

PART C: Membership & Volunteers

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A: Chapter Membership Form

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Membership

Alumni Chapters can consist of a variety of membership levels including:

- **Full members**—usually limited to people who are part of the key constituent group for which the chapter was formed. This group will make up the majority of the membership base and is mostly confined to QUT alumni.
- **Associate members**—membership which is extended to people/groups who have an interest in the chapter but do not meet the criteria for full membership. Examples include students, partners of full members and industry professionals. Associate members do not normally have voting rights.
- **Life/Honorary Members**—usually confined to long-term supporters of a chapter but NOT current committee members. Examples include previous chapter presidents, past-committee members and honorary 'patrons' who have supported the chapter's development over time. Life members are recognised for their contribution, but this is purely an honorary title and does not afford any elevated status, influence or voting rights.

Generally speaking chapters are NOT encouraged to charge membership fees, **however they may decide on different pricing structures for the various membership levels to attend events.**

Chapters must seek approval from the Alumni Board if they wish to charge a membership fee to join the chapter.

Refer to Financial Management (B-13) for further information on membership fees/levels

BUILDING MEMBERSHIP

A successful chapter is an active one. Chapters should strive for an engaged membership base with a participation rate of at least 5%.

Chapters also play an important role in assisting QUT to maintain accurate and comprehensive data on constituents for the purpose of providing relevant and value-add activities and programs.

Suggestions for conducting membership drives and updating information include:

- Mailing and/or emailing alumni in a chapter's geographic, discipline or interest area to seek their involvement and ideas
- Contacting new graduates within your membership base to inform them about your chapter and to encourage participation in chapter activities
- Including membership or update details forms/links in communications or having these available at events
- Looking for ways to add value to chapter members by securing 'membership only' events or benefits
- An email to lapsed and non-members inviting them to join or re-join the chapter

- Using social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook to connect with members who QUT may have lost contact with due to returned mail/ bounced emails
- Seeking the support of your membership base to find 'lost' alumni on your behalf—perhaps hold an event or competition where members are encouraged to 'bring a QUT friend'
- Advertising in relevant journals or other media asking QUT alumni to make contact (look for low or no-cost advertising options through online magazines and networks)
- Regularly seeking information from your members on their work roles, professions, and interests to help inform event and programming planning.

All updated information must be forwarded to the Alumni Office to ensure details are captured in the database for future use (C-A1).

Refer to Alumni Data (A-7) for further information and policies related to alumni database access



Segmentation & Programming

Whether your chapter caters to a niche cohort or is responsible for engagement with alumni in a country or region, it is bound to be made up of a vastly diverse membership.

For this reason, chapters should aim to understand the different types of members they have and the implications this might have for chapter programming and events.

A 'one size fits all' approach for programming involves less planning and may be easier to manage, but it could discourage involvement from a large section of your membership base who's interests and needs are not being catered to.

Consider how your chapter adds value to your members over their lifetime—not just the next event.

Data segmentation

It is important for chapters, especially newly established ones, to take the time to learn as much as possible about their membership base. Quite a deal of information can be gleaned from basic data without making any contact with members.

Some specific traits/segments to look for include:

- **Age groups**—are there distinct age groups in your membership base? Age is a key factor in determining what activities will appeal to your audience and why some members may not participate. It will also impact on the communication techniques and tools you use to promote your activities.
- **Gender**—is there an even spread of men and women or are there significant numbers skewed towards a particular group? This may impact on the type of speakers you engage, scheduling of activities and level of available time to attend events.
- **Discipline and degree type**—are your members representative of all QUT courses or are there specific disciplines/levels with a

higher representation? If one of your goals is to provide professional development activities then understanding members' education levels is important. An undergraduate business alumnus may have quite different professional needs to someone who has a PhD in science.

- **Professions and job levels**—are members concentrated in distinct professions or career levels (eg middle-management)? Are there segments within your membership base who could assist other segments eg CEOs advising early-career alumni? Is there a need for small, dedicated programs for key groups such as CEOs who may be looking for high-level networking and business opportunities?
- **Dedicated supporters**—consider your most dedicated members (the ones that come to every event) and look for the shared characteristics of this group. This will provide clues on where your programming is currently pitched and identify the segments that are not being catered to.

Programming for different segments and special interests

Once you know more about your membership base you can start to investigate programming options to tailor to as many different segments as possible. This does not mean increasing the number of events or programs you provide, instead it will assist the chapter to allocate resources and time to the activities that will have the most value and impact for your membership.

Remember your motto should always be **quality over quantity** and what is realistic and sustainable within your resources and time availability.

