AN OVERVIEW

WHAT IS AN ALUMNI GROUP?

Cambridge’s Alumni Groups are an invaluable network of ambassadors, advocates and supporters who enable the University to continue to fulfil its mission and core values; to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence, and to support freedom of thought and expression and freedom from discrimination.

We are immensely proud that our Groups form the furthest reaching alumni network of any university in the world. We have 450 Alumni Groups serving over 230,000 alumni. Cambridge alumni and alumnae are active in all walks of life, and the University and Colleges are deeply committed to building strong and enduring relationships with this global community in order to benefit from all the advantages it brings to both the University and its alumni. The network of volunteer Alumni Groups around the world is the community’s cornerstone.

Groups vary from a single alumna using an email list to organise monthly pub meetings to large Alumni Group committees fundraising for student bursaries and organising events for new students.

In turn, the University provides a range of services to support and promote the activity of all officially recognised Alumni Groups.
HOW TO SET UP AN ALUMNI GROUP

1. EXISTING ALUMNI GROUPS

There may already be a Group in your area. All Groups are listed on the University’s Alumni website by location and interest. If you would like to set up a Group linked to your College or department, please contact your College or department directly.

If you would like to approach alumni linked to your student club or society, please email: contact@alumni.cam.ac.uk

See 5a below for details on overlapping Groups.

2. BACKGROUND READING

Please read and familiarise yourself with the Guidance for Alumni Groups and the Memorandum of Understanding. These documents include all the information you need to run a successful Group and outline what is expected of you as an officially recognised Group Primary Contact.

3. APPLICATION FORM

On completing the application form. You will be asked to confirm that you have read and understood all of the important background information mentioned above. It will also ask you to sign and return the Memorandum of Understanding and to provide contact details for the Group’s Primary Contact with the University.

4. INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW

We aim to arrange an introductory interview with the Alumni Relations Coordinator within two weeks of receiving your application. For US and Canadian enquiries, an introduction will be made to, Cambridge in America (CAm) in order for them to complete the introductory interview. This may be carried out in person or over the phone. It is an opportunity for you to ask any questions arising from the application form and for us to help you outline your plans for the Group.

5. OFFICIAL RECOGNITION

Volunteer-led Alumni Groups are entirely legally and financially independent from the University, but are officially recognised as Alumni Groups on the University Alumni Groups web pages and in printed materials such as the annual Alumni Groups Directory. Please see the ‘Support for your Alumni Group’ section for further information.

In order to protect the University’s reputation, it is essential that the University is entirely satisfied that any Alumni Group is positively assisting the University, its reputation and its alumni. All new Groups must be approved by the Development and Alumni Relations Office and for US and Canadian Groups, by Development and Alumni Relations and CAm. The University reserves the right to consult with the Networks Working Group at its next meeting (the Working Group meets every six months). Although we aim to approve Group applications as quickly as possible, it can take a number of months to do so. Please bear this in mind when planning any Group activity.

5a. OVERLAPPING GROUPS

If an alumnus/na wishes to set up an Alumni Group in an area where an Alumni Group already exists, all Alumni Groups in the area must be consulted by the Development and Alumni Relations office or CAm and given the opportunity to comment on the creation of a new Group.

It is important that all Groups demonstrate that they can cooperate harmoniously. It is not acceptable for any Group to refuse to engage congenially with other Groups in their area and such action could jeopardise their status as an officially recognised Group.

6. LAUNCHING YOUR GROUP

Once your Group has been officially recognised you will receive an email from the Alumni Groups Coordinator, for US and Canadian Group CAm confirming recognition and, where appropriate, the terms upon which the Alumni Group Recognition Mark is licensed to the Group. We will work with you to set up your Alumni Group web page and agree a promotional plan, possibly including a ‘launch’ email to all relevant alumni. You will also begin receiving the monthly Alumni Groups’ newsletter and invitations to Alumni Group events organised by the University.
GUIDANCE FOR ALUMNI GROUPS
FORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY

It is important for all Alumni Groups to understand and recognise the relationship they enter into with the University once they become officially recognised:

- the University has no responsibility for the financing of Alumni Groups
- the University relies upon Alumni Groups to act in the best interests of the University, as its key ambassadors, advocates and supporters for Cambridge
- the University has the discretion, at all times, to remove an officer or officers of an Alumni Group should he or she act in a way that could be construed as prejudicial to Cambridge.

The formal relationship between an Alumni Group and the University is established via the completion of the application form and confirmation of agreement with the Memorandum of Understanding.

ALUMNI GROUP STRUCTURE AND ROLES

The University does not prescribe a particular format for Alumni Groups. Groups vary from a single alumna using an email list to organise monthly pub meetings, to large Alumni Groups with membership fees and multiple committees organising initiatives such as student bursaries and Welcome to Cambridge events for new students. It is the combined commitment and hard work of these types of Groups that ensure the ongoing success of the Alumni Group network.

Most Groups begin with small-scale informal gatherings rather than large events. This helps build up local interest and allows you to find out what local alumni are interested in, and how other alumni would be willing to help before creating a more formal committee.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

All Alumni Groups must recruit a Primary Contact (see Memorandum of Understanding).

Here are some additional roles (or parts of roles) you should consider creating to help balance the workload of running a Group. Identifying clear role descriptions, even in a few lines in an email, can help ensure work is delegated effectively and that everyone involved is clear about their roles within the Group. This often prevents later disagreements.

- It’s also helpful to have a wide demographic of volunteers (age, profession, gender, College) to ensure this is reflected in your Group’s membership and activities.

