Guidance for Alumni Network

AN OVERVIEW, GUIDANCE FOR ALUMNI NETWORKS/CHAPTERS AND SUPPORT FROM THE ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE

If you have the passion to connect or reconnect, why not establish an alumni group in the form of an Alumni Network. All it takes to create a network is for one or two of you who share a connection through location, faculty, interests or affiliation to build a formal network.

WHY AN ALUMNI GROUP?

Macquarie's Alumni Groups are an invaluable network of ambassadors, advocates and supporters and are a huge part of our University family.
As a group you have a history of shared experiences and memories, understood by those who studied before you, those who studied with you and those who will soon join the alumni community.

We have developed *Alumni Networks* and *Alumni Chapters* in Australia and around the world based on geographic, academic or professional interests.

At Macquarie University, our goal is to foster a more connected alumni community and we are deeply committed to building strong and enduring relationships with this global community in order to benefit from all the advantages it brings to both the University and its alumni.

ALUMNI NETWORKS are informal groups in locations where there are smaller numbers of alumni. The purpose is to build supportive professional networks and communities.
ALUMNI CHAPTERS have a formal operating structure and are often incorporated bodies. They elect officers, hold official meetings and are governed by the Chapter charter.

HONG KONG

NEW YORK

SINGAPORE

GUIDANCE FOR ALUMNI NETWORKS

The role of the Alumni Network is to represent alumni communities, provide advice, share experiences and connect fellow alumni with each other and the University.

Note: The University encourages the creation of Alumni Networks rather than Chapters.

BENEFITS

The Alumni Networks program aims to provide alumni volunteers an opportunity to actively engage with the alumni community and the operation of the groups, with an aim to:

- engage alumni and connect them with each other and the University
- share local or industry knowledge with their fellow alumni and the University
- expand their professional/personal networks and skills through the growth and management of these communities.

These groups operate under a less formal structure than Alumni Chapters. Volunteer leaders of Alumni Networks are encouraged to contact the Alumni Relations Office so that they can be added to the University's groups register. Alumni Networks may be assigned an Alumni Relations staff member who will act as their main point of contact at the University.

FORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY

It is important to understand that all Alumni Networks understand and recognise the relationship they enter into with the University once they become officially recognised, and as such are ultimately responsible for the conduct and management of their programs.

The University relies on our Alumni Networks/Chapters to act in the best interests of the University, as its key ambassadors, advocates and supporters for Macquarie. For more information, refer to '*Alumni Network Terms of Reference.*

GROUP CONSTITUTION

We recommend that all Alumni Networks create and agree a basic constitution that is available to all members. It can be as simple as a few lines posted on the University's website. An example is below to help:

Macquarie University _____ Alumni Network
The Macquarie ____ Alumni Network provides _____ alumni the opportunity to meet fellow alumni and reconnect with their University in a meaningful way. The purpose of the network is to foster networking and enable opportunities for professional and personal development.
We encourage all alumni to get involved. take an active role in promoting this network, attend events and keep their contact details updated.

ALUMNI NETWORK STRUCTURE

The University does not prescribe a particular format for Alumni Networks. Alumni Networks can vary from a single alumnus using an email list to organise monthly pub meetings, to large groups with a formal executive committee organising initiatives such as professional development workshops and networking events (whether online or face to face).

All it takes to create a network is for one or two alumni who share a connection through location, faculty, interests or affiliation to build a formal network.

Most groups begin with small-scale informal gatherings, rather than large events. This helps build up local interest and allows you to find out what local alumni are interested in, and how other alumni would be willing to help before creating a more formal committee.

VOLUNTEER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Alumni Networks must have a Network Leader, who will be the primary contact with the Alumni Relations Office.

Here are some roles (or parts of roles) you should consider creating to help balance the workload of running a group:

Network Leader	• ensures all activities are organised in line with Alumni Network's and University's mission • is the primary contact with the University
Admin	• is responsible for administrative aspects of running a network
Events	• oversees individual events (eg sourcing speakers, venues and catering). Many Networks allocate this role for each event, rather than one person looking after all events throughout the year
Marketing	• maintains information for website, social media channels (Facebook and LinkedIn Groups) and communications channels (WhatsApp, WeChat etc)

Identifying clear role descriptions, even in a few lines in an email, can help ensure work is delegated effectively and that everyone involved is clear about their roles within the Network.

