Fielmann Akademie Schloss Plön

European Academy of Optometry and Optics

71st Fielmann Akademie Kolloquium • 3rd International Joint Colloquium with EAOO

DIABETES AND DIABETIC RETINOPATHY

Online seminar
Wednesday, October 7, 2026
6:30pm – 8:30pm CET

Dear colleagues,

Fielmann Academy Ploen Castle is firmly established as a leading centre for education and professional development in optics and optometry in Germany. Through the Fielmann Academy Colloquia, it also provides a forum for scientific exchange and interdisciplinary dialogue, bringing together perspectives from optometry, ophthalmology and related fields.

We are delighted to organise this event for the third time in partnership with the European Academy of Optometry and Optics (EAOO). This conference reflects the EAOO's commitment to advancing education and professional development for optometrists, opticians, vision scientists and other eyecare professionals.

The Fielmann Academy and the EAOO share the goal of fostering international collaboration and encouraging discussion across professional boundaries. This year's programme addresses diabetes and diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of vision loss and blindness among adults. Distinguished speakers will present current scientific findings and translate them into practical insights for clinical care. Join us for an informative programme offering new perspectives and valuable knowledge for your professional practice.

The seminar will be held online and will include opportunities to put questions to the speakers following their presentations. To reach a broad audience across Europe and beyond, the conference will be held in English. Participation is free of charge. For further information, please contact kolloquium@fielmann-akademie.com or admin@eaoo.info.

With best regards,

Prof. Dr. med. Dipl.-Ing. (FH) Hans-Juergen Grein, Head of Science Fielmann Academy Ploen Castle/Technical University of Applied Sciences Luebeck (Germany)
Prof. Dr. José Manuel Gonzalez-Meijome, Dean of the School of Science, University of Minho (Portugal), President EAOO

Diabetes and Diabetic retinopathy

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disease characterized by persistently elevated blood glucose levels. It comprises several forms with different underlying mechanisms. If not adequately managed, diabetes can progressively damage blood vessels, nerves and organs throughout the body, increasing the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and other serious complications.

Diabetic retinopathy is a progressive microvascular complication of diabetes and remains one of the leading causes of severe visual impairment and blindness among working-age adults. Although regular eye examinations are essential, many people with diabetes do not receive comprehensive eye examinations or systematic screening. As accessible primary eyecare providers, optometrists and opticians can help close this gap through proactive screening, patient education and timely referral.

While ophthalmoscopy remains an important method for assessing the retina, modern imaging technologies such as widefield fundus photography and optical coherence tomography substantially improve the opportunities for early detection and documentation. Screening asymptomatic patients can reveal retinal changes before vision is affected, allowing those at risk to be referred to an ophthalmologist before irreversible vision loss occurs.

- What is the pathogenesis of the different types of diabetes?
- Which clinical criteria are essential for identifying diabetic retinopathy?
- Which imaging protocols provide the greatest sensitivity in screening?
- Can artificial intelligence reliably detect diabetic retinopathy?
- How can optometrists contribute to interdisciplinary diabetes care?
- How can cooperation between optometrists, ophthalmologists and diabetologists be improved?

These and other questions will be explored from medical, ophthalmological and optometric perspectives, with a strong emphasis on clinical relevance and interdisciplinary patient care.

Presentation Program

6:30 Welcome
Prof. Dr. med. Dipl.-Ing. (FH) Hans-Juergen Grein, MD, Head of Science at the Fielmann Academy Ploen Castle/Luebeck University of Applied Sciences, Germany
Prof. Dr. Daniela Nosch, PhD
Institute of Optometry, Olten University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland; Vice President EAOO
Prof. Dr. José Manuel Gonzalez-Meijome, Dean of the School of Science, University of Minho (Portugal), President EAOO

6:40 Understanding Diabetes: What Eyecare Professionals Need to Know
PD Dr. med. Svenja Meyhoefer
Senior physician, Head of the Obesity Day Clinic, Department of Internal Medicine I – Endocrinology & Diabetology, University Medical Center Schleswig-Holstein