CHAIR/PRESIDENT/GROUP LEADER

- ensures all activities are organised in line with the Group’s and University’s mission
- ensures smooth transition for all role changes on the committee
- ensures the workload for all committee members does not become too demanding.

SECRETARY

- maintains the list of active Group members and their contact details
- coordinates the Group’s programme of events and activities
- holds copies of key documents, e.g. constitution, minutes.

TREASURER

- maintains the Group’s bank account
- collects and records any subscriptions or fees
- provides a finance report for the Group at each committee meeting and AGM.

HONORARY PRESIDENT/CHAIR

- acts as an ambassador for the Group in their capacity as a high-profile local alumna or alumnus
- speaks at key Group events
- represents the Group in key local forums.

EVENTS OFFICER(S)

- oversees individual events (e.g. sourcing speakers, venues and catering). Many Groups allocate this role for each event, rather than depending on one individual to organise all events in the Group’s programme.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

- maintains a list of all active members
- is responsible for the development and growth of the Group’s membership.

WEB OFFICER

- maintains the Group’s website and social media channels.

RECENT GRADUATE OFFICER

- acts as the main point of contact for recently graduated alumni
- organises activities and events aimed at this group.
TERMS OF SERVICE
Agreeing a length of service for committee members from the outset helps with recruiting new members and also ensures there are new members to provide fresh ideas. We suggest a two-year term in the first instance, with the possibility of extending this for a second two-year term.

Committee elections/appointments normally take place at a Group’s Annual General Meeting. It is beneficial to the Group if new appointments to the committee are staggered where possible, to guarantee an element of continuity and experience on the committee.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA
The University’s nature is to be as inclusive as possible and to welcome not only alumni but also its friends and supporters to take part in University activities. We encourage Alumni Groups to do the same, when deciding their membership criteria.

These might include:
- partners and family of Cambridge alumni
- staff and former staff of the University
- parents of current Cambridge students
- visiting academics and scholars

Although the University encourages Groups to be inclusive, it is up to each Group to determine their membership criteria. The key principle is to enable those who feel a close connection to the University are able to enjoy alumni activities.

RISK ASSESSMENT
The law does not expect you to eliminate all risks but does expect you to manage them, and to protect people ‘as far as reasonably practicable’. In practical terms, this means completing a risk assessment, which helps you identify and limit the risks. The following sites provide useful guidance:
- HSE’s Guidance on Risk Management: hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm
- Volunteering England: volunteering.org.uk

MAINTAINING A DATABASE
Even the smallest Group needs to keep a record of members. The easiest way is to do this electronically. There is no single solution as to how best to maintain your Groups database. The Alumni Relations team would be happy to discuss the options currently available in helping to maintain a useful database for your society.

In all cases it is important to control who has access to the data and to ensure that data transfers are secure. Make sure you have a secure way of storing data, ie, use a password on your computer or a secure filing cabinet.

See the Data protection recommendations for European University Alumni Groups, Clubs, and Societies, and the associated data protection statement that all European Groups must agree to use.

GROUP FINANCES
Each Group is entirely self-financing and does not pay any fee to the University.

It is up to each Group to choose how they finance their activities: some Groups charge an annual membership fee or a one-off joining fee; alternatively some Groups simply add a small amount to the cost of every event ticket price. In all cases we recommend that you work on a break-even basis with a small reserve fund in case of emergencies. It is advisable to keep basic written records of income and expenses together with a balance sheet. If you can, we suggest that you recruit a volunteer with previous experience of handling basic accounts and ask them to present them to the Group on an annual basis. It is advisable to have more than one signatory for Group funds, as well as ensuring that access to funds are handed over as committee members change.
MEMBERSHIP FEES

Whether your Group is charging a membership fee to help cover administration costs or fund your key events, you may want to consider the following tips to calculate an appropriate fee:

- the cost of your key communications (e.g. newsletters, postal mailings, email software)
- average expenses for guest speakers, including accommodation, travel and subsistence
- subsidising specific Group events (e.g. annual dinner/lunch, Welcome to Cambridge event)
- discounts you may want to offer (e.g. reduced ticket price for students and recent graduates)
- contribution to award schemes the Group currently runs or wishes to set up.

It is advisable to make clear to your members how the membership fees are used, as this is not always obvious to non-volunteers. It is also sensible to highlight any benefits associated with becoming a paid member of a group. These could include receiving discounted tickets for group events or having the opportunity to vote at the group’s Annual General Meeting.

INCOME FROM EVENTS

Groups should try to run their events on a break-even basis, meaning pricing the tickets at around the cost of the event. Groups may decide to subsidise their key annual events and it may therefore be necessary to slightly increase the price of other events to support future activities.

In general, costs should be kept to a reasonable level in order to make Group events accessible to all.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Without the willingness of volunteers, the network of Alumni Groups would not exist. It is therefore important for a group to keep seeking new volunteers and encouraging them to become involved within their own society.

RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS

Here are a few suggestions about how to recruit/search for new volunteers to help run the Alumni Group.

- Incorporate a tick-box option in your mailings to members so you are able to gain a list of potential new volunteers.
- Encourage passionate members to become involved in small tasks, with the hope this involvement may flourish into a new volunteer.
- If new roles within the Group become available, publicise these to your general members in your newsletters and, if applicable, on your online channels.
- Invite general members to attend the Group committee planning meetings. This will provide the occasion for new volunteers to come forward and discuss their own ideas.

