

Coordinate/Run a Group Guide

Welcome

Our alumni are valuable members of the UEA community, all around the world. They are also our greatest ambassadors and, through their support, contribute to the University's development by promoting its name and reputation.

Our main aim is to bring our alumni together and build strong UEA alumni networks across the globe. We actively encourage the development of alumni groups no matter the place and we are here to support and help them thrive. Alumni groups are a great way to stay in touch with friends and make new contacts no matter where you live. These groups provide valuable networking opportunities and keep alumni in touch with the University.

Successful groups depend on the effort and commitment of alumni volunteers who contribute their time to help plan and organise the group's activities. If you are thinking about setting up and running a group, this guide can be a useful tool for you. Here you can find practical tips and suggestions, the important steps you need to take, a full list of your responsibilities and benefits, as well as all the possible ways the University can support you in your role.

If you are located in a country/region where no current alumni group exists, we look forward to hearing from you soon and help you explore the options available.

UEA Alumni Relations Team

✦ Why set up an alumni group?

Alumni groups are a great space for reconnecting and strengthening your bond with fellow alumni and the University, building social and professional networks, and representing UEA in your country or region. They can be an amazing opportunity to develop new friendships, increase your circle of business contacts, support your own career development as well as apply and develop your leadership and coordinating skills.

By setting up and running an alumni group, you will have the endless support of the alumni team, and the opportunity to meet and liaise with other University stakeholders.

The already established UEA alumni groups are diverse just like our alumni community and we recognise and respect that fact. You can decide on the type and style of your group. It can be informal, which means organising a couple of professional and social events per year such as drinks, reunions, or networking events; perhaps you want something more formal with more regular activities and events, as well as actively participating in other various University's activities such as recruitment events.

However, whatever the style and type of an alumni group, all groups and their coordinators should have in mind that they should always make efforts for the benefit of the wider alumni community and the University.

✦ Skills and Qualities required

If you have decided that becoming a UEA alumni group coordinator really appeals to you, these are the skills and qualities we are looking for:

- ❖ Enthusiasm, Willingness and Commitment
- ❖ Willing to contribute time and effort; self-motivated, flexible and resilient
- ❖ Good interpersonal and communication skills
- ❖ Helpful, friendly and approachable manner
- ❖ Ability to deal with people from all walks of life
- ❖ Able to motivate and engage with other alumni including new alumni
- ❖ Team player
- ❖ Ability to appropriately handle confidential data

✦ What we expect from you and your group

Your responsibilities as Group coordinator/ Primary Contact

- ❖ Organise regular activities and events which provide an opportunity for alumni to continue their education, offer their skills, expertise and networks to other alumni or to wider community and socialise with one another. Ideally aim to hold at least two events per year.
- ❖ Keep the Alumni Team informed about the latest developments and activities of your group
- ❖ Create Facebook or LinkedIn pages for your group and ensure they remain active
- ❖ Receive the monthly eZiggurat and distribute news accordingly to your group members during your gatherings, via e-mail or your group's pages on social media
- ❖ Inform the Alumni Team in advance about planned future events so that appropriate levels of support can be provided for group activity and events
- ❖ Seek to ensure that your group is as open as possible to alumni involvement
- ❖ Prepare a full profile along with a photo in order to be uploaded on the alumni group coordinators' list on the alumni website. In the profile we want you to write about your studies at UEA, your career so far as well as the reason you chose to set up and run a UEA alumni group in your country/region, the rewards and the challenges of doing so
- ❖ Forward updated addresses and business contacts of the Group's members to the Alumni Team
- ❖ Actively encourage alumni to join the group
- ❖ Keep your group members informed about all the potential ways they can volunteer for the University (e.g. mentoring, provision of internships and job opportunities etc.)
- ❖ Share roles within the group (e.g. some group members can help in recruiting new students, others can take part in pre-departure events etc.)

- ❖ Communicate regularly with your group, Perhaps you could send a general announcement at the beginning of the year highlighting the work and activities of the previous year and informing group members
- ❖ Become a point of contact in the region for enquiries from fellow alumni, prospective and current students
- ❖ Update Alumni Team if you are not able to continue running the group and provide details of the new alumni group coordinator

Your Group's responsibilities

- ❖ Foster a sense of pride and enthusiasm for UEA
- ❖ Promote the University's name and reputation on a local or regional level
- ❖ Actively engaging with the University and supporting strategic goals and objectives
- ❖ Foster an open network and community which welcomes all UEA alumni
- ❖ Assist in the recruitment of new students by taking part in recruitment events
- ❖ Take part in/ organise pre-departure events for students living in the region who are about to start at UEA or 'welcome-back' events for recently graduated alumni
- ❖ Offer informal advice for students or alumni as and when appropriate
- ❖ Have fun!

Important Note:

The average time commitment for the alumni group coordinators is 20 to 30 hours while for group members it fluctuates from 2 to 20 hours.

The alumni group coordinators would expect to be contacted by the alumni office as well as possibly by the International office or the Careers. There is also a possibility the group members to be contacted at some point by the above offices.

✦ How we can support you

- ❖ Help with the coordination and planning for the launch of your group and for subsequent group events and activities
- ❖ Promotion of group activities and details via alumni website, eZiggurat, emails and social media
- ❖ Identify alumni who live in your area and inform them on your behalf about the new group
- ❖ Maintain regular communication with you and keep you informed about the latest University's news and developments including when a UEA representative travels in your country/region

- ❖ Assist with data management of group members and local alumni in accordance with Data Protection Act
- ❖ Provide advice and guidance on any issue relating to group activities
- ❖ Provision of UEA promotional material and memorabilia, when possible
- ❖ Invite you to become member of the official local UEA alumni coordinators group on LinkedIn. This group gives the opportunity to the University's alumni group coordinators to interact with each other, share best practices and challenges and provide advice

✦ Next steps

➤ Contact the Alumni office

If you are excited by the idea of hosting an alumni group in your country/region, the first things you have to think are the below:

- The type of your group
- Your group's objectives
- Your group's potential activities
- Business model and sustainability
- Any additional ideas you have for your group

When you have a think, the next step is to contact the alumni office and share your thoughts and ideas. The alumni office can then inform you about the potential of setting up a group in your region by identifying the number of alumni living there. Always have in mind that the type of your group in terms of size and structure largely depends on the number of alumni based in your region.

➤ Contact alumni in your country/region

The initial communication with potential members of your group is something that we can do on your behalf. The purpose of this communication is to introduce the idea of an alumni group, to request support from alumni and to determine levels of interest. Your contact details will also be given so that the alumni interested in participating in the group can contact you and declare their interest and ask their enquiries.

➤ Organisation of the first meeting

Once you have initially contacted and received replies from your fellow alumni, it is time to organise your first meeting. This meeting will be useful to meet each other, discuss further the group's objectives and the group's future plan as well as to make your group

aware of its responsibilities and the kind of support UEA can provide. It will serve to orientate first-time alumni attendees and encourage group's growth. This meeting can be a social/informal gathering or something more formal and it has to be planned properly and in advance. For advice and support on organising this, please contact the alumni office.

Important Note:

Always have in my mind that you should keep the alumni office throughout the whole process informed and up-to-date about your actions. This will allow us do our best and support you as much as we can.

✦ Thank you!

We are always happy to hear from alumni who are keen to support the University in every chance and help them, wherever in the world, to set up and run successful alumni groups. We try to continuously recognise and value the passion and efforts demonstrated by our current alumni group coordinators. A huge and warm thank you for your continued input and endeavours.