

COS Leadership in Advocacy Award (Inaugural Award)

The **COS Leadership in Advocacy Award**, first to be presented in 2026, recognizes Society members for exemplary advocacy efforts. The recipient will have demonstrated significant and dedicated efforts, aiming to elevate awareness, mobilize resources, prevent blindness, preserve vision, and improve overall eye health—thereby safeguarding the precious gift of sight for all Canadians.

The award will be presented during the **Current Concepts of the COS Annual Meeting and Exhibition**, and one recipient will be selected each year.

Eligibility:

The nominee must be a member in good standing of the Canadian Ophthalmological Society who has demonstrated a sustained pattern of advocacy for the profession of ophthalmology in Canada or abroad over several years. Qualifying service may include, but is not limited to:

- Increasing awareness of the value of ophthalmology to the public and/or health care community.
- Inspiring others to exceed their own expectations in practice and contribute to the profession.
- Acting as an ambassador for the profession by going above and beyond in integrity, professionalism, advocacy, accountability, and communication.
- Making outstanding efforts in advocating for the profession at the local, provincial, or national level.

Nominations must include specific examples of how the nominee has promoted the profession of ophthalmology—for example, involvement in community groups, raising awareness through local government or media, serving on committees, remaining current with professional issues, and translating this knowledge into practice and shared learning with others.

Awardees will be selected based on evidence provided in the nomination package that demonstrates their contribution to advocacy in advancing the management of eye disease in Canada.

Awardees are individuals who advocate for safe ophthalmological practices and positively impact the profession by educating decision-makers, the public, and the media, and/or influencing policy and legislation through effective health advocacy at the local, provincial, or national levels. Advocacy work should exceed normal expectations and be inclusive and respectful of the values and autonomy of those affected.

Selection Criteria:

Nominees will be considered if they meet one or more of the following:

1. Advocacy work has generated support or raised awareness among policymakers, the media, and/or Canadians about the importance of ophthalmology, its social and economic benefits, and its critical role in nation-building.

2. Shares knowledge of and passion for ophthalmology with others through writing, speaking, or consulting.
3. Plays a lead role in developing or growing community, provincial, or national awareness related to ophthalmology and is recognized as a leader in the field.
4. Actively participates in stakeholder groups dedicated to advancing ophthalmology or other advocacy efforts.
5. Champions advocacy programs, tools, or strategies within their organization.
6. Works in partnership with government and decision-makers, using a healthcare and innovation policy lens to support all stakeholders.

Additional points may be awarded for:

- Advocacy efforts that include multiple components to frame issues, develop alliances, and gather and disseminate relevant data.
- Consistency and sustained effort over time.

How to Nominate:

Nominations for the 2026 award will be accepted from **August 29, 2025, to October 10, 2025** via the online submission portal.

Supplemental documents that may be uploaded with the nomination include:

- **Required:** One letter of recommendation (maximum two pages, PDF format).
- **Required:** One-page biographical sketch highlighting the nominee's advocacy contributions (PDF format).
- **Optional:** News articles or other supporting documents demonstrating the nominee's advocacy efforts (PDF format).