UNSUCCESSFUL GROUPS

Through successful planning and rotating committee members, Groups will, we hope, continue to exist for many years. Occasionally, however, Groups feel they are unable to continue. If you are in this situation, please make contact with us so that we can investigate ways that we may be able to help.
GROUP CONSTITUTION

We recommend that all Groups create and agree a basic constitution that is available to all members. There is considerable flexibility as to the issues which should or could be covered in a constitution (for a small informal Group this need only be the very basic details that are posted on the Group’s web page on the University’s website), but what follows is regarded as appropriate for a volunteer Alumni Group.

The following terms are used:

**Essential:** These are essential matters in that (a) if they are omitted there could be significant problems/disputes, or (b) they clarify an issue which is not clearly defined by law and thus remove potential uncertainties.

**Recommended:** These are matters of good practice.

NAME

**Essential:** The official Group name should be clearly stated and relate to its objects.

OBJECT/PURPOSES OF THE NEW GROUP

**Essential:** The Group’s objects clause should be stated in a suitably wide form to cover all the objectives it may wish to achieve.

For example:

The objects of the Society shall be the advancement of the welfare and interests of the University of Cambridge (‘the University’) and its alumni, as a place of education, learning and research, including:

1.1 The encouragement of closer relations among members and intended members of the University, who live in or close to XXX, by fostering interests which they may have in common.

1.2 Associating with any organisations having the like or similar objects, such as other County Societies.

1.3 Supporting the University and its Development and Alumni Relations office through affiliation.

MEMBERSHIP

**Essential:** There should be a clear definition of those to whom the membership of the Group is open. For example, membership of the Suffolk Cambridge Society is open to ‘any resident in or near the County of Suffolk who was or is a member of the University, or has associations with its welfare’.

There should be flexibility to decide on the criteria for membership. It should be a local decision as to whether, for example, to allow spouses or non-Cambridge graduates to become members.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Essential:** Local Groups have autonomy over subscriptions. The Group could include a clause in its constitution relating to subscriptions in terms of who has the power to decide the amount, due date for payment and joining fee. It should be noted that, in contract law, there is no term implied in the contract of membership that if a member fails to pay his subscription by the specified date his membership will lapse. To clarify the point, therefore, the constitution should have an express rule that if a subscription is not received by a specified period after it has become due, that member’s membership will automatically lapse.

Groups are not required to have a subscription for their members at all and so this clause is only essential if a subscription is to be charged (or if the Group believes it may want to charge subscriptions in the future).

RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS

**Essential:** There needs to be a clause setting out a procedure for resignation of members. The requirements for resignation (for example, formal written notice to the Chairman) may vary between Groups but the process should be clearly set out in each constitution.
OFFICERS

Essential: It is necessary to include provision as to how the individuals who are going to have principal responsibility for running the Group are appointed, elected or selected, whether by nomination or voting, and, if the latter, who is eligible to vote. This will include the Executive Committee and any officers of the Group such as Chairman, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and/or Secretary.

The constitution should also specify how long the positions are to be held and how often the Executive Committee should meet.

MANAGEMENT

Essential: There should be a clear definition of who is ultimately responsible for the management of the Group's affairs. This will usually be the Executive Committee.

For the avoidance of doubt, the members of the Executive Committee and their powers should be defined. Their powers could include appointing new officers to their number, appointing sub-committees, investing the Group’s funds, signing cheques and calling meetings. It should be stated how often the Executive Committee should meet.

Recommended: It is recommended that the Executive Committee should be required to produce an annual report, income and expenditure account and balance sheet at the end of each financial year. This requirement, however, will depend on the size of the Group and it may not be appropriate for small Groups to have to go to this time and expense.

MEETINGS

Recommended: It is best practice for the Group’s constitution to make provision either for a regular Annual General Meeting (AGM) or for the Executive Committee to call for an AGM. If the date of the meeting is fixed in the constitution there is the advantage that no formal notice is required. Provision for having such a meeting is strongly recommended as it gives the members an opportunity to meet formally, review the performance of the Group, review its financial position and discuss the way forward on all issues, such as financial and social, for the coming year. Matters for inclusion at any AGM agenda may be stated in the constitution. This could include consideration of the year’s accounts and reports of sub-committees. This works as a useful checklist for the AGM agenda.

Provision for the calling of Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM) should also be included. It is usual to allow that an EGM may only be called by the Committee or by a minimum number of members. The constitution should include the length of notice a member will receive in respect of any type of meeting.

QUORUM

Essential: There should also be definition (in terms of a number) for a quorum at meetings of the Executive Committee and general meetings. This will naturally vary considerably for each Group depending on the size of its membership.

Recommended: More detailed information could be included setting out, for example, qualification to attend meetings, casting vote of the Chairman and type of majority required to carry a motion.

NOTICES

Recommended: The constitution should include a reference as to how notices may be sent. Best practice would be to draft this as widely as possible to include post and electronic means, to give as much flexibility as possible. Members should be placed under a duty to inform the Secretary of their current contact details.

AMENDMENT OF RULES

Essential: It is important that the rules contain an express provision whereby the members are empowered to alter the Group’s rules by way of amendment, addition or revocation. There should also be a procedure laid out within the rules for the Group committee to initiate alterations to the rules. A Group changes and evolves over time and new generations of members may not want to be inhibited by pre-existing rules which may become defunct or superfluous. Sometimes a high percentage vote is required – for instance 66% or 75% of members present and voting.

DISSOLUTION

Essential: There must be provision as to how a resolution to dissolve the Group is passed. This will assist in avoiding a potentially acrimonious end to the Group’s life and leave no doubt as to how the future of the Group’s assets will be determined.

DISPUTES AND EXPULSION OF MEMBERS

Essential: It is important that the constitution includes provision for internal dispute resolution, particularly disputes between members or between a member and the Group. There should be an internal complaints procedure or at least a clear statement that the Committee is empowered to make a binding decision on all such disputes. It is important for a Group to include a clause in its constitution relating to the suspension or expulsion of members. The rules should expressly set out an expulsion procedure because, if they are silent on expulsion of members, then this power will not be implied.
A GUIDE TO ALUMNI GROUP EVENTS

A varied programme can help strengthen a Group’s membership by retaining existing members and attract new members of different ages, interests and affiliations. Below are some suggestions and ideas for types of events.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Drinks receptions and informal dinners, sport events, wine and cheese tasting, events associated with prominent dates in the calendar or Cambridge year, for example, Burns Night, Boat Race, Varsity Rugby.

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 Group.

ACADEMIC EVENTS

Lecture or presentation by a visiting Cambridge 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 Group is considering hosting an academic event, the Alumni Relations Co-ordinator has an Alumni Groups Speaker List. See information on how this service works in the ‘Support for your Alumni Group’ document.

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 café or local pub.

Cambridge College choirs often travel abroad in the vacations and so it may be possible for international Groups to arrange an alumni event around one of their performances. If this type of event is of interest to your Group, please inform the Alumni Relations team who will enquire about possible opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING 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.

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 CAMBRIDGE EVENTS

(formerly known as Freshers Parties)

These events for new students are a great way to engage with our future alumni.

These events help new students to:

- meet each other and alumni from their area
- hear the experiences of those who have been there and know what to expect
- make new friends.

Please ask the Alumni Relations team if you would like more details of how the University can help you facilitate a Welcome to Cambridge event.
SCHOOLS’ OUTREACH EVENTS

A number of groups have become involved in schools’ outreach activities to encourage applications to Cambridge and to help dispel myths about the University.

Make sure your members involved in schools’ outreach are fully up to date and able to pass on accurate information about admissions to enquirers, friends and relatives. For the most up to date information visit the University’s Admissions webpages: www.cam.ac.uk/admissions. An event idea is to invite a speaker from the Admissions Office to discuss the current admissions process during one of your regular speaker events.

We advise Groups to speak to the Alumni Relations team before taking any action with local schools.

COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

These are a great way to offer a different type of event for your members. Joining with another 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.

Possible Groups you could collaborate with include:

- other Cambridge Alumni Groups in the region
- Cambridge Shared-Interest Groups, for example the Cambridge University Land Society.
- where appropriate, Cambridge student clubs and societies.
- Oxford Alumni Groups in your region (Cambridge has a number of international Oxford and Cambridge joint societies)
- Alumni Groups from other universities and institutions.

The Alumni Relations team can assist with collaborative events by providing contact information for other Alumni Groups, student clubs and societies and Oxford groups.

Please see ‘Support for your Alumni Group’, on how we are able to help advertise your events to the wider alumni community.

RESEARCHING AND IDENTIFYING SPEAKERS

For many Groups, speaker events are the highlight of their event calendar, as they provide an insight into Cambridge today.

Assistance in finding a speaker is one of the most frequently asked questions we receive. Please see ‘Support for your Alumni Group’ for more information about the service we can provide to Groups.

However, there are other sources which are available to identify a potential speaker:

- University website: The University’s Public Engagement team offer a ‘Book a Speaker’ service: www.cam.ac.uk/public-engagement/voluntary-sector/book-a-speaker. As a voluntary organisation of the University, Groups are entitled to use this service
- the University’s Communications team’s ‘Find an Expert’ searchable list is a good place to start your research if you have a particular topic in mind for one of your events: www.communications.cam.ac.uk/media/find-expert
- University museums and libraries. The University has nine museums running many different projects. The museums can provide speakers to Groups. This could be a fascinating addition to your event programme: www.cam.ac.uk/museums-and-collections.

EVENT CHECKLIST

To successfully organise and manage an event can be stressful, especially for first timers. We have provided the following checklist to help you when preparing to run an 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.

VENUE

☐ Research possible venues
☐ Use contacts within your group to find suitable and affordable venues
☐ Agree upon a suitable venue.

FINANCES

☐ Create a budget document to keep track of your income and outgoings for the event. This could include speaker expenses, tour guide expenses, venue hire, refreshments.

SPEAKERS

☐ If appropriate, research possible speaker options using the information in the ‘Researching and Identifying Speakers’ section of this pack
☐ Send formal invitation to speaker with details of the event
☐ Ensure the speaker is kept aware of all timings and arrangements for the event.

VIPS

☐ Identify and invite any VIPs for the event.
GUEST LIST
☐ Compile the proposed guest list and circulate to the relevant individuals. This could include the guest speaker, tour guide, venue and the attendees themselves.

INVITATIONS
☐ Send invitations and accompanying information in advance to maximise attendance
☐ Make it clear to invitees how and who they should respond to
☐ Monitor replies
☐ Set a clear deadline for replies.

RISKS
☐ Complete a risk assessment (see the section on Risk Assessment, above)
☐ Consider what you will do if the event is cancelled (e.g. venue cancellation charges, ticket refunds)
☐ Be sure that key volunteers are aware of emergency procedures
☐ Find out if you need insurance or licences (e.g. alcohol, entertainment), and procure them if necessary.

