



## WSD Photo Competition: 5 Years of Photos and Loads of Inspiration

*IAPB, with support from Bayer, is celebrating the fifth year of its online photo competition. This year's theme is "Vision First!" and the competition ends on World Sight Day (10 October 2019). Prizes include a popular pick at IAPB's Council of Members, a DSLR camera and a cash prize. Find out more at <http://photocomp.iapb.org> (Do use the hashtag #VisionFirst!)*

**Immediate release:** Starting July 2019, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) has been inviting amateur and professional photographers from around the world to showcase the diversity of eye health—and to help us put vision first. With support from Bayer Health Care, the international Photography Competition theme this year is “**Vision First!**” IAPB and Bayer are also celebrating five years of the competition.

“We at Bayer are incredibly proud to stand with the IAPB for the fifth year in a row, encouraging people from across the globe to stand for those with avoidable blindness by sharing their photos. What makes the WSD photo competition so powerful is that it brings to life the reality of sight loss,” said Dr Rafiq Hasan, VP & Head of Ophthalmology at Bayer. “We understand that we cannot prevent avoidable blindness by working in silos, and therefore collaboration across sectors and disciplines is essential. We are delighted to once again stand with IAPB and the wider eye health community this year to put Vision First.”

The competition has built an open-access database of nearly 4000 eye care photos over the years. To mark this occasion, IAPB and Bayer will be holding a special event at IAPB's Council of Members meetings in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

“Our partnership with Bayer has been outstanding and productive”, said Joanna Conlon, Director of Development and Communications, IAPB. “The photo competition is a powerful, visceral reminder of the impact of eye health. It draws our attention to the vast need for eye care, and the change we are bringing to the lives of millions around the world”.

### Competition Theme

An estimated **90 million people** around the world were treated or prevented from vision loss since 1990. Globally, age-standardised prevalence of vision impairment has declined in every region of the world in the past 25 years. And yet, an ageing global population, an increase in diabetes and myopia are poised to overwhelm these gains.



The photo competition is a great tool to draw a spotlight on eye care issues. We are running out of time to ensure that we put together an effective system in place to tackle these conditions. One of the first things people can do is get their eyes checked. They can also encourage young children, persons with diabetes, older people, people with limited access to health services etc. to do the same. With the theme, “Vision First!”, IAPB and our partners are keen to encourage photo submissions that highlight the need for eye health and the impact eye care can have on our lives.

World Sight Day (10 October 2019) is an international day of awareness about avoidable blindness and its prevention, and is an important advocacy and communications opportunity for the eye health community. It is a great time to ask people to get their eyes checked—and remind them to put their vision first. How can your photos encourage people to deliver this? Thousands of people are sending in their photo submissions, and we encourage you to do the same.

This year also marks the launch of the World Report on Vision by the World Health Organization (WHO) in October. The World Report sets the stage for the next decade of eye health delivery and discusses strategies to better integrate eye health into broader health care. It highlights the need for eye care that is integrated into the health system, and is people-centred. Photo submissions this year are already highlighting some of these integrations, and we would love to see more examples!

Participation in the competition is open worldwide – upload a photo that best exemplifies the theme, “Vision First!”, give it a title or caption; clearly note your name, profession and contact details on the competition micro-site: <http://photocomp.iapb.org>

## Prizes

All individuals interested in the theme are welcome to participate in the photo competition. We have been picking “Editor’s picks” and highlighting them on IAPB’s social media accounts—a great way to win accolades and recognition for your work in the eye health community. Finally, winners will be selected from these Editor’s picks after World Sight Day (the last day of the competition).

The competition will be open till 10 October 2019 - World Sight Day, after which we will pick two winners and 5 runners-up. Winners will be announced on 15 October 2019. The Amateur prize is a Canon 1200 D DSLR camera and the professional prize is a cash prize of USD 1000. Delegates to the [IAPB Council of Members](#) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, will pick their favourite from among a selection of Editor’s picks and the winner will be given a certificate and a special mention.



For more information do visit the micro-site: <http://photocomp.iapb.org>

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## Notes to Editors:

### About IAPB

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) is the membership alliance leading international efforts in blindness prevention activities. IAPB's mission is to eliminate the main causes of visual impairment by bringing together governments and NGOs to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of sustainable national eye care programmes. Please visit: [www.iapb.org](http://www.iapb.org)

### Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. Its products and services are designed to benefit people by supporting efforts to overcome the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development, and the Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2018, the Group employed around 117,000 people and had sales of 39.6 billion euros. Capital expenditures amounted to 2.6 billion euros, R&D expenses to 5.2 billion euros. For more information, go to [www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com).

### World Sight Day

World Sight Day (WSD) is an annual day of awareness held on the second Thursday of October, to focus global attention on blindness and vision impairment. This year it is on **10 October 2019**. This year too, the theme is 'Universal Eye Health', and the 'Call to Action' is "**Vision First!**". <http://www.iapb.org/wsd19> #VisionFirst!

### Key facts

- 36 million people who are blind
- 217 million people with moderate or severe distance vision impairment
- 1.1 billion people cannot see well as they lack spectacles
- Of those with blindness and MSVI, 124million people have uncorrected refractive errors and 65 million have cataract—more than 75% of all blindness and MSVI is avoidable
- 253 million people blind or vision impaired (in 2015)
- The prevalence of blindness and vision impairment combined has dropped from 4.58% in 1990 to 3.37% in 2015
- 89% of vision impaired people live in low and middle-income countries
- 55% of moderate or severely vision impaired people are women