



Access to Practice | Professional Development Awards

Program Overview

The Access to Practice | Professional Development Awards support clinical professionals across orthotics, prosthetics, and pedorthics (OP&P) in strengthening their skills, expanding professional networks, and advancing high-quality patient care.

In partnership with the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP) American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (AOPA) and the Pedorthic Footcare Association (PFA), this program fully supports recipients' participation in leading national OP&P professional conferences.

By removing financial barriers to access, these awards ensure that critical members of the care team can engage in high-quality continuing education, hands-on learning, and clinical collaboration that enhance patient outcomes, promote continuous practice improvement, and deepen connection to the professional community.

Award Categories

Funds are intended to reduce barriers to participation in national professional education and may be used to support:

- Conference registration
- Travel and lodging expenses
- Hands-on educational workshops

O&P Assistants

This program offers one \$2,000 stipend award per conference (AAOP and AOPA), annually, to support Orthotic and/or Prosthetic Assistants in deepening their clinical knowledge and advancing professional development.

Through participation in national conferences, O&P Assistants gain access to leading education, practical learning, and networking opportunities that directly strengthen quality patient care delivery.

Pedorthists

This program offers one \$2,000 stipend award per conference (PFA/AAOP and AOPA), annually, to support Pedorthists in expanding their expertise, engaging with peers, and strengthening professional networks within the OP&P community.



Participation in nationally recognized education programs allows pedorthic professionals to exchange knowledge and best practices with peers as well as return to their communities with strengthened skills, new perspectives, and improved patient-care practices.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be an active CPed (ABC), BOCPD, or (ABC) COA, CPA, or CPOA in good standing
- Be employed in an OP&P clinical setting at the time of application
- Demonstrate commitment to professional growth and patient-centered quality care

Application Materials

Applicants must specify the conference for which they are submitting (AOPA 26, AAOP27, or PFA27)

1. Personal Statement (500 words max)

- Applicants must submit a personal statement describing their professional background, current role, and interest in receiving this award. The statement should explain how participation in a national conference will support the applicant's professional development, strengthen clinical knowledge or skills, and enhance their ability to contribute to high-quality, patient-centered care.

Applicants are encouraged to address:

- Their current role and experience as an O&P Assistant or Pedorthist
- Specific educational, learning, or networking goals they hope to achieve through conference participation
- How the knowledge, skills, or connections gained will be applied in their professional practice
- The anticipated impact on patients, colleagues, or their broader community

2. Resume

3. One (1) Professional Reference



- From a supervisor, clinician, or professional colleague who can speak to the applicant's current role as an Orthotic and/or Prosthetic Assistant, or Pedorthist.
- Highlight the applicant's clinical contributions, professionalism, and how participation in national conferences will support their continued development and impact within the field.

Program Goals

Through the Access to Practice | Professional Development Awards, The O&P Foundation seeks to:

- Expand access to national professional education opportunities across the OP&P care continuum
- Strengthen clinical excellence across the OP&P care team
- Encourage continuous improvement towards quality care
- Enhance patient outcomes through skilled and connected professionals

Submission & Key Deadlines

Applicants are responsible for ensuring all required materials are submitted through [The O&P Foundation portal](#) by the posted deadline at 5pm (CST).

Program Opens: May 5th 2026

Program Closes: June 2nd 2026

Notifications: July 2026

Questions

For questions regarding the Access to Practice | Professional Development Awards, contact info@oandpfoundation.org