**Student Travel Award 2016**

**Winners’ tips for Alumni Groups on how to connect with students and recent graduates**

To read about our winners’ trips, visit: www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/student-travel-award

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**Ray Aun Fan**

The trip was an amazing experience for a student like me to engage with the alumni societies across Europe. It would otherwise not have the opportunity to meet alumni and learn more about the working environment in each county.

**Ray Aun’s tips**

- **Students**
  - Co-organise activities with your equivalent student society
  - Set up a Facebook group and use it to interact with student Facebook groups
  - Make your events appeal to students by hosting them outside term. Host intellectual events, such as debates, and company tours
  - Offer student travel grants and awards, such as for language study and cultural learning
  - Collaborate with departments and Colleges to engage students
  - Get involved with outreach work in schools and speak to prospective students at higher education fairs

- **Recent graduates**
  - Offer graduates free membership and free attendance at events for the first year
  - Have a well-managed Facebook group for members to interact with one another
  - Collaborate with other Cambridge Alumni Groups
  - Invite alumni from other institutions to your events and go to their events
  - Host family-friendly events during the day to attract graduates with children
  - Reach out to expatriates and travelling graduates who are passing through your area

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**Anna Jennings**

I have learnt that Alumni Groups are really excellent organisations and students are so lucky to have them to join when they graduate. My travels are certainly unforgettable and I’m hugely thankful to all the Alumni Group members who made it possible.

**Anna’s tips**

- **Students**
  - Have a current student on your committee, so they can represent students and take an active role in running the Group
  - Host an annual ‘Welcome to Cambridge’ event for incoming freshers, attended by alumni and current students
  - Respond to enquiries from students and graduates promptly
  - Get involved with outreach work, for example giving talks in schools, offering prospective students guidance on applying, setting up a mentoring scheme and inviting prospective students to your events

- **Recent graduates**
  - Publish a list of the Group’s regular events online
  - Provide a range of ways for members to interact outside events, such as video feeds from speaker events and an active Facebook group/online community
  - Host joint events with alumni groups from other institutions
  - Host events in a range of locations to include alumni living outside the city
  - Have a fixed-term leadership – elect a new leader every two years to bring new energy
  - International Groups should forge strong links with the British Embassy

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**Ben Williams**

The positivity of the response I received everywhere I went is a testament to the enthusiasm and effort put in to ensure the [alumni] network remains a success. I had a fantastic trip and met so many incredibly interesting people.

**Ben’s tips**

- **Students**
  - Have a social media presence
  - Promote events on Facebook so attendees can see who else is going – this helps put a few friendly faces to the Group
  - Pass on your enthusiasm to students for living and working abroad, to inspire this as a viable option
  - Reach out to your counterpart student group in Cambridge
  - Liaise with College Development and Alumni Offices to engage students
  - Show students and graduates that your Group is relevant to them and inclusive. Help break down the negative stereotypes about Groups that can be off-putting

- **Recent graduates**
  - Circulate regular newsletters to members – share members’ stories interesting projects and relevant news
  - Promote Groups as a chance to meet other intellectually-minded people with something in common
  - Events that attract high attendance are talks and presentations given by alumni who are experienced in their field, followed by drinks
  - Offer a variety of events, such as company visits, hikes, cultural visits, boat cruises, talks and drinks
  - Provide an easy way for new graduates to add themselves to your mailing list and social media groups

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**Zoscha Partos**

By engaging with new students at the stage that they are freshers and maintaining contact throughout their studies, the transformation from student to Alumni Group member will be far more successful and the Group will grow organically.

**Zoscha’s tips**

- **Students**
  - Co-host an annual ‘Welcome to Cambridge’ event with the other Groups in your country. This should secure higher attendance than running separate events
  - Invite welcome event attendees to your regular Group events, starting with a Christmas celebration. Promote these events at the welcome event
  - Invite welcome event attendees back to future welcome events

- **Recent graduates**
  - Host events for new graduates, such as a ‘welcome/welcome back’ event soon after graduation
  - Welcome graduates who are moving to the Group’s region/country but not originally from there, in addition to returning nationals
  - Make your web and social media pages warm and welcoming
  - Set your Facebook page as open/public, because this is far more welcoming to prospective members than a closed page
  - Use Twitter for regular updates and constant visibility and LinkedIn for creating a professional network of graduates