You should aim for activities and programs which:

- ☑ Offer unique opportunities for engagement

- ☑ Are practical, meaningful and add value
- ☑ Link and engage with industry
- ☑ Offer opportunities for alumni to feel useful
- ☑ Are accessible to the local and global alumni community
- ☑ Are tailored to people's needs and are offered on a variety of technology platforms
- ☑ Leverage what alumni have to offer each other
- ☑ Leverage what the university can offer as well as obvious networks and synergies for your audience.

Determine the programming needs of your different membership segments:

1. **Ask them**—use every opportunity you have to ask people across these segments what activities would be of most interest AND value to them. Start building up a profile of your constituent groups and their key characteristics such as preferred types of activities, scheduling and time availability, pricing options, development needs etc
2. Another way to gauge the interests of your membership is to ensure a good **representation of segments** on your committee OR invite people from different groups to have input into programming and planning through sub-committees or other involvement.

Personal Contact is Key

Although mailings are an effective way to reach out to a lot of people at once, personal contact is more effective.

Personal emails or connections with members on LinkedIn can provide rich insights into your constituents. Focusing on targeted programming can increase membership levels, event attendance, activity participation and word-of-mouth support for your chapter. This in turn could lead to untapped networks, potential speakers, and new partners/sponsors and event venues and activity providers.

Segmentation - know your audience!

Student Engagement

One of the most important audiences for alumni chapters to consider are current students. Engaging with students should be seen as a **'sustainability'** strategy for the chapter, as it helps educate and enthuse the next generation of chapter members.

The student cohort, especially those volunteering for student associations and undertaking other leadership and volunteering activities at the university, are also a key source of future chapter committee volunteers as they have a closer connection with QUT and experience in working in teams, on committees and juggling projects with their other activities.

Ways you can engage with students:

- ▶ Allocate at least **one event a year as a student engagement activity** and work with faculties to promote your activity to the student cohort. You could concentrate on final year students or open it up to all years.
- ▶ Make contact with **student associations** that have an obvious link with your chapter such as school/faculty-based student groups or international student associations and invite the committee members to connect with their equivalent position on the chapter committee.
- ▶ Considering a **student membership** or associate membership level.
- ▶ Offer to assist student associations with finding **alumni speakers** for their events or finding other ways of involving your members in their activities.
- ▶ Look for opportunities to **sponsor** or co-brand activities. These could be professional development and networking activities or collaborating on community events such as charity races etc
- ▶ Consider holding an event during **orientation** and other key student engagement times of the year.
- ▶ Invite alumni to **support student activities** such a pre-departure briefings for international students or leadership development programs.
- ▶ Invite students to act as **volunteers** for your larger scale events eg to work on registration, meeting guests etc.
- ▶ If possible, look at **fundraising** projects which help establish scholarships and prizes.
- ▶ Encourage chapter members to participate in the **Career Mentor Scheme** or to offer work-integrated learning and internship opportunities.
- ▶ Hold a **welcome** event for new graduates or work with the Alumni Office to send a **congratulations email**.

STUDENTS (UNDERGRADUATE)



AGE: 17-22 year olds

PROFILE:

- Busy student lives coupled with part-time work
- Expect to be entertained
- Immediate and short-term gratification
- High mobile phone and social media use and very quick uptake of new technologies and trends
- Concerned with **career choices & possibilities**
- Possibly seeking leadership/volunteer roles to increase skills and networks
- Renting or living at home
- Disposable income for gadgets and social activity
- Focused on self-promotion
- Idealised view of work and potential

INTERESTED IN:

- Novelty and short-term/project-based activity
- Meeting people they aspire to be
- Work experience
- Opportunities to self-promote/be seen
- 'What's in it for me?'
- Involving their friends

CHALLENGES:

- Gaining & holding attention
- Instilling traditions and service/giving ethic
- Understanding the real value of exposure and networks—what others are giving not just what students are getting out of it
- Educating students about alumni program

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Fun and novel events/activities (utilising technology) at key times eg orientation/final year
- Volunteering opportunities with exposure to high profile people
- Internships/work experience/worksites visits
- Mentoring programs
- Hearing from alumni perceived as 'successful' or 'interesting'

Segmentation - know your audience!

YOUNG ALUMNI



AGE: 23-35 years

PROFILE:

- Transition to busy work lives whilst trying to maintain social connections
- High mobile phone and social media use and continued uptake of new technologies & trends
- Concerned with **career development & exposure**
- Possible overseas experiences/travel
- Increasing disposable income used on networking and material/status symbols
- Seeking opportunities to network and make connections
- Renting / independent living
- More realistic view of work
- Entrepreneurial types likely to branch out on own

INTERESTED IN:

- Meeting people who are doing work they aspire to and making connections with people who can help them with their careers
- Wanting to stay at forefront of information/ advances in their profession and developing key skills (leadