Member Associations (full and associate)

### **Full Members:**

Australia: Orthoptics Australia; Austria: Verband der Orthoptistinnen und Orthoptisten Österreichs; Belgium: Belgische Orthoptische Vereniging v.z.w. Association Belge d'Orthoptie a.s.b.l.; Canada: the Canadian Orthoptic Society; France: Association Francaise d'Orthoptique; Germany: Berufsverband Orthoptik Deutschland e.V. (BOD); Italy: Associazione Italiana Ortottisti Assistenti in Oftalmologia (AIOraO); Japan: Japanese Association of Certified Orthoptists (JACO); The Netherlands: Nederlandse Vereniging van Orthoptisten (NVvO); Portugal: Associacao Portuguesa de Ortoptistas (APOR); Scandinavia: Scandinavian Orthoptic Association (SOA); Switzerland: Schweizerischer Verband der Orthoptistinnen und Orthoptisten SVO; Tunisia: Association Tunisienne d'Orthoptie (ATO); United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland: British & Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS); United States of America: American Association of Certified Orthoptists (AACO)

### **Associate Members:**

Asia Pacific: Asian Pacific Orthoptic Association; Brazil: Conselho Brasileiro de Ortoptica; Czech Republic: Czech Orthoptic Association (CSO); Hong Kong: Hong Kong Orthoptists Association; New Zealand: New Zealand Orthoptic Society; Pakistan: orthoptic wing of Society of Optometrists, Orthoptists & Ophthalmic Technologist Pakistan (SOOP); South Africa: South African Orthoptic Society

### **Individual Members:**

Orthoptists who reside in a country that does not have a national association or that has a national association which does not have either a seat on the Council or observer status on the Council are eligible to Individual Membership upon completing an application in the form.

## Council of Management

The IOA Council (COM) consist of Council Members who represent each national member association. Council members are elected by their national association in any manner determined by that association. Four Directors being the officers set out below elected from the membership.

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## **Association Officers (directors)**

The officers of the IOA are:

The Deputy President

The Secretary

The Treasurer

The President

The affairs of the association are administered by the council and perform all acts on behalf of the association as may be exercised and performed by the articles of association. The president has the right, as chairperson, to preside at all sessions of the council at which the president is present.

Council members can co-opt an IOA member to function as an advisor to the council at any time. A co-opted advisor is invited to attend council meetings as an observer to advise them but has no voting rights on the issues to be determined by the council members.

## **IOA Collaborations and Memberships**

The IOA is a supranational member of the International Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus Council (IPOSC) and by virtue of IPOSC membership in the International Council of Ophthalmology membership in ICO is also attained in this international body. The IOA also holds membership in the World Society of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus and sits on its Global Advisory Council. Finally, the IOA has a unique and supportive relationship with the International Strabismological Association.

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# Strategic Direction



The IOA envisions itself as the global advocate for orthoptic learning, research and professional excellence.

## Mission Statement



*The International Orthoptic Association serves its members by:*

- Developing the capacities of orthoptic professionals.
- Providing standards of excellence in specialized eye care.
- Setting standards for clinical practice and education based on research with the aim of promoting continued quality improvement for the benefit of their patients.

## Fundamental Beliefs



*The International Orthoptic Associations key principles:*

- The Association's most important assets are its members.
- IOA success is dependent upon respect and trust within a strong, unified Council of Management working with IOA Member Associations and individual members.
- The IOA is communicative and transparent.
- The IOA is accountable.
- The IOA acts ethically, fairly and with integrity.



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## Organizational Aims and Objectives



IOA objectives are:

- The promotion of the science of orthoptics and the publication of scientific material relative thereto: and for such purposes to promote the use of an internationally accepted terminology.
- The provision of information and assistance to national authorities and individuals to initiate and develop the practice of the science of orthoptics throughout the world.
- To promote ambitious standards of training and practice in orthoptics.
- The organization of international and national congresses of orthoptists and others concerned in the practice of orthoptics for the propagation of knowledge of the science of orthoptics.



IOA aims are:

- To provide a service to patients by encouraging a high standard of practice in orthoptics.
- To encourage ambitious standards in the training of orthoptists.
- To foster the science of orthoptics.
- To encourage and maintain an internationally acceptable terminology.
- To provide information and assistance to national organizations as well as to individuals so that orthoptic services may be initiated and developed throughout the world.
- To organize at regular intervals Orthoptic Congresses

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## What Makes the IOA Unique?



The Association's uniqueness is based upon its:

- Superior knowledge and understanding of the orthoptic profession in most cultures of the world
- Established international structure and network
- Membership strength



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# Strategic Priorities & Directions 2023 - 2027

## Program Structure

The IOA has a program-based structure with five program areas that work together to achieve the aims and objectives of the Association. The five program areas are: International Cooperation; Education and Research; Standards and Quality; Promotion and Development and Operations Management. The work is conducted by program coordinators, project leaders/committee chairs and team and committee members. Program coordinators oversee the function and time limited project teams or individuals which are guided by specific project plans. While specific project teams evolve and dissolve as needed, the core program areas remain a constant.



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## International Cooperation

### Mission

- Continue to grow and strengthen the Volunteer Program
- Seek out and/or develop international partnerships and collaborations
- Continue and expand active representation at international forums including, but not limited to eye care
- Initiate or further communication with appropriate individuals or organizations regarding available International Cooperation Program's materials and services
- Serve as the advisor to countries interested in establishing orthoptics as a profession

### Agenda

- Recruit and vet teaching volunteers for the IPET Gambian Program for 2023-2024
- To develop a mentorship program for novice volunteers
- Recruit volunteers for clinical work, program development and screening program development or management as project arise
- Develop a mentorship program for novice volunteers
- Develop online training modules for volunteers
- Review and make any needed updates to the IOA handbook, IOA Volunteer Code of Conduct, and IOA Volunteer Application by 2024
- Establish an IOA Volunteer Engagement Strategy
- Create a committee designated to assist countries interested in developing orthoptics as a profession.
- Compile packet of materials and information including syllabus, scope of practice, title protection, developing national association.
- Form partnerships or alliances with NGOs and/or government bodies to further IOA International Cooperation objectives



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## Promotion & Development

### Mission

- Provide a range of promotional materials and strategies that will assist member associations in increasing the awareness of the profession and the work of the IOA
- Reinforce the importance of membership and engagement in a global profession
- Promote international vision-related initiatives designed to increase awareness in eye disease, eye health, and vision care
- Inspire orthoptic students to become actively involved in National Associations and the IOA
- Develop further IOA recognition awards and review the current awards to acknowledge accomplishments and service to the profession
- Facilitate professional development for those interested in leadership roles

### Agenda

- Strengthen and expand the social media program
- Create a WOD committee
- Monitor website to assist in updating content
- Review existing IOA awards and develop criteria and guidelines for each
- Promote blindness prevention month (October) on social media
- Investigate other vision-related international “holidays” and promote as appropriate
- Create promotional materials emphasizing benefits of membership to assist member associations in recruiting and sustaining members
- Congress promotional materials; IOA corner at the Congress
- Team building activities for the Council of Management and all IOA members



World Orthoptic Day  
June 5, 2023



World Orthoptic Day  
June 3, 2024



World Orthoptic Day  
June 2, 2025



World Orthoptic Day  
June 1, 2026



World Orthoptic Day  
June 7, 2027

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## Education & Research

### Mission

- Promote clinical research in orthoptics and vision care
- Promote and develop expertise in medical writing and publishing
- Support editorial review of manuscripts based on presentations at IOA Congresses
- Maintain current list of Orthoptic Education Programs on the IOA website
- Develop IOA symposia given at non-IOA Congresses
- Develop or update Education- or Research-related IOA documents
- Develop and maintain minimum universal standards for orthoptic education (including syllabus and clinical competencies)

### Agenda

- Revise and rename the Orthoptic World Wide Survey
- Create standards for scientific journals to publish IOA Congress Transactions
- Create an IOA Continuing education plan
- Initiate and develop standardized vision screening policy
- Initiate Orthoptic White Papers (policy or position papers)
- Curriculum & syllabus development for developing countries
- Guidelines for Writing Scientific Papers
- Developing guidelines for education grants
- Develop education program in clinical research
- Collect documents/standards of care, guidelines (amblyopia, prescribing glasses, strabismus surgery, Low Vision, Vision screening, Reading disabilities, VR and ABL)



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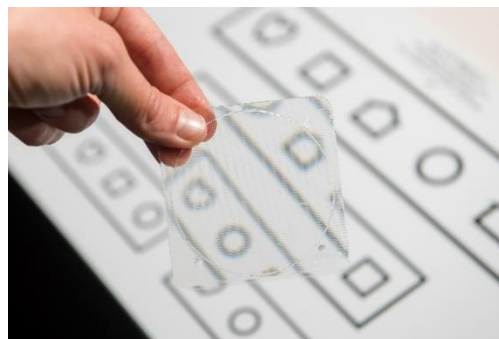
## Standards & Quality

### Mission

- Define the global scope of practice of orthoptics
- Develop guidelines and documents pertaining to the definition and practice of orthoptics
- Promote ethical practice, sensitive to local cultural context and adhering to the national regulations
- Guide and support the establishment and growth of new orthoptic associations at the request of practicing orthoptists in a country without a national association

### Agenda

- Complete and update the Scope of Practice as needed
- Create competency profile describing how the orthoptist fits into the eye care team
- Create document describing credentialing and title protection in member countries
- How to establish a national register (disciplinary law)
- Inventory of prescription authority and exemptions (glasses, prisms, patches atropine)
- Update of documents: The Code of Ethics and Conduct for Associations in collaboration with OCE, How to Create a National Association
- Collect and compile information on terminology used by member countries and update as needed



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## Operations Management

### Mission

- Maintain ambitious standards of accountability and transparency in governance
- Maintain and sustain the IOA Program structure and monitor the progress of each Program
- Oversee the work of the Finance Committee, Membership Committee, Website Committee, Congress Local Organizing Committee, Congress Scientific Program Committee, Congress Oversight Committee
- Ensure compliance with GDPR laws and requirements
- Processing applications for national and individual membership, and maintaining secure records to ensure the privacy of members
- Maintain comprehensive and transparent financial records & investments, and ensure the responsible use of IOA funds

### Agenda

- Restructure the IOA budget
- Recruit and select Coordinators for each Program, and volunteers within the COM and among all IOA members for each Program
- Ensure the scheduling of the AGM and annual meetings of the Council of Management
- Membership committee to review status of all member organizations (full and associate) every two years to determine if their current membership status is appropriate
- Continue to investigate the use of a single Professional Congress Organizer for future congresses
- Reset the Congress schedule and format beginning with the XV IOA Congress
- Update the IOA Handbook
- Review the Articles of Association once per 4 years and update as needed
- Monitor and update the website

