

UOW

# ALUMNI NETWORK

BUILDING *Lifelong* RELATIONSHIPS

HANDBOOK

University of Wollongong



# WELCOME

The University of Wollongong (UOW) is committed to building and nurturing lifelong relationships with its alumni (graduates) through the UOW Alumni Network.

Our alumni are important members of the University community and are vital to our ongoing success. They inspire future generations, share knowledge and experience and support the vision of UOW.

All UOW alumni are members of the UOW Alumni Network, along with current students, study abroad and exchange students (past and current), honoraries, graduates from the former institutions of UOW and staff.

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## OBJECTIVES OF THE UOW ALUMNI NETWORK

The primary objectives of the UOW Alumni Network and its Chapters are to:

**PROMOTE AND SUPPORT  
THE UNIVERSITY'S  
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES  
AND REPUTATION**



**PROVIDE SUPPORT AND  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
THE PROFESSIONAL AND  
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OF UOW ALUMNI**



**FOSTER A MUTUALLY  
BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN ALUMNI  
AND THE UNIVERSITY**

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# CHAPTER/NETWORK GUIDELINES

A Chapter or Network is created when a group of alumni who share a location, field of study, professional area or other common interest, form to collectively remain involved with the UOW community.

All Chapters operate relatively independently through their own committees and within the guidelines of the UOW Alumni Network. The Alumni Relations team is the principal connection between the University and its alumni and aims to assist Chapters in running smoothly.

It is important that all Chapters:

- Comply with the legislations and regulations of the country or region in which they operate
- Make membership open to all UOW alumni

This document details the guidelines for forming a Chapter and explains how the Alumni Relations team can help you.

## ESTABLISHING A CHAPTER/NETWORK

- 1** Contact the Alumni Relations team to discuss the proposed Chapter or Network, including:
  - Objectives
  - Proposed structure and function
  - Proposed activities
  - Target audience
- 2** Gather the support and interest of alumni. The Alumni Relations team can assist by sending communication to your target audience, outlining the objectives and inviting alumni to join. We can also promote the new Chapter on the UOW Alumni Network website.
- 3** Form a steering committee to oversee the first year of activities
- 4** International Chapters should seek legal advice regarding forming a registered legally incorporated body
- 5** Hold preliminary meetings where members establish a vision and objectives for the Chapter or Network and list events or projects that the members can successfully coordinate
- 6** Forward to the Alumni Relations team, the minutes of the preliminary meeting with the names of the Chapter committee members
- 7** Review operations at the end of the first year and elect office bearers if deemed appropriate

We ask alumni who nominate themselves to represent the new Chapter give permission for their email address to be disclosed as a contact on the UOW Alumni website. Interested alumni can then be directed to the main Chapter contact.

The most important elements of a successful Chapter are its members and the enthusiasm and level of interest of alumni involved. Without a group of dedicated members Chapters may find it difficult to achieve their goals. For this reason, we recommend the support of at least ten alumni is obtained in order to establish a Chapter.

The Alumni Relations team is here to help you through all facets of starting your new Chapter, so please don't hesitate to contact us at any time to assist you.

## STRUCTURE

Most Chapters are unincorporated associations, meaning they are not legal entities, but rather a group of people who come together to promote a common interest or activity.

In some countries outside Australia, Chapters are required to form a registered legally incorporated body which must be registered with the appropriate authorities in the relevant country. In these circumstances, we encourage Chapters to seek professional advice from the appropriate government or professional organisations on incorporation, insurance and other relevant laws and regulations.

## LEADERSHIP

In the early stages of developing a Chapter, we recommend preliminary meetings are held where Chapter members resolve to:

- Establish a vision and proposed objectives for the Chapter
- Develop events or projects the members feel they could easily achieve in the first twelve months

Upon successful completion of the first year of operation, Chapters may choose to formally elect a Management Committee such as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. We also recommend that volunteers are assigned particular areas of responsibility, such as events coordination or promotions officer. Terms of office for these positions would usually be for two years.

Chapters must ensure the Alumni Relations team always has up-to-date committee details. If you would like definitions of the various roles within the Management Committee, please feel free to contact [alumni@uow.edu.au](mailto:alumni@uow.edu.au).

## GOVERNANCE

Chapters may develop their own governance subject to approval by the Alumni Development Group. Typically a Chapter will have a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and committee members serving a two-year term. Chapter by-laws can be developed subject to approval by the Alumni Development Group. Please contact the Alumni Relations team if you would like an example.

