

The AO Foundation: ready for the future?!

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AO Research was founded on the collaboration between the clinician and the scientist to solve clinical problems. Müller understood the potential of internal fixation, Allgöwer understood the need to determine its biological basis and hence, AO made internal fixation a success based on excellent surgery and science. Over the years, basic research and development in fracture surgery has evolved. At the present, there remains an interest in mechanics of fracture stabilization but the future rests in biology and understanding conditions that affect bone strength. In the recent past, AO research has not maintained its focus on the collaboration between the clinician and the scientists. The Research Institute has been able to develop a strong basic science program in musculoskeletal research but the prime focus of solving clinical problems has been lost. To restore this important surgeon/scientist collaboration for the future, the Foundation has readied itself by prioritizing its research

so as to focus its resources through its clinical priorities programs. The Biotechnology Advisory Board and a fair and equal peer review process for research within the Foundation have been established. The development of specialty academic councils will stimulate the clinician/scientist involvement through the clinical priority programs. With these changes, the AO Foundation's research program is now ready to tackle the future.