7:10 Diabetic Retinopathy: Diagnosis and Treatment
Dr. med. habil. Gábor Márk Somfai, PhD
Opthalmologist, senior consultant and Head of Research, Stadtspital Zuerich, Switzerland

7:40 The Optometrist's Role in Interdisciplinary Diabetes Care
Nina Mueller, OD, M.Sc., Dipl.-Ing. (FH), FAAO, OSO, Optometrist, Managing Director Eschmann-Contactlinsen AG Bern, Switzerland

8:10 Concluding Discussion

8:40 Closing of the event

Speakers

PD Dr. med. Svenja Meyhoefer

Svenja Meyhoefer is a senior physician at Medical Department I of the University Medical Center Schleswig-Holstein (UKSH), Luebeck Campus, where she heads the Obesity Day Clinic. After completing her doctorate in gynecology at Philipps University Marburg, she pursued specialist training at UKSH and qualified in internal medicine as well as endocrinology and diabetology. In 2024, she completed her habilitation in internal medicine at the University of Luebeck. Her clinical and scientific work focuses on obesity, diabetes, metabolic disorders, and their complications, with a particular interest in translating research findings into improved patient care. She leads AG Meyhoefer – Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism, a research group investigating hormonal and metabolic mechanisms as well as innovative strategies for prevention and treatment. Since 2024, she has been an Advanced Clinician Scientist at the University of Luebeck and project lead at the associated Luebeck site of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD). Her work has received several distinctions, including the Silvia King Award of the German Diabetes Association (DDG) in 2025.

Dr. med. habil. Gábor Márk Somfai

Gábor Márk Somfai is a specialist in ophthalmology with a clinical and scientific focus on medical retina, diabetic eye disease, retinal imaging and Oculomics/AI. Since 2020, he has been working at Stadtspital Zuerich, where he currently serves as a senior consultant and Head of Research. He studied medicine at Semmelweis University in Budapest, where he received his medical doctorate in 2001 and later completed his specialist training in ophthalmology and his PhD. Following his board examination, he worked as an assistant professor until 2015, with a research fellowship at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami, USA in 2014. Between 2015 and 2020, he served as a Consultant and Head of Training and Continuing Education at the Pallas Kliniken, in Olten, Switzerland. He is a member of the Swiss Ophthalmological Society, the Hungarian Ophthalmological Society of Euretina and a Silver Fellow of ARVO.

Nina Mueller, OD, M.Sc., Dipl.-Ing. (FH)

Nina Mueller initially studied optometry at Aalen University. From 2002 to 2007, she worked in the field of specialized contact lens fitting and vision therapy at various contact lens institutes in Germany and Switzerland. After completing a part-time M.Sc. in Vision Science & Business, she went to the New England College of Optometry in Boston in 2007 to complete her optometric training with a Doctor of Optometry degree. She then worked at the University Eye Clinic in Basel from 2009 to 2021 as a liaison between optometry and ophthalmology, with a focus on clinical optometry. From 2010 to 2020, she taught as an adjunct assistant professor in the international M.Sc. program in Aalen for the New England College of Optometry (Boston, MA). From 2018 to 2024, she served on the board of directors of the SBAO. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry (FAAO) as well as a member of OSO (Organization of Swiss Optometrists), AOA (American Optometric Association), and VDCO. Since 2022, she has been working at Eschmann-Contactlinsen AG in Bern, specializing in the fitting of special contact lenses for infants and toddlers as well as patients with irregular corneas, where she assumed the role of Managing Director in 2026.

Accreditation pending

1 COE point (Germany), 2 SwissOptom points (Switzerland), and GOC CPD points (United Kingdom). The number and type of GOC CPD points are subject to approval.

Registration

Participation in the online seminar is free of charge. After registering, you will receive an email with information on how to join the seminar. You can use this link to access the virtual conference room (via Zoom) on October 7, 2026, from around 6:20pm.

> Online registration (please click)

Conference Management

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