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*of* ADELAIDE



Alumni Relations  
**Alumni Network  
Handbook**

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# STRENGTHENING THE ENGAGEMENT OF OUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY

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## University of Adelaide Alumni Network Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to support alumni wishing to establish a formal Alumni Network. The University recognises the value of these networks and aims to provide alumni with the resources, support and guidance required to successfully execute their programs.

These guidelines provide a framework that Alumni Networks can use to better understand their roles and responsibilities.

For more information, please contact the Alumni Relations team at the University of Adelaide.

**Alumni Relations Office**

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## 1. Adelaide University and its Alumni Networks

There is no greater evidence of the University of Adelaide's success than the accolades and achievements of our alumni.

Alumni are part of our distinguished institution's family, which ranks in the top one per cent in the world. Alumni have a history of shared experiences and memories, understood by those who studied before them, those who studied with them and those who will soon join the alumni community.

With almost 125,000 graduates located across 80 countries, many of our alumni have become inspirational leaders, making a positive difference in Australia and around the world. From world leaders, CEOs, Nobel Laureates and Rhodes Scholars to innovative medical researchers, international conservationists and Olympians, our alumni share a common desire to make a difference locally, nationally and globally.

### Who are alumni?

Alumni are defined as below, under the University of Adelaide Alumni Council:

- All graduates of the University;
- All former students of the University who have completed at least one course at the University, or, in the case of study abroad, students who have completed at least one semester of study;
- All former academic or professional staff members of the University who completed at least 3 years of service at the University.

As a graduate, former student or academic of the University of Adelaide who fit the above definition you are automatically a member of the University's alumni community. We encourage you to remain connected with your alma mater, keeping your contact details up to date and letting us know where your degree has taken you. Unless the University is advised otherwise, all alumni who keep their contact details up-to-date with the University will be treated as active members of the University's alumni community.

## 2. Alumni Networks

### What are Alumni Networks?

Networks are groups of alumni who volunteer their time to hold regularly scheduled events and activities for the benefit of the University and its alumni community. Networks are usually formed based on discipline, special interest or location.

The Alumni Network program supports the University of Adelaide alumni in continuing their connection and interaction with each other and with the University through a variety of activities. This leads to personal and professional development, adds value to the communities we live in, and increases the understanding and support of the University, its needs and its future.

Network participants provide valuable feedback to the University on how to build stronger relationships with alumni, what type of information alumni wish to receive, what connections they wish to make, and how they wish to participate in University life. This, in turn, helps the University and supports the mutual value proposition which underpins the University of Adelaide's Strategic Plan, The Beacon of Enlightenment.

### Where are Alumni Networks located?

Alumni Networks are located all over the world. The University currently has 13 networks – 8 based in Adelaide and one in each of the following overseas locations; Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Wherever there is a group of alumni who desire to connect because of their association with the University, or because of a shared cause, career, or particular interest, a network can be developed.

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### 3. Establishing an Alumni Network

The Alumni Relations office can assist you (if required) to gather together a small group of enthusiastic alumni, gauge their interest in forming a network and ascertain the type of proposed activities they would be interested in pursuing.

The widespread geographic distribution of alumni combined with the increasing mobility of new graduates, places great importance on the University's need for a strategic approach to the management of its alumni groups.

Alumni groups may be organised based on:

- Region (focusing on alumni in a given city, country or region)
- Faculty or academic discipline
- Extra-curricular interests (Sports, Arts, Library etc)

#### **Purpose**

The University works with its Alumni Networks to deliver beneficial outcomes for the global alumni community and strengthen a lifelong affiliation with the University. Alumni volunteers involved in leading Alumni Associations are important in that they:

- Represent the views, needs and interests of their alumni communities;
- Act as trusted advocates for the University;
- Foster a culture of contribution among alumni in support of the University and its students by becoming volunteers, contributing to scholarships or supporting other philanthropic activities;
- Design and deliver opportunities for the alumni community to engage with each other and the University;
- Offer voluntary assistance to the University in the organisation of events including reunions, interstate and overseas functions.

#### **Benefits**

In return, volunteers engaged in the management of Alumni Networks stand to gain a number of benefits including:

- Developing new leadership and personal development skills;
- Expanding personal and professional connections;
- Understanding how to plan, promote and execute events;
- Gaining experience in team work and advocacy.

The University respects that its Alumni Networks will have varied expectations and modes of operation, however it encourages these groups to maintain a close relationship with the University, sharing ideas, comments and suggestions, co - hosting events and communicating with Alumni Relations on a regular basis.