## MEMBERSHIP

All alumni of the University should be welcome to join Chapters. Chapters may charge a fee for attendance at events and participation in activities, but may not charge membership fees.

## REPORTING

The Chapter contact person must maintain regular contact with the Alumni Relations team either via regular meetings or email communication. Please send an updated committee member list to the Alumni Relations team each time there is a change in the committee.

Minutes from meetings should be sent to the Alumni Relations team as soon as possible. Staff may attend Chapter meetings.

Every Chapter is required to submit an annual report and activity plan to the **Alumni Development Group**. The Alumni Development Group (ADG) is an advisory group to the Vice-Chancellor that:

- provides strategic advice and support to enhance the University's alumni programs
- advises on current and new alumni programs and initiatives to meet specific strategic outcomes

The Alumni Development Group is responsible for overseeing the strategic activities of the Chapters and the allocation of funds.

The annual report should include the following:

- Chapter's overall vision or objectives
- Description of the year's activities and achievements
- Breakdown of expenditure
- Financial report and a copy of bank account statements, if applicable

You will be provided with a template for your annual report when your Chapter is formed.

## ACTIVITIES

Planning diverse activities will generate interest in a Chapter and play an important part in encouraging alumni and the University to remain connected with the Chapter and the UOW Alumni Network. In order to maintain momentum and continued interest of members, we recommend that Chapters hold at least three activities each year.

Suggestions for activities include:

- Networking Functions
- Professional development activities such as a seminar or lecture by a graduate or UOW lecturer
- Career advice and/or networking
- Alumni-student engagement activities such as a mentoring program
- Alumni reunion
- Fundraising events for University projects (i.e. scholarships)

Chapters are required to submit an activity plan for the year to the Alumni Development Group.

The activity plan should include:

- Objectives and proposed outcomes
- Budget and support required from the Alumni Relations team

We can provide you with a template to assist you with this, please contact the Alumni Relations team for a copy.

## ACTIVITIES - RESEARCH

As part of the organisation of Chapter activities, the Alumni Relations team will work with you to undertake all relevant research to determine:

- Number of alumni to be invited
- Appropriate activities
- Demographics of alumni to be targeted, including degree completed and area of interest
- Timing
- Costs/budget
- Does the activity support Chapter objectives?

## ACTIVITIES-PROMOTION

The Alumni Relations team can assist in the promotion of activities via Alumni E-News, targeted email invitations or postal invitations, as well as Chapter websites and the UOW Alumni Network website.

We would encourage Chapter activities to include all alumni, including those outside of the Chapter membership.

It is considered good practice to provide at least six weeks' notice of an upcoming event to guests. This will ensure that the Alumni Relations team can assist you with promoting your event.

## CHAPTER BANK ACCOUNTS

If your Chapter requires a bank account, it must be set up as a dedicated account in the name of the Chapter with a minimum of two signatories from the Chapter. If the balance of the account exceeds AUD\$10,000, a designated UOW staff member must also be listed as a signatory.

## INSURANCE

In certain circumstances the activities of University volunteers may be covered by the University's corporate insurance policies. It is imperative that all volunteers operating on-campus complete the **Volunteer Acknowledgement form** and submit to the Alumni Relations team before commencing any voluntary activities in order to comply with UOW policies.

All Chapters must contact the Alumni Relations team prior to organising major activities which make reference to the University, involve University staff or use the University logo, name, facilities or premises.

## LIABILITY

Chapter committee members are not authorised agents of the University of Wollongong or the UOW Alumni Network and should not represent themselves as such at any time. No Chapter committee member may enter into any contract or arrangement on behalf of, or for the University.

The University is not in a position to provide legal advice to Chapters, whether in Australia or overseas. We encourage all Chapters to seek independent, local legal advice in their own locations before entering into contracts, incorporating or engaging in any activity which makes reference to, or involves the use of the University logo or name.

# SUPPORT SERVICES

The Alumni Relations team provides a number of support services to Chapters and Stakeholders to enable them to better engage with alumni. The following are considered Stakeholders of the UOW Alumni Network and we actively encourage them to connect with their alumni:

- Faculties
- Satellite and off-shore campuses
- Schools within each Faculty
- Chapters
- Residential Colleges
- Any other group or individual associated with the UOW community that has an interest in the UOW Alumni Network

Stakeholders can organise activities that are consistent with the aims and objectives of the University and the UOW Alumni Network.

