

Press release



THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE
SHOW FOR OPTICS & DESIGN

16.–18.01.2026

Munich

www.opti.de

opti director Cathleen Kabashi on her upcoming trade show 'Up close and personal: opti is a mirror and networker for the industry'

Munich, 5 June 2025 – Half-time on the way to opti 2026! From 16 to 18 January, Munich will once again be the hotspot for international ophthalmic optics. In her interview, opti Director Cathleen Kabashi reveals what makes opti so special, what she and her team are currently working on and what visitors, exhibitors and those to be, as well as trade media and influencers, can already look forward to.

Ms Kabashi, what makes opti 2026 so special?

All the protagonists and their passion for their profession! opti is the first big industry get-together of the year – which brings energy, inspiration and real business power! Why is that? Because we are very close to all the players: opti is the mirror and networker of and for the industry. For 2026, we are once again focusing on a strong concept with the latest trends, innovative technology, customised services and international contacts.

What are the main topics at opti's upcoming edition?

Clearly the topic of young talent, among others! This is a burning issue for employers in our industry. But the next generation is also looking for dialogue, inspiration and personal contacts. This was clearly demonstrated by the success of the opti NEXT GENERATION HUB and was also reflected to me at Brandenburg University of Applied Sciences at the end of May. I attended the 5th edition of OptoMEETry, the VDCO Young's event for the industry's bright young things, to encourage students to get involved in shaping the next opti NEXT GENERATION HUB. The energy of these young talents there was tangible and downright contagious with their creative drive, their fresh approaches and their openness to new perspectives – exactly what our industry is looking for and needs.

What is your success recipe for opti?

Close contact and dialogue with market! Just as we don't only talk to the next generation of opticians and hearing care professionals, but also work together with them, we engage in dialogue and cooperation with all stakeholders in the entire industry. Here's one example: we are currently working with contact lens manufacturers on the next concept for TOMORROW VISION and are evaluating ideas on how we can surprise and inform with the topic of contact lenses at opti 2026. We

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are also meeting with manufacturers of hearing systems. We are talking to start-ups in the frame segment as well as potential exhibitors for opti VISIONARY, the area for start-ups in the non-framing segment. In short: my team and I are truffle hunters, so to speak, to make opti 2026 even more successful than the 2025 edition already was!

Last but not least, the feedback from over 21,000 visitors and more than 330 exhibitors at the last opti obviously is a major driver. We stay close to the industry, optimising where need be in a rather targeted way – with small but effective adjustments.

And what can visitors look forward to in particular?

Of course, our exhibitors' creativity and innovative power, the trends they set with their products, visitors will encounter smart formats, exciting topics and lots of new ideas – and not just for the optical industry. Small spoiler alert: Listen(!) carefully! opti is an industry festival: it brings people together, creates enthusiasm and is the perfect start to a successful business year!

The upcoming opti dates

opti 2026: 16 - 18 January 2026

opti 2027: 29 - 31 January 2027

opti 2028: 14 - 16 January 2028

www.opti.de/en

About opti

opti is the international trade show for optics & design which takes place annually as the industry kick-off in January in Munich. The networking event offers trade visitors the complete spectrum of ophthalmic products, from spectacle frames and lenses, contact lenses, refraction, diagnosis and low vision to shopfitting and technical equipment. opti is the order platform and the location for product premières by international market leaders and start-ups alike. The event was first held in 1998, and since 2008 has been organised by GHM Gesellschaft für Handwerksmessen mbH.

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