PUBLICITY
☐ Send event details to the Alumni Relations team for publicising on the Cambridge alumni website
☐ If appropriate, arrange with the Alumni Relations team for a mailing to the alumni in your region, informing them of the event
☐ Use social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

AUDIO/VISUAL
☐ If appropriate, agree audio and visual requirements, such as projectors and screens.

STAFFING
☐ Decide on the tasks for your Group volunteers.

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
☐ Consider decorations such as flowers, banners and tablecloths. The Alumni Relations team 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 for the Group’s database
☐ If applicable, ask speakers to submit their expenses claim form
☐ Finalise budget and pass all 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 might want to consider to maximise your 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 Dinner, a formal invitation sent by mail or a specially designed email may be appropriate. For your informal monthly get-togethers, a round robin email may be all that is called for.

ADVERTISING ONLINE
If you have an external website or Facebook group, it is important to list all your events and keep your event sections 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.

EVENT REMINDERS
It is acceptable to send up to three reminder emails to your members about your Group’s current events. Preferably the reminders should come 1–2 weeks before the RSVP date for the event.

DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS AND CAm SUPPORT
All Group events should be listed on the main alumni website for the University of Cambridge. If you would like your events to feature, it is important to keep the Alumni Relations team and for US and Canadian Groups, CAm up to date with your latest events.

The Alumni Relations team can also arrange for a mailing to be sent on behalf of your Group to help reach a wider audience of alumni.

Please see ‘Support for your Alumni Group’, for further information.
ALUMNI ONLINE

CAMBRIDGE ALUMNI WEBSITE – GROUP WEBPAGE

The University’s alumni website contains information about alumni benefits, events and University news, as well as a full directory of Alumni Groups.

All Alumni Groups are provided with an individual webpage and we strongly encourage your Group to take advantage of this. In addition, the alumni website contains a list of forthcoming Group events. If you need some inspiration for your next event this list may be helpful.

To take advantage of these pages, please ensure we have details of your latest news, events and activities. You can add photos and/or links to other sites as appropriate.

You can find the Groups’ pages by visiting alumni.cam.ac.uk/groups. Email us with your Group’s information at networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk.

INDEPENDENT WEBSITES

Why have an independent website? Many Groups find developing their own website, which they maintain themselves, has useful benefits:

- attracting new members
- keeping existing members informed and engaged with the events and activities the Group is organising
- giving more control over the site and its appearance than free networks or online services
- less likely to be unavailable in certain territories.

From the outset it is important that your Group identifies a member of your committee/volunteer team who would be happy to develop and maintain your external website.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

At the very least, your website should include:

- an introduction to your Group
- details of your forthcoming events and how to book
- contact details for the Group
- links to any additional online platforms you use, eg Facebook
- Link to the University’s alumni website: www.alumni.cam.ac.uk

The following functions may also be useful:

- an automated ‘join the group’ form
- a facility for members to update their details online
- if applicable to your Group, a facility for members to pay their subscription online
- a facility for booking and paying for events
- subscription to the Group’s newsletter
- events calendar

Additional functions for adding events to your personal calendar or RSS feeds are also useful.

Development and Alumni Relations cannot take responsibility for Alumni Groups’ independently created websites. It is at the discretion of each Group how they run and maintain their website; we can only intervene in exceptional circumstances, for instance, if the Group is perceived to be damaging the reputation of the University of Cambridge.

COLLECTION OF ALUMNI DATA

The Data protection recommendations for European University Alumni Groups, Clubs, and Societies provides guidance on collecting data from your members through your website.
SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn bring together a community and make it easy to stay in touch and exchange ideas. They do not replace emailing, but are an excellent tool to reach additional members.

Not all networks are available in all areas of the world. Below are some suggestions. We recommend that you select one with a user-friendly mobile version (eg responsive website and/or apps for common operating systems), as more than half of internet traffic now takes place on mobile devices.

As with many IT systems, it is often the case with social networks that you get out what you put in; maintaining your channel well usually leads to a good level of engagement by your members. Remember, however, that functionality may be developed or removed without much warning. It is good practice to have more than one administrator, where possible, so that your Group retains easy access to administrative controls.

FACEBOOK GROUPS

Facebook groups can reinforce a sense of community and make it easy for people to stay in touch and swap ideas. They are not a substitute for emailing members directly. We recommend you always use both email and Facebook messaging.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

Facebook groups are like a community noticeboard on the internet. The creator(s) of a group decides who can see it and who can post messages.

Facebook calls these people the group’s ‘members’ and the creators are its ‘administrators’. There are several types of message that you can post to the board: notices, photos, questions and event invitations.

In a typical group, every member can see the name and photo of every other member, and send each other messages directly (depending on individuals’ own privacy settings).

WHY ARE THEY USEFUL?

Many Cambridge alumni have Facebook accounts; Facebook is the most popular social network in the world currently and is mostly used for social or personal reasons, as opposed to professional networking.

This makes it easy for Alumni Groups to verify new members. When you join Facebook, you create a public profile. People’s profiles may show the university at which they studied, location and/or employment, depending on what the individual has chosen to make visible. On Facebook, you can also see contacts that you have in common.

Facebook makes it easy to grow and promote Alumni Groups. Cambridge alumni tend to be ‘Facebook friends’ with other alumni. When one friend joins a new group that may be advertised to other friends, who can also apply to join the group. Members may invite others to join the group too, unless this has been disabled in the group’s settings.

Most younger people rely on Facebook, and it may be the first place that they think to search for an Alumni Group. If there’s someone in your group who is willing to consider new applications to join, you should have a Facebook group – even if you don’t know how to use it, your members will!