#### **Steps for forming an Alumni Network**

1. Read this guidelines document.
2. Test the feasibility and level of interest within the target community in consultation with fellow alumni.
3. Contact Alumni Relations to discuss the proposed Alumni Network.
4. Consider and decide the best structure for the Network being aware of the legal requirements in your region.
5. Apply to be registered as a formal Alumni Network by submitting an Alumni Network.

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Application outlining: (Application form)

- a. Key purpose  
The Alumni Network's key purpose and how it aims to meet the needs of its alumni community.
  - b. Key market  
The alumni community the Alumni Network aims to serve whether by region or discipline.
  - c. Committee structure  
A system of governance that enables the efficient and transparent running of the Alumni Network. This includes the nomination of an Executive Committee comprising a President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Network must provide a list of the names and contact details of its committee members to the University on an annual basis.
  - d. Financial status  
Information on accumulated funds and any membership fees that may apply to the Alumni Network.
  - e. Proposed activities  
A draft overview of the Alumni Network proposed annual activity program.
6. Work with Alumni Relations to:
- a. Receive formal approval from the University to establish your network;
  - b. Develop and Create your Terms of Reference document;
  - c. Establish position descriptions (see Alumni Network Structure);
  - d. Complete volunteer agreement form;
  - e. Complete volunteer registration form.
7. Launch the Alumni Association

### **How can I be involved in a network if I live outside of Australia?**

The University has graduates around the world and the University of Adelaide extends its services to cover all our alumni. Often those situated the furthest away are the most interested in getting together with others who share the same alma mater.

University staff on study leave, attending conferences and on research projects, travel to many locations and may be available to meet with alumni. This is also a perfect time to get alumni together through an organised social function or perhaps a professional development event. Alternately if you reside overseas and are travelling to Adelaide, Alumni Relations staff would be pleased to assist you in making contact with alumni through our Australian-based networks.

### **Establishing an International Alumni Network**

Alumni who are seeking to establish an Alumni Network outside of Australia need to discuss this matter directly with the Alumni Relations Officer (International). There are additional matters to consider including developing a Constitution/Terms of Reference which complies with the laws and regulations of their respective country. This may include some form of incorporation, or registration with a national body representing not for profit associations.



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## 4. Alumni Network Structure

Choosing the right structure for your network is important. Most Alumni Networks are unincorporated, meaning they are not legal entities, but rather a group of people who come together to promote a common interest or group activity.

An incorporated association is a legal entity which is created under the appropriate legislation of the state, territory or country in which the network is formed. Within Australia, there is no legal requirement to incorporate an Alumni Network.

In some countries there are legal requirements that any kind of network must be formally established and registered with the appropriate authorities. Alumni who wish to establish a new association overseas are advised to seek professional advice specific to their region.

University of Adelaide Alumni Networks are required to formally elect office bearers including:

- a. President;
- b. Secretary;
- c. Treasurer;
- d. Ordinary Committee Members.

Other elected roles may include a Vice-President and/or Patron. A Patron is usually a distinguished alumnus who can offer advice but are not involved in the hands - on management of the Network.

The University of Adelaide also recommends each elected office bearer has a position description outlining his or her roles and responsibilities. Below is a brief description of each role and a link to assist with developing position descriptions:

### **Role of the President (Chair)**

Charged with providing leadership and direction to the Committee, the President is responsible for ensuring that the Committee fulfils its responsibilities for the governance and success of the network. He/she also works to optimize the relationship between the Committee, network members, stakeholders and the University. The President is generally the spokesperson for the network and should work to maintain key relationships within and outside of the network.

### **Role of the Vice President (Vice Chair)**

The Vice President is responsible for assisting the President to fulfill his/her responsibilities for the governance and success of the network. This may mean chairing meetings at short notice. The Vice President's role is commonly regarded as preparation for the next President. At times the Vice President will need to work with the President to help him/her understand concerns and alternative points of view within the network.

### **Role of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer is responsible for the financial supervision of the network to allow the Committee to provide good governance of the network. The Treasurer is the chief financial management officer whose tasks include the preparation of annual budgets, planning for the organisations financial future and monitoring the organisations revenue and expenditure. It is desirable that the Treasurer is well organized and possesses a level of financial expertise.

### **Role of the Secretary**

The Secretary is responsible for the documentation and communication of the activities of the Committee. The Secretary is the primary administration officer of the Committee and provides the links between the Committee, members and outside stakeholders. The Secretary should be a good communicator, maintain confidentiality on relevant matters and have the ability to delegate tasks and supervise others. Amongst the Secretary's tasks are to prepare agendas, prepare and distribute minutes, receive and disseminate correspondence to and from the network.

