Guidelines for creating an alumni network

So you want to start a network?

Alumni are part of our University family. As alumni you are the university's best ambassadors. 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.

If you have the passion to connect or reconnect, we are delighted to invite you to establish a formal 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. The Alumni Relations team recognises the value of these networks and aims to encourage the valuable advocacy they provide, and is here to provide alumni with the resources, support and guidance required to successfully execute their programs.

Who is responsible for managing the network?

Alumni Networks have an informal relationship with the University and as such are ultimately responsible for the conduct and management of their programs.

Criteria

Alumni groups that are smaller in size (representing communities less than 1,000 alumni), informal in nature and/or defined by discipline or professional focus are referred to by the University as Alumni Networks. These networks, often based on industry or professional interests are generally affiliated with the Faculty from which their constituents have graduated, but can also be formed based on a shared location.

Purpose

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.

Benefits

The Alumni Networks program aims to provide alumni volunteers involved in the operation of the groups with the satisfaction that comes from:

- Engaging alumni and connecting them with each other and the University
- Sharing local or industry knowledge with the University
- Expanding their professional and personal networks Governance

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.

Steps for Forming an Alumni Network

1. Contact the Alumni Relations office to discuss the proposed Alumni Network. Email alumni@mq.edu.au. You will be assigned an Alumni Relations contact to guide you through the process.

2. Gauge the feasibility and level of interest in the target group in consultation with your Alumni Relations contact.

3. Discuss possible models and decide the best structure for the group.

4. Register your Alumni Network by submitting an Alumni Networks Terms of Reference outlining:

- **Key Purpose** The alumni group's key purpose and how it aims to meet serve the needs of its alumni community.
- **Key Market** The alumni group the Alumni Networks aims to serve whether by region or discipline
- **Proposed activities** An overview of the Alumni Network's proposed annual activity program

5. Your assigned Alumni Relations contact can offer guidance to grow your network via social media and email; and include your network on the Alumni webpage list of networks.

Next Steps

These are suggested ideas and guidelines to growing your network and establishing an Alumni Network Program. However, you are free to come up with your own ideas to make your network a success.

1. Once you've established your network, you will need to **grow your numbers**. Your Alumni Relations contact can help you with targeted facebook posts and eDMs. We suggest allowing 3-12 months to grow a network before hosting an event.
2. **Establish a committee** – Identify and recruit volunteers to help manage your network. You can do this through your existing network, using social media networks or seek advice from the Alumni Relations office.
3. **Host your first event** – You only need a few interested alumni to host a small informal event, like networking drinks. Pick a time and place that would be most convenient to the group eg a bar or restaurant after work. You can promote it through your social networks, and the Alumni Relations Office can send an email to a targeted group of alumni. You could use your first informal event to recruit a volunteer committee.
4. **Establish a program of events** – 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.
5. Keep your Alumni Relations contact informed of your plans as he/she can provide support in promoting your event, making introductions to relevant

University and alumni leaders if relevant. Other resources such as brochures, alumni pins, show bags, donation forms and alumni magazines may be provided depending on the nature of the event.

Funding

Alumni Networks may be eligible to receive funding for specific alumni engagement activities. 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.

Communications Support

Alumni Networks may request communications be sent on their behalf to their communities upon arrangement with their Alumni Relations contact. A minimum four weeks' notice (by email) is required for Alumni Networks wishing to request University communications.

Social Media Alumni

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 groups - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1774516/
> Facebook account - https://www.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.

Alumni Personal Information

Due to privacy restrictions, the University is unable to provide volunteers leading Alumni Networks with the names, mailing addresses, email addresses or telephone numbers of its specific alumni cohort. The University's privacy policy can be found on the University's website. https://www.mq.edu.au/about/about-the-university/governance/privacy

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 permitted to use the University logo, however they must agree to adhere to the Alumni Networks 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 financially