

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Siegman International School on Lasers Request for Proposal 2026-2028

Introduction

The Optica Foundation Siegman International School on Lasers invites 100 graduate students for a week-long intensive program. Applicants are selected from developed and underdeveloped nations to learn about the basics and advances in optics and photonics using lasers. Lecturers and contributors are drawn from an international group of pioneering laser researchers and experts from leading laser companies, highly-regarded professors, and fellow students. In addition, attendees will have the opportunity to present their own research and gain invaluable experience in building exposure for their work.

The primary goal of the school is to inspire students to succeed and stay in optics and photonics careers. The daily interactions provided by world-renowned instructors are a proven vehicle for inspiration. Allowing students, the experience and education program affords, assists the professional community by adding new members and increasing representation from diverse communities.

The school was established in honor of laser pioneer and instructor, as well as Optica 1999 President and founding board member of the Optica Foundation, [Anthony E. Siegman](#). This program is co-founded by IPG Photonics and endowed by donors from around the world.

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Program History

Date	Location	Attendance
03-08 August 2014	Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA	82
02-07 August 2015	Max Planck Institute, Amberger Congress Centrum, Amberg, Germany	82
24-29 July 2016	ICFO Institute of Photonic Sciences, Barcelona, Spain	89
06-11 August 2017	Centro de Investigaciones en Óptica (CIO), Leon, Mexico	68
28 July- 04 August 2018	Technical University Denmark - Backafallsbyn, Island of Ven, Sweden	94
27 July- 03 August 2019	University of Rochester, NY, USA	93
18-25 July 2020	University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland	¹ 160
19-23 July 2021	University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland	² 201
25 June- 02 July 2022	University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland	104
18-24 June 2023	Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland	99
23-28 June 2024	Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA	101
27 July- 02 August 2025	Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia	60
2026-2028	TBD	TBD

¹ Siegman School 2020 was pushed to 2021 due to Global Pandemic.

² Siegman School 2021 allowed past attendees to participate in virtual school due to Global Pandemic.

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Program Overview

- Five days of interactive workshops, lectures, and cultural activity.
- Six nights of shared housing with students of the same gender paired together.
- Three to seven nights of housing for lecturers and staff.
- Morning and afternoon coffee breaks.
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner for all attendees, volunteers, and staff.
- Two receptions—typically an opening and a closing.
- Planned cultural activity for a half or full day.
- Lab tours.
- The dates on which the school takes place are flexible, with a target range late June through early August.

Website

Optica manages the school's website for students to showcase the program highlights as well as provide a location for all important information and dates. This would include:

- Dates of the school (arrival/departure)
- Housing information
- VISA request information
- Grant request information
- Program schedule
- Extracurricular programming

Registration and Fees

In order to receive a grant of US\$60,000+ from the Optica Foundation, the host should assume registration is a standard US\$900 for 100 students.

With the support of a grant from the Optica Foundation and the Siegman International School on Lasers endowment, the host covers housing, food, beverages, and materials for the school.

Speaker travel is typically provided by the Optica Foundation, as well as travel grants. Air/rail travel is the responsibility of the student.

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Sample Program

Day 1 (Sunday)

- Students arrive
- Students check into rooms (Hotel/Residence Hall)
- Setup of space/orientation of staff and lecturers
- Welcome reception (Afternoon/evening)

Day 2 (Monday)

- School Begins
- Typical Program Highlights:
 - Welcome
 - Lectures and Discussions
 - Poster Setup
 - Ice Breaker / Large group experience

Day 3 (Tuesday)

- Typical Program Highlights:
 - Lectures and Discussions
 - Lab Tours
 - Poster Session 1
 - Group Photo

Day 4 (Wednesday)

- Typical Program Highlights:
 - Lectures and Discussions
 - Cultural Experience (Half Day)

Day 5 (Thursday)

- Typical Program Highlights:
 - Lectures and Discussions
 - Lab Tour 2 (If needed)
 - Poster Session 2

Day 6 (Friday)

- Typical Program Highlights
 - Lectures and Discussions
 - Closing Lunch and Poster Awards

Day 7 (Saturday)

- Students depart and check out of housing
- Staff and Lecturers depart

OPTICA FOUNDATION

School Budget

Income: The school has three primary sources of income to consider as you partner with us to create a budget proposal:

- Optica Foundation Grant – minimum of US\$55,000 assuming the registration fee is US\$900 per student
- Host Institution Support – Varies based on cost of facilities, housing, and catering
- Any additional sponsors secured by the host or Optica

Expenses: The school's expenses vary based on the location and facilities cost. The total cost of the school ranges \$140-170K. The costs to consider are:

- Housing
 - Double room /Single room estimated costs
- Catering
 - 5 days; 3 meals a day for each attendee
 - Two receptions
 - Coffee/snack breaks
- Audio Visual
 - Wireless internet for attendees
 - Capabilities of hosting a virtual lecturer for any last-minute cancellations
 - Stage, microphones, projectors, etc. for sharing content
- Facility rental
 - Lecture hall
 - Meal space
 - Poster session space and poster boards
 - Reception space
- Speaker Travel/Hotel
- Printing
 - Program book
 - T-Shirts/bags (giveaway items)
- Special Events
 - Local excursions/tours

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Benefits to a Host Institution

- **Community visibility: Establishes the institution as a major player in the Optica community.**
 - The school announcement goes to 24,000+ Optica members
 - World-renowned laser experts from academia and industry attend
 - Coverage in Optica's magazine *Optics & Photonics News (OPN)*, which showcases both the host university and the unique school features attributed to the host university
- **Reputation: Reinforces the institution's reputation as a cutting-edge leader in optics and photonics.**
 - The host institution develops the program committee and, ultimately, the final program for the school.
 - There is an opportunity for the host to showcase their facilities, labs, and faculty to the participants.
- **Access: Connects the institution with leading students.**
 - With representatives on the selection committee, the institution has access to 150 to 200 graduate student applicants vying for a seat at the school.
 - Local students who may not have an official seat at the school can audit the program and lectures.
- **Ability for the host to promote the event to local/regional/national photonics companies.**
 - Speaking and sponsorship opportunities
 - Career fair hosted by photonics industry optional component

Review and Selection Process

RFP Opens – 01 July 2025

RFP Closes – 15 September 2025

2026 Signed MOU – November 2025

Options for 2027-2028 schools explored

OPTICA FOUNDATION

Organization Information

Established in 2002, the Optica Foundation carries out charitable activities in support of the society's students and early career communities. We cultivate the next generation of leaders and innovators as they navigate advanced degree programs and become active members of research, engineering and business worldwide. The foundation also works to secure the endowments for Optica's awards and honors programs.

Optica, Advancing Optics and Photonics Worldwide, is the society dedicated to promoting the generation, application, archiving and dissemination of knowledge in the field. Founded in 1916, it is the leading organization for scientists, engineers, business professionals, students and others interested in the science of light. Optica's renowned publications, meetings, online resources and in-person activities fuel discoveries, shape real-life applications and accelerate scientific, technical and educational achievement.

[Please complete the online application.](#)