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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OPTICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES A GLOBAL CONNECTION EVENT AT SILMO 2026.

DALLAS, TX – August 12, 2026 – The Optical Women's Association (OWA) is proud to announce a significant milestone in its international expansion journey with the launch of **START STRONG. Powered by the OWA**, a global connection event taking place at **SILMO Paris 2026** on **Saturday, September 26**, at **8:30 am CEST**.

As the OWA continues to expand its mission beyond North America, this event marks an important step in building a truly global community of optical professionals committed to connection, leadership, mentorship, and advancing opportunities for women across the industry.

START STRONG will focus on purposeful goal setting, wellbeing, and meaningful connection. This thoughtfully curated breakfast experience is designed to help pause, recharge, and prepare for the day ahead before the pace of the show takes over. Attendees will have the opportunity to align their priorities, gain valuable insights from industry leaders, build meaningful connections through purposeful networking, and approach the show with greater clarity, focus, and purpose.

Beginning at 8:30 am, **START STRONG** has been scheduled to enable exhibitors to participate before the exhibition opens. Visitors will be able to join from 9:00 am, when the show floor opens, ensuring that both exhibitors and visitors have the opportunity to attend and connect before the day gets fully underway.

Graciously sponsored by SILMO, Amélie Morel, President of SILMO and Director of Communications at MOREL, will provide opening remarks, followed by engaging discussions with industry leaders and networking opportunities designed to foster collaboration and support across the global optical community.

In Focus

- Exhibitor Edition – *Barbara Hébert Motz*, Chief Marketing Officer at MOREL, shares practical advice on preparing for trade show success, maximising opportunities during the exhibition, and measuring results afterwards.
- Buyer Edition – *Tamara Johnson*, Buyer at New Look Vision Group, will detail how she approaches major trade shows, sets priorities, identifies new opportunities, and evaluates success.

Attendees will also learn about the OWA's growing international presence, current initiatives, and future expansion plans, with the opportunity to meet members of the OWA International Expansion Committee and learn more about becoming involved.

Space is limited so register now! The **first 50 attendees** to sign up will receive an exclusive premium **START STRONG** wellness bag, curated to support you through the day ahead.

Event Details:

When: Saturday, 26 September 2026 | 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Where: The SILMO Club

Event: **START STRONG.** Powered by the OWA.

Cost: Complimentary, generously sponsored by SILMO. Space is limited, so advance registration is highly recommended

[RSVP here](#) by 25 September.

Whether you are exhibiting, buying, networking, mentoring, or supporting the future of the optical industry, **START STRONG** offers an opportunity to connect with the OWA community, build meaningful relationships, and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive future for women and leaders across the global optical industry.

ABOUT THE OPTICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1997 as a non-profit, the Optical Women's Association is committed to supporting and promoting the professional development of women involved in all facets of the optical industry.

As the vision of the OWA evolves and expands, it maintains the focus of the OWA's founding principles and core mission: to enhance and promote the leadership role of women in the optical industry through networking, education and peer support. Learn more about the OWA here www.opticalwomen.com

Have specific questions about our International Expansion? Reach out to the IEC Committee Chair, Nancy Gries at international@opticalwomen.com