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## Annual General Meetings

Networks are required to hold an annual general meeting each year. Depending on the agreed length of term of office bearers, elections may be conducted at the Annual General Meeting.

Networks are advised to discuss holding their Annual General Meeting with the Alumni Relations Office.

## University Expectations

The University asks that all Alumni Associations:

- Endeavour to enhance the reputation of the University of Adelaide and its alumni network;
- Act as ambassadors of the University of Adelaide alumni network and visible advocates of the University of Adelaide;
- At least two communications annually to your alumni network members regarding alumni related activities and opportunities and a call to update personal details;
- Organise a program of at least 2 activities per year at which alumni can connect with one another in person;
- Actively seek new committee members and encourage members to take up leadership positions on the executive committee and exercise succession planning particularly in the lead up to Annual General Meetings;
- Maintain clear lines of communication with the Alumni Relations Office.

## 5. Financial Support

All Alumni Networks are largely responsible for generating their own operating revenue, but Alumni Networks can apply for funding under the Alumni Funding Scheme.

### Alumni Funding Scheme

In 2008 the Alumni Funding Scheme was established to support new, unique or large projects proposed by alumni networks. Annually, networks will be able to submit an application for funding under the Alumni Funding Scheme. Each application is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### Eligibility

To be eligible to submit an application, the alumni network must be registered with Alumni Relations as an official Alumni Network.

### Criteria

Generally, preference will be given to those projects which meet one or all of the following outcomes:

- An increase in the number of contactable alumni, including activities that encourage 'missing' alumni to reconnect;
- An increase in alumni participating in the Alumni program, with an emphasis on attracting alumni who are not currently engaged;
- The University's career readiness program including internship opportunities.

To find out more details on the Alumni Funding Scheme please contact the Alumni Relations office.



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## 6. Events and Activities

One of the key roles of Alumni Networks is organising and executing events and activities for alumni. Events and activities can take many forms, but essentially they allow your network members to come together to network and socialise.

Network events that can be undertaken include, but are not limited to:

- Social events that reconnect alumni with other alumni and/or the University (e.g. reunions, family days, cultural events etc);
- Professional development;
- Fundraising to sponsor an award, prize or program within the University;
- Community service activities that promote the University and its alumni community;
- Young alumni activities (involving recent graduates).

Alumni Relations can assist Alumni Networks in promoting their events and activities. However, this service is strictly available at the discretion of Alumni Relations.

For more information on organising an event please contact the University of Adelaide Alumni Relations team.

## 7. Communication Support

Alumni Networks are encouraged to submit articles, invitations and opportunities for publication and or promotion in University alumni communications. The University of Adelaide Alumni Relations communicates regularly with its alumni community through a variety of channels and can assist in the following ways:

### General Promotions

- An Alumni Network presence featuring contact details on how to join the network ([ua.edu.au/alumni](http://ua.edu.au/alumni));
- Opportunities to suggest stories for Alumni E-news, our electronic newsletter sent 6 times a year to around 44,000 alumni worldwide. Please be advised that articles featured in Alumni E-News are subject to approval by an Editorial Board;
- Opportunities to suggest stories for our bi-annual magazine, Lumen. This publication is distributed both in an electronic and hardcopy format. Please be advised that articles featured in Lumen are subject to approval by an Editorial Board.

### Promotion of Events and Activities

- Approved event listings on the alumni website;
- Alumni Relations may provide distribution of personalised emails/invitations promoting Alumni Network events to alumni segments in its database. Alumni Networks are required to notify Alumni Relations at least four weeks prior to the event to discuss the content, timelines and event requirements. The University reserves the right not to distribute invitations based on resource availability;
- Targeted posts, shares, likes via University of Adelaide alumni social media channels including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr where relevant;
- Access to Faculty newsletters, blogs and social media channels where relevant.

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## 8. Ongoing Management

### Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Under the [safety legislation](#) a volunteer program, including Alumni Networks must meet the same safety requirements and standards as all other workplaces within an organisation. The requirements for documentation in relation to education, training, licences and permits (where required), hazard management, risk assessment and incident reporting all apply equally to a volunteer program as to all other operations within the University.

As per the volunteer agreement form, the volunteer must report any accident, incident or injury to their volunteer coordinator or supervisor immediately. They will then complete the incident report form and provide it to the local Health and Safety Officer to record in the risk management and safety system.

### Insurance

The University has a number of policies to protect volunteers participating in approved activities. As a pre-condition of [insurance cover](#) volunteers must be registered with Alumni Relations, External Relations. Note that the Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance Policy does not apply to volunteers over the age of 85.