It's also helpful to have a wider demographic of volunteers (age, profession, gender) to ensure this is reflected in your network's membership and activities.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Without the willingness of alumni volunteers, Macquarie's Alumni Networks and Chapters would not exist. It is therefore important for a group to keep seeking new volunteers and encouraging them to become involved with its own network.

Here are a few suggestions about how to recruit/search for new volunteers to help run the Alumni Network.

- Promote members to get involved at every point of contact, whether it be physically or online at events or gatherings or social media channels
- Encourage passionate members to become involved in small tasks, with the hope this involvement may flourish into a new volunteer
- If new roles within the network become available, publicise these to your general members in your online channels and through personal relationships
- Invite general members to attend the network committee planning meetings. This will provide the occasion for new volunteers to come forward and discuss their own ideas

FINANCING AND FUNDING

Each Alumni Network is self-funded, with costs for activities paid for by each member. For example, when hosting networking drinks on a Friday night, you can either charge a ticket price to cover costs or advertise as "buy-your-own".

Alumni Networks may be eligible to receive funding for specific alumni engagement activities through our *Macquarie University Alumni Chapter and Networks Grant Program*. Alumni Networks wishing to request support should contact their Alumni Relations contact at least 4 weeks' prior to requiring the funds. Funding requests will be granted at the discretion of the Alumni Relations Office.

PROGRAM OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Establishing a program of events and activities is key to a vibrant and connected alumni network. Work with your committee members to create a program for the next few years.

You may wish to put on an event to which you invite industry experts to speak on a topic of interest. You can mix it up by alternating between more formal and informal events. For more information, refer to *'Guide to Alumni Events'*.

Your planned activities need not be restricted to just events. You may also wish to share alumni success stories, celebrate national public holidays, share job opportunities or even consider fundraising activities for one of the many University causes like scholarships or research projects.

GROUP WEBPAGE

Ensuring that your Alumni Network has a homepage, and therefore an online presence, that contains information about who you are, why the group exists, and clear contact details is very important. You want to make it as easy as possible for alumni in your region to get in touch with you.

You can create your own or we can create one for you. Just make sure that all your details are always up to date. For more information, refer to *'Guide to Connecting Online'*.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Networks are encouraged to use social media channels to promote their activities and engage their communities. Assistance in establishing these online networks can be provided by the Alumni Relations Office.

When considering its social and online media presence, Alumni Networks are asked to consider the following:

- All alumni are encouraged to sign up to the:
  - Macquarie University Alumni LinkedIn linkedin.com/groups/1774516/
  - Macquarie University Alumni Facebook facebook.com/mqalumni
- Establishing social media accounts which refer to Macquarie University are permitted provided they do not claim to be "official" Macquarie University channels. This is because these groups are not monitored and reported on by the University and may not follow specific online communications guidelines.
- If managing social media account for alumni, the manager of that account should regularly post and monitor the account to ensure relevance and mitigation of risk to reputation.
- Please ensure that copy and posts comply with the code of conduct relevant to each social media channel and to Macquarie University's Social Media guideline.

ALUMNI PERSONAL INFORMATION

Due to privacy restrictions, the University is unable to provide Network Leaders with contact details of its alumni. Please see below under *'Support from the Alumni Relations Office'* for how we can help you communicate with alumni in your network. See Macquarie University's privacy policy.

FINDING IMAGES FOR WEBSITE AND EMAILS

Using images in your Group's online materials makes them visually more appealing but it can be difficult if your group does not have a budget to pay for images, which is a common way to establish that you have permission to use the picture from the copyright owner. Fortunately, websites like Unsplash give you access to thousands of images which are allowed to be used without a license. If you do use an image from there, just make sure that you tag it with appropriately.

USE OF THE UNIVERSITY LOGO

The Macquarie University logo is the foremost visual expression of the University's brand. The logo is a formally registered trademark of Macquarie University both in Australia and overseas. Use of the logo projects a consistent image of the University. All approved Alumni Networks will be provided with and be permitted to use the University logo. However, they must agree to adhere to the University Brand Guidelines. The logo will not be distributed contrary to the purposes of Alumni Networks nor will it be misused, stored, copied or manipulated.

