



13th Annual O.U.R. Fall Conference

PLENARY SPEAKER

Dr. Ananya Datta

Assistant Professor

New England College of Optometry

Galloway Bldg. Landes 101

November 13, 2026, from 1:50 to 2:30 p.m.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Ananya Datta is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Optometry at the New England College of Optometry (NECO), where she holds teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. She earned her Bachelor of Optometry from Vidyasagar College of Optometry and Vision Science, her Master of Philosophy from the Elite School of Optometry, Chennai, and her Ph.D. in Optometry and Vision Science from the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, in 2018. With over 15 years of clinical and academic experience across three continents, she has held significant research and teaching positions at premier institutions globally, including postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Houston College of Optometry and the Fleiszig-Evans Lab at the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to her tenure in the United States, she served as an Assistant Professor at Manipal University and held a clinical fellowship at the renowned L.V. Prasad Eye Institute.

Dr. Datta has authored and co-authored over 25 peer-reviewed publications, including 12 as first author, in leading high-impact journals such as *Progress in Retinal and Eye Research*, *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science (IOVS)*, *PLoS One*, *Contact Lens and Anterior Eye (CLAE)*, and the *Journal of Visualized Experiments (JoVE)*. She has presented her research at major international conferences including ARVO and the American Academy of Optometry, and was recognized as an Emerging Vision Scientist by the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research in 2023. She serves as a peer reviewer for numerous high-impact journals including *Frontiers in Immunology* and *Translational Vision Science & Technology*. Beyond her research, Dr. Datta contributes to the profession through active service on national and institutional committees, including the Professional Development and Education Committee of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) and the Biomedical Science Educators Special Interest Group of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry — reflecting her commitment to both policy-making and education advancement in the field. At NECO, she teaches Human General Anatomy and Ocular Anatomy and Physiology, while actively mentoring master's students and research assistants.

PATHOGENESIS OF OCULAR SURFACE DISEASES

Dr. Datta's primary research interests focus on the pathogenesis of ocular surface diseases, with specialized emphasis on dry eye in contact lens-wearing populations and in metabolic diseases such as diabetes and obesity. Her research investigates corneal epithelial cell and conjunctival goblet cell signaling mechanisms, as well as the role of corneal nerves in innate para-inflammatory immune responses, utilizing advanced murine models of diabetes mellitus, environmental desiccation stress, and contact lens wear. She leads a robust research portfolio including NIH-funded studies on tear fluid and conjunctival epithelial biomarkers—particularly osteopontin isoforms—in diabetic ocular surface disease, alongside active multi-institutional collaborations with the Mayo Clinic and Boston University. Her work is supported by multiple research, teaching, and travel grants, including the EyeFind Research Grant awarded by the ARVO Foundation for Eye Research.