CAVEATS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

You need a personal account to use Facebook. You should read Facebook’s group information before you create a group.

As a Facebook group administrator, you can choose how easy it is to find the group and who can join. There are three broad settings: public, closed and secret. You can decide, based on Facebook’s guidelines, which one best suits your needs.

For example, the Cambridge in Business (Russia) Group privacy setting is ‘closed’, which means that they have customised the settings so that only group administrators can approve applications to join. Once people have joined the group, any member can post a notice.

When someone applies, the Group sends them a message to check their college and year of graduation. It’s unlikely that you’ll want an ‘open’ group because this gives you no control over who joins and who can read the messages.

Managing a private group on Facebook and its membership applications might be a more intensive effort than your alumni group is able to sustain. An alternative option is a Facebook page, which offers a different set of functions and is more like the profile for your alumni group as an entity than a community of users. Pages tend to be used by organisations and businesses and users connect by ‘liking’ the page or ‘becoming fans.’ Pages can have multiple users as their administrators and contributors, can be customised to showcase particular features and offer statistics on audience engagement.
LINKEDIN GROUPS

LinkedIn is mostly used by active professionals between 25 and 65, who use this as a platform for keeping in touch with their professional network and, increasingly, with fellow alumni. Groups are used for exchange about professional topics, finding jobs and promoting events.

WHY WOULD YOU CREATE A LINKEDIN ALUMNI GROUP?

A LinkedIn alumni group can enable you to create a unique and up-to-date network of alumni, because the data LinkedIn uses is updated by its members. You can therefore find alumni close to where you live, who may not appear in information from other sources.

LinkedIn allows you to check how many alumni there are in a certain radius around a postal code. For instance, we found that for one of the existing groups in western England, with 270 mostly retired members, there were an additional 600 professional members in a radius of 10 miles, and 3,000 members in a radius of 25 miles. This is potentially helpful because groups with larger memberships find it easier to organise and fill interesting events.

Another benefit of searching local alumni on LinkedIn is that you find alumni in interesting roles and with great experience, which can provide ideas for events (e.g. if an alumnus heads a museum or a theatre, they might be willing to provide privileged access and a personal tour). You can also organise events quickly because of the speed of communication and the fact that people use the network on their mobile devices. So getting members together at short notice to meet a visiting alumnus, for example, can be successfully achieved.

Events can be publicised with a direct link to Eventbrite or an equivalent service, for easy booking on the internet.

The group can also be used as a bulletin board for helping members with specific questions, as other members of the network can easily provide answers and information.

HOW DO YOU CREATE A GROUP?

Creating a LinkedIn group from scratch is not easy; it requires significant work, but is very worthwhile.

You need your own personal account to use LinkedIn. We recommend that you become familiar with LinkedIn and build your own network by connecting with users you know and joining groups, before you create your own group. One way to recruit members via LinkedIn is to invite local alumni to connect with you, telling them about the alumni group and its activities, and once they connect, invite them into the group.

LinkedIn groups can be public, which means anyone can join, or unlisted, which means people can’t find and join it just by searching LinkedIn. Alumni groups are typically unlisted, so that the administrator and other members can decide who joins.

CONCLUSION

LinkedIn groups are an excellent tool for attracting a balanced membership of all ages. If you have a group that has mainly older members, and you want to create a wider society, LinkedIn can be a powerful resource. However, bear in mind that successful events need to be designed with that wider community in mind.

FINDING IMAGES FOR YOUR WEBSITE AND EMAILS

Using images in your group’s online materials makes them visually more appealing but it can be difficult if your group does not have a budget to pay for images, which is a common way to establish that you have permission to use the picture from the copyright owner (i.e. a ‘licence’). Fortunately, a non-profit organisation called Creative Commons has made licensing images without payment much easier by creating some standard licences describing the terms under which photographers, artists, designers, etc are happy for a work to be used.

Creative Commons licences contain information such as:
- whether you can use a work for commercial purposes, such as selling event tickets
- whether you may change the work or use it to create a new work
- how to credit the work’s creator (also known as ‘attribution’), and so on.

Find out more about Creative Commons, FAQs and best practice guidance on the organisation’s website: creativecommons.org.

Creative Commons also offers a search tool that can filter results by the use(s) for which they can be licensed at search.creativecommons.org. For example, you might choose to search for the terms ‘Cambridge’ and ‘University’ and only results that may be used for commercial purposes that are available on Flickr.com (a popular image hosting website on which Creative Commons licensing is often used). When you find an appropriate image, always check the individual work’s licence to be sure that it can be licensed for your purpose. Some sites like Flickr.com allow you to contact the account that uploaded an image, though you may need to set up your own profile to do so.

For events, some venues may have approved images that can be used in your event marketing – this can be established by enquiring directly with the venue.
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE SHIELD

The University’s coat of arms and, by association, our logo, represents more than 800 years of excellence. It is an international symbol of the University’s reputation for high quality and standards, and this makes it a very valuable asset, which requires protection.

As a valuable asset the logo is very much in demand by those not entitled to use it.

For this reason both the logo and the coat of arms are registered trademarks. The University has strict controls in place for when the logo may, and may not, be used, as well as how it should be used. These are essential in order to prevent revocation of the trademarks.