USE OF THE UNIVERSITY NAME

Alumni Networks will be permitted to use the Macquarie University name. Like the logo, the Macquarie University name is a formally registered trademark both in Australia and overseas and it is key expression of the University's brand. The manner in which the name is used and the actions of groups and individuals who use the Macquarie University name all contribute to the ongoing reputation of the University. The University name may be used alongside that of an Alumni Network based on the following grounds:

- That the Alumni Network agrees that the Macquarie University name will not be used for purposes other than that of enhancing the relationship between the Macquarie University and its alumni, and building the relationships between alumni of Macquarie University.
- That the Alumni Network must not act in a manner that will bring the University into disrepute, including financial

SUPPORT FROM THE ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE

The Alumni Relations Office is able to provide the following services, support and advice in helping you run your Alumni Network/Chapter.

ALUMNI RELATIONS POINT OF CONTACT

Your Alumni Network/Chapter will be allocated a contact from the Alumni Relations Office to assist you and will walk with you along the journey of growing the Alumni Network/Chapter. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or ideas you might have.

We will also hold regular teleconference meetings (monthly or bi-monthly) with you to keep up to date and plan through any events or activities you may have coming up and to share latest news and updates from the University.

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF ALUMNI

Are you thinking about how you might engage alumni in your area in new ways? Would you like to organise different types of events, but are not entirely sure where to start? Would it be helpful to know a little more about your local alumni?

We are now able to provide you with demographic summary to help you with this. The information can include the number of alumni in main town/cities, with information on degrees, subject and industry sectors. To request the summary, please email alumni@mq.edu.au.

GROUP MAILINGS

Being able to contact the alumni in your city/region/country is extremely important when you have events or news to publicise, and we can help you do this. We can tailor the group emailing service to each Alumni Network/Chapter's needs. So, whether you just need to advertise one of your main events or share some news, we will work with you to make the most of this service.

The most effective emails should:
- be concise
- contain a short introduction to the group
- include publicity for an interesting event or initiative
- have an easy way for alumni to get in touch with your Group

We request that you give the Alumni Relations Office minimum two weeks' notice with a draft copy of your email to load your content into the email platform and draw the data list. Once this is done, we will send you a preview before the email is sent out.

ALUMNI GROUP WEBPAGE

All Alumni Networks/Chapters can be provided with an individual web page on the University's alumni website: mq.edu.au/alumni/global alumni-network, and we strongly encourage your group to take advantage of this. This is where your group's primary contact details and group descriptions will be displayed. We can also upload information about your alumni group events, newsletters, booking forms and photographs, as well as links to your independent website, Facebook groups and LinkedIn profiles.

Your group web page is a great tool to advertise your group and its events to members and to the alumni all around the world, so inform the Alumni Relations Office when you have any updates.

PUBLICISING OF GROUP EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

As well as being listed on the University's group's webpage, we offer all Alumni Networks/Chapters the opportunity to advertise their events on the main alumni event website: mq.edu.au/alumni/events. Each event is given its own listing and can include all the necessary information including registration website. This is a fantastic way to advertise your group event.

We also offer advertising of Alumni Network/Chapter events through the Alumni Relations social media channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn and WeChat, and Alumni newsletter (if there is one coming up).

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AND MEETINGS

We aim to hold a virtual forum for alumni network leaders to share best practice, meet staff from the Alumni Relations Office, and learn more about Alumni Network/Chapter's vital role as advocates and ambassadors for Macquarie University in your respective countries.

We also hold regular teleconferences between regions that allow us to provide detailed updates from the University and to engage fully with the successes and concerns of the local groups.

EVENTS SUPPORT PACK

Successfully organising and managing an event can be stressful, especially if it's your first time. We've created a '*Guide to Alumni Events*' to help you prepare your event. This includes a list of different types of events you can host, an event checklist, downloadable resources and ways to promote your event. And don't forget, we are here to help along the journey too.

We can also send Macquarie promotional materials and collateral for your event. If you would like this, please let the Alumni Relations Office know and we can send you an events pack.

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