## COMMUNICATION SERVICES

The Alumni Relations team communicates regularly with alumni through a number of mediums including the:

- UOW Alumni Network website
- Alumni E-News, an electronic newsletter sent every two months
- UOW Alumni Network Facebook page, which provides regular, more informal updates
- UOW Alumni Network Linked In page, providing a business forum for alumni
- Occasional newsletters and invitations from Faculties, Departments and Chapters

The Alumni Relations team provides Chapters with free access to all UOW Alumni Network communications to publish news, events and articles related to the Chapter. We can help you structure your story or advertisement so that it works best for your Chapter. Contact the team for advice and assistance.

All Chapters may have their own webpage within the UOW Alumni website. These are updated by the Alumni Relations team. Chapters can submit Chapter based news and announcements, along with photos of events and activities.

Chapters or Stakeholders may publish their own communication of particular interest to their group. The production and distribution costs for this communication, if outside what is provided free of charge by the UOW Alumni Network, must be paid for by the Chapter or Stakeholder.

## UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG LOGO AND BRAND

The University of Wollongong logo and name are proprietary to the University and shall not be used without written permission of the University and only for specified purposes. For more information, please contact the Alumni Relations team.

## DATABASE SUPPORT

The Alumni Relations team maintains a database of all UOW alumni and offers a range of services to all Chapters and Stakeholders. The database services required by Chapters and Stakeholders will vary from activity to activity so please discuss this with the Alumni Relations team.

Alumni data is confidential and protected under Australian privacy legislation. To ensure the consistency and quality of alumni data, and to protect the privacy of graduates, we strongly encourage Chapters and stakeholders not to keep separate databases. Instead, all alumni should be directed to the 'Update your details' form on the UOW Alumni website at [www.uow.edu.au/alumni/new-contact](http://www.uow.edu.au/alumni/new-contact) to maintain their personal information.

All communication from the UOW Alumni Network includes an opt-out to ensure that Australian privacy laws are complied with.

## FUNDING FOR CHAPTERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The UOW Alumni Network receives an annual budget from the University to provide funding to Chapters and other Stakeholders. The Alumni Development Group manages and approves all funding. The University allocates an annual budget of AUD \$15,000 to the Alumni Development Group. Funding for Chapters and Stakeholders is provided from this budget.

Chapters and other Stakeholders may apply for funding to assist them with their alumni engagement activities for the upcoming year.

ADG funding assistance is available for all activities that align with UOW Alumni Network objectives.

Funding applications should include:

Chapters:

- Chapter's activity plan for the upcoming year
- Objectives and proposed outcomes of the activities
- Anticipated alumni involvement or attendance numbers
- Budget with estimated costs; including the specific amount requested from the Alumni Development Group, and specific amounts available from other sources (if applicable)

Stakeholders:

- Objectives and proposed outcomes of the activities
- Anticipated alumni involvement or attendance numbers
- Budget with estimated costs; including the amount requested from the Alumni Development Group, and specific amounts available from other sources (if applicable)

The Alumni Development Group will review the funding applications according to:

- Availability of other funding for the activities
- Number of alumni that will benefit from the activities
- Identification of a clear purpose for activities

The Chapter or Stakeholder contact person will be notified of the outcome of the funding application as soon as possible after the Alumni Development Group's next scheduled meeting.

The offer of Alumni Development Group funding is subject to the following conditions and terms:

- Funding is valid for a 12 month period only, any funding not spent must be returned to the Alumni Development Group
- Chapter Chairs and Stakeholder contacts are required to liaise regularly with the Alumni Relations team to report on progress
- Funds must be used for the purpose stated in the funding application, unless approval is granted for re-allocation of funding
- Prior approval must be sought before significant changes are made to approved activities, or if difficulties arise which substantially alter the activity
- Re-allocation of funding must be applied for in writing to the Alumni Development Group
- The Alumni Development Group reserves the right to withdraw funding if approved activities are cancelled or postponed

## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

### THE CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS FOR VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

These annual awards recognise voluntary service by community members and graduates of the University and highlight the contribution they make to the enrichment of their community and advancement of society.

Chapter committee members can nominate fellow committee members or instigate a group nomination on behalf of a Chapter, but self-nominations are not accepted. Contact the Alumni Relations team for further information on the selection criteria for the awards.

### CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS FUNCTION

A Celebrating Volunteers function is held each year to celebrate the achievements of all volunteers across the University. The Chancellor's Awards for Voluntary Contribution are awarded at this function.



## ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

UOW Alumni Network  
Office of Community and Partnerships

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Web: [www.uow.edu.au/alumni](http://www.uow.edu.au/alumni)