To assist Alumni Groups, the Alumni Relations team, together with the Office of External Affairs and Communications, have developed a special ‘Recognition Mark’ which all recognised Alumni Groups can use. This includes a digital version for the use on online platforms. Please see ‘Support for your Alumni Group’ for further information on how to apply for your own Recognition Mark.
DATA PROTECTION

In order to be officially recognised by the University of Cambridge, all European Groups must agree to follow the Data protection recommendations for European University Alumni Groups, Clubs, and Societies. In addition you must of course follow all data protection laws in the country in which you operate.
SUPPORT FOR YOUR ALUMNI GROUP
The Development and Alumni Relations office is able to provide the following services, support and advice in helping you run your Alumni Group.

**GROUP MAILINGS**

Being able to contact the alumni in your city/region/country is extremely important when you have events or news to publicise, and we can help you do this. We can tailor the group emailing service to each Group’s needs. So whether you just need to advertise one of your main events or you would like a series of mailings throughout the year (maximum of five), we will work with you to make the most of this service.

The most effective emails should:
- be concise
- contain a short introduction to the Group
- include publicity for an interesting event or initiative
- have an easy way for alumni to get in touch with your Group.

If you would like to discuss the communication plans for your Group, please email the Alumni Relations team and for US and Canadian Groups, CAm, who would be delighted to work with you.

**DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF ALUMNI**

Are you thinking about how you might engage alumni in your area in new ways? Would you like to organise different type of events, but are not entirely sure where to start? Would it be helpful to know a little more about your local alumni?

We are now able to provide you with a demographic summary to help with this. The information can include the number of alumni in main towns/cities, with information on College, matriculation, degrees, subjects, and industry sectors.

To request this summary, please email networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk

**LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS**

Every two years the Development and Alumni Relations office hosts a Leadership Conference in Cambridge. This is a forum for Alumni Groups’ representatives to share best practice, meet staff from Development and Alumni Relations and throughout the University, and learn more about Alumni Groups’ vital role as advocates and ambassadors for the University of Cambridge.

We also hold regional meetings in between these conferences. These regional meetings allow us to provide detailed updates about the University and to engage fully with the successes and concerns of the local Groups.

**ALUMNI GROUP WEBPAGE**

All recognised Alumni Groups automatically receive their own webpage on the University’s alumni website: www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/groups. This is where your Group’s Primary Contact details and Group descriptions will be displayed. We can also upload information about all your Group events, newsletters, booking forms and photographs, as well as links to your independent website, Facebook groups and LinkedIn profiles.

If you organise an official photographer at your event, please ensure that attendees are forewarned that photos may be taken and are given an opportunity to let you and the photographer know if they don’t want to be featured.

Your webpage is a great tool to advertise your Group and its events to members and to alumni around the world.

**PUBLICISING OF GROUP EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

As well as being listed on your Group’s webpage, we offer all Groups the opportunity to advertise their events on the main alumni website: alumni.cam.ac.uk/events. Each event is given its own listing and can include all the necessary information. This is a fantastic way to advertise your Group event; 80% of the events listed are hosted by Alumni Groups. We also offer advertising of Group events through the Development and Alumni Relations social media channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Weibo and Twitter.

To advertise your events online, please email networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk or directly to the Alumni Relations Co-ordinator, and for US and Canadian Groups, CAm.

**EVENT SPEAKERS**

Many Group events rely on finding an informative and enjoyable speaker to give a lecture or after-dinner speech. A large number of senior members of the University are more than happy to attend and speak at such events.
We can assist in finding a speaker for your Group by using the Alumni Groups Speakers List. This is an ever-growing list of Pro-Vice-Chancellors, heads of houses, Pilkington Prize winners and senior members of the University who have shown interest in supporting Group events. This list is available to all Groups and includes information about the potential speaker’s department, topic of research and College. It also includes the countries these academics regularly visit.

Once you have received the list, we ask for you to let us know the top five academics you would like us to contact, along with the following information for us to forward to the speakers:

- date
- time
- event venue
- expenses covered
- accommodation
- travel
- dinner
- are they able to bring a guest?

We must stress that the Development and Alumni Relations office does not offer travel or accommodation expenses for speakers, so before requesting a speaker, please ensure that your Group is prepared either to cover these costs (in cash or in kind) or to ask the speaker to make their own arrangements.

**PRINT COMMUNICATIONS**

With the network of Alumni Groups constantly growing and changing, it is important that the most up-to-date information is provided, not only to alumni but also to the student population of the University. The Development and Alumni Relations office helps advertise the network by producing two main printed communications; the Alumni Groups Directory and the Alumni Groups Network leaflet.

**ALUMNI GROUPS DIRECTORY**

Each year, we produce a printed directory of all the recognised Alumni Groups (regional, College, shared interest) across Collegiate Cambridge. This directory is sent to over 55,000 alumni across the world in the Michaelmas edition of CAM magazine. Updating this information begins in late June, when the Alumni Relations team, contacts each Group asking for them to provide the latest contact details for all Groups. The deadline for updates is usually mid-August.

**ALUMNI GROUPS NETWORK LEAFLET**

This handy leaflet lists the Alumni Groups by region, College and shared interest and is handed out at all graduation ceremonies. This leaflet provides recent graduates with a snapshot of the network of Alumni Groups which is available to them and the benefits Groups can provide.

**NETWORKS WORKING GROUP**

The Networks Working Group reports to the Alumni Advisory Board and offers guidance to Development and Alumni Relations specifically on the network of volunteer Alumni Groups.

