

A Guide to Alumni Events

TYPES OF EVENTS, EVENT CHECKLIST, EVENT PROMOTION
AND DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

TYPES OF EVENTS

A varied events program can help strengthen an alumni group's membership by retaining existing members and attracting new members of different ages, interests and affiliations. Below are some suggestions and ideas.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Types of events include: drinks receptions, informal dinners, sports events, wine and cheese tasting, events associated with prominent dates in the calendar (eg public holidays or celebrations) or Macquarie calendar year (eg graduations, open days).

Informal evening gatherings which allow alumni to attend after a normal working day and are not tied to a specific arrival time. These events are often held in the same location each month on the same day, for example, "first Thursday of every month", so all members know when these gatherings take place. These events are a wonderful way to encourage new members to join the Alumni Network/Chapter.

ACADEMIC EVENTS

Lecture or presentation by a visiting Macquarie academic or a senior member of staff. These events are often the most popular in the events calendar and may be combined with a lunch or dinner to add a more social element.

If your Alumni Network/Chapter is considering hosting an academic event, please reach out to the Alumni Relations Office.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Trips to local museums, historic houses, gardens, theatres or art galleries. Usually the trip involves a guided tour, followed by a social gathering at a nearby cafe or local pub. These can also include national public holidays or religious celebrations.

PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

These are aimed at encouraging members to find out more about the careers and experiences of their fellow alumni. These can be very popular with recent graduates.

Professional development or networking events can have a formal format with a speaker or theme, or be informal over a meal or drinks.

FAMILY EVENTS

Family picnics, visiting a local animal park or attending a family show.

WELCOME TO MACQUARIE ALUMNI COMMUNITY

These events for new international graduates who are returning home, are a way to engage with the local alumni community.

VIRTUAL/ONLINE EVENTS

See more on “Guide to online alumni events”.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT EVENTS

Alumni are our best ambassadors for student recruitment. If you would like to get involved, please email the Alumni Relations Office so we can put you in touch with our Macquarie International team.

COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

These are a great way to offer a different type of event for your members. Joining with another partner group offers the opportunity to create a larger-scale event, in both attendance and the overall format, and to share the workload of organising the event.

EVENT CHECKLIST

Successfully organising and managing an event can be stressful, especially for first timers. The following checklist can help you prepare your event. While this list is by no means exhaustive, we hope it will give you some suggestions for good practice.

PROPOSAL

- ☐ Draft a proposal for the event, including a budget and timeline for key tasks and deadlines

DATE

- ☐ Discuss proposed dates internally and with key stakeholders including VIPs and the Alumni Relations Office

VENUE

- ☐ Research possible venues
- ☐ Use contacts within your Alumni Network/Chapter to find suitable and affordable venues
- ☐ Visit the proposed venue before finalising to make sure it meets your requirements, check that the space is suitable, wheelchair accessible if needed, etc
- ☐ Agree upon suitable venue

The Alumni Relations Office can assist with collaborative events by providing contact information for other Alumni Networks/Chapters and student clubs and societies.

Possible groups you could collaborate with include:

- other Macquarie University Alumni Networks/Chapters in the region
- where appropriate, Macquarie University student clubs and societies
- Alumni Network/Chapters from other universities and institutions
- Austrade and DFAT

FINANCES

- ☐ Create a budget document to keep track of your income and outgoings for the event. This could include speaker expenses, venue hire, refreshments and others
- ☐ Decide on whether there will be an event charge (full/discounted), self-funded or free

SPEAKERS

- ☐ If appropriate, research possible speaker options
- ☐ Send formal invitation to speaker with details of the event
- ☐ Ensure the speakers kept aware of all timings and arrangements for the event

VIPs

- ☐ Identify and invite any VIPs for the event

GUEST LIST

- ☐ Reach out to the Alumni Relations Office to prepare the proposed guest list

INVITATIONS

- ☐ Draft and send invitations and accompanying information in advance to maximize attendance
- ☐ Make it clear to invitees how and who they should respond to
- ☐ Monitor replies
- ☐ Set a clean RSVP deadline for replies

RISKS

- ☐ Complete a risk assessment
- ☐ Consider what you will do if the event is cancelled eg venue cancellation charges, ticket refunds etc
- ☐ Be sure that key volunteers are aware of emergency procedures

PUBLICITY

- ☐ Send event details to the Alumni Relations Office for publicising on the Macquarie Alumni Events website
- ☐ If appropriate, arrange with the Alumni Relations Office for a mailing to the alumni in your region informing them of the event
- ☐ Use social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, WeChat to promote
- ☐ The Alumni Relations Office will also share the event through our own channels

AUDIO/VISUAL

- ☐ If appropriate, agree audio and video requirements, such as projectors, screens and microphones

STAFFING

- ☐ Decide on your tasks for your alumni network volunteers eg registration desk, meet and greet

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Make sure to include dietary requirements in the registration form

PARKING

- ☐ If appropriate, reserve parking at the venue
- ☐ Check details for disabled parking

ACCESSIBILITY

- ☐ If appropriate, check with the venue regarding accessibility issues

ROOM DRESSING

- ☐ Considered decorations such as flowers, banners or tablecloths. The Alumni Relations Office may be able to provide items to help dress your venue.

POST EVENT

- ☐ Thank speakers and VIPs
- ☐ Collect feedback from attendees / send survey
- ☐ Create final attendee list with updated contact details to send to the Alumni Relations Office
- ☐ Finalise budget and possible invoices for payment

EVENT PROMOTION

If you want to organise a great event, you need good pre-event promotion. Below is a list of ways you could maximise event attendance.

EVENT INVITATIONS

The type of event you are organising will determine the type of invitation you send to your members. For example, for your annual reception, a formal invitation sent by mail or a specifically designed email may be appropriate. For your informal monthly get-togethers, a simple post on social media channels may suffice.

ADVERTISING ONLINE

It is important to list your events on all your social media channels and group webpages and keep your events up to date. Tips for making your event stand out online:

- Keep your event title short, descriptive and to the point
- Provide a contact person who may be reached at all times
- Use the description to communicate your event's appeal to a wide audience
- Be sure to note whether your event is free and/or open to the non-group members/ guests

DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

If you want to organise a great event, you need good pre-event promotion. Below is a list of ways you could maximise

- Event registration template
- Signage
- Name tags
- Brochure
- Donation form
- Build your own Macquarie lighthouse kit

EVENT REMINDERS

It is acceptable to send up to three reminder emails to your members about your Alumni Network/Chapter's current events. Preferably the reminders should come 1-2 weeks before the RSVP date for the event.

ALUMNI RELATIONS SUPPORT

All Alumni Network/Chapter events should be listed on the main alumni event website for Macquarie University. If you would like your event to feature, it is important to keep the Alumni Relations Office up to date with your latest events.

The Alumni Relations Office can also arrange for emails to be sent on behalf of your group to help reach a wider audience of the alumni.

Please see '*Support from the Alumni Relations Office*' for further information

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