The Group assists in assuring that volunteer-led Alumni Groups have appropriate support to help the University achieve its mission, including:

- disseminating key messages and information to Group volunteers
- writing and reviewing materials for Alumni Groups
- hosting and leading break-out sessions at Alumni Group leadership events
- working with specific Groups to assist them in developing their strategy and activities
- suggesting further initiatives that may be of use in developing the network of Alumni Groups
- acting as an ‘ear to the ground’ to ensure the Development and Alumni Relations office remains fully aware of the needs and thoughts of Alumni Groups, including gathering information and feedback from Alumni Group volunteers
- offering guidance in prioritising Alumni Group support in relation to the University's international strategy and key initiatives
- helping to identify appropriate level of services and support for the Alumni Groups Network
- consolidating the good working relations between the Colleges and the University.
The Networks Working Group members are also there to provide extra support to all Alumni Groups. For example, you can contact them if you are having difficulty with arranging events or have an idea but don’t quite know how to execute it.

The Working Group meets twice a year, but also works on specific projects in between meetings, such as this resources pack for Alumni Groups and the Alumni Groups Directory.

**WELCOME TO CAMBRIDGE EVENTS SUPPORT PACK**

Alumni Groups all around the world hold Welcome to Cambridge events for new students who have been given a place at Cambridge. These typically take place in August, September and October. Welcome to Cambridge events help attendees to:

- meet other new students, postdocs and alumni from their area
- hear hints and tips of what to expect when they arrive
- make new friends.

Every year, students tell us how helpful the Welcome events are and how much they appreciated the opportunity to meet others who were coming up to Cambridge.

To help those Groups who host a Welcome to Cambridge event, we provide a ‘Support Pack’, which explains the importance of the Welcome to Cambridge event series, provides useful hints and tips and also includes all the information and materials a Group will need to make the day a success.

If you are interested in hosting a Welcome to Cambridge event, please contact the Alumni Relations team, networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk, who will be able to provide you with the pack.

**GROUPS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

Each month Group Primary Contacts and Group volunteers receive our dedicated monthly e-newsletter.

This provides you with the latest news about the University and the opportunity to share best practice with your fellow Primary Contacts and volunteers, and keeps you up to date about the services Development and Alumni Relations are able to offer you.

Please ensure you share the news and information widely amongst other committee and Group members.

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING EVENTS**

As well as the Leadership Conferences and meetings, the Development and Alumni Relations office also organises workshops and training to support Alumni Groups with their key events and activities.

Invitations to attend these workshops will be sent out to all Primary Contacts.

**GROUP CANTAB.NET EMAIL ADDRESS**

The Development and Alumni Relations office offers all Alumni Groups an enhanced cantab.net email address. This offers 2GB storage and includes IMAP and POP access from programs such as Outlook or your mobile phone.

If you are interested in applying for a Group cantab.net email address, please email us on networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk

**ALUMNI GROUPS RECOGNITION MARK**

Working with the Office of External Affairs and Communications (OEAC), who manage the University brand, we have created a ‘Recognition Mark’ that is especially designed for use by the University’s Alumni Groups.

The Alumni Groups Recognition Mark is available in three formats:

- standard full identifier for printed material
- smaller identifier for use on digital material, as the full identifier does not produce well on screen
- tailored identifier which incorporates the name of the Alumni Group.

If you are interested in applying for the recognition mark then please email us on networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk.
THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES OF CAMBRIDGE
For eight centuries, Cambridge has had a huge impact on the world. Because we look outwards, not inwards. Because we welcome brilliant minds in, set them free to collaborate and create, and send world-changing ideas back out again. We have many more world-changing ideas to give. But we need the world’s support.

**WHY CAMBRIDGE IS HAVING A CAMPAIGN**

The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. This campaign is crucial to our ability to deliver our mission and ultimately increase our impact on the world. There is so much more that can be accomplished through our partnership with philanthropy.

**OUR TARGET**

£2 billion. All donations made to the University and Colleges during the campaign will count towards this target.

**WHY WE NEED PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT**

Cambridge invests all of its income in people and programmes that make a global impact. We are ambitious to do more - to make a bigger contribution to the world - and that requires investment. At the same time, compared to peer institutions, particularly in the US, we are operating with far smaller resources.

**OUR TOP PRIORITIES**

- Provide increased funding for our graduate student population; they are the problem-solvers and innovators the world needs
- Transform the Biomedical Campus into a global centre where new treatments are created, tested and delivered, all on one site; expand West Cambridge and increase its standing as an international science and innovation hub
- Enrich the unique environment of our Colleges, which are central to Cambridge’s academic community
- Launch new initiatives targeted at solving the world’s most important challenges, drawing on the full breadth of Cambridge’s expertise and international connections
- Attract more world-leading academics to lead teaching and research

**WHY NOW?**

The world is changing faster and more radically than ever before, and faces enormous challenges. Challenges such as food security, the spread of infectious disease, the search for alternative energy sources and combatting climate change.

Cambridge can deliver change the world needs, but change requires investment. Investment will accelerate our impact.

**HOW DOES PHILANTHROPY HELP CAMBRIDGE?**

Collegiate Cambridge has benefited from philanthropy since its inception in 1209. Over the centuries there are countless examples of philanthropy that have been fundamental to the success of the Collegiate University, ranging from the patronage of kings and queens to the building of the Sainsbury Laboratory and the foundation of the Gates Cambridge scholars programme.

**HOW OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS CAN HELP**

By engaging with us, starting a conversation about what we’re doing and where your interests lie, by advocating for us with those who may be interested in our work, and by investing in our work.

[www.cam.ac.uk/YoursCambridge](http://www.cam.ac.uk/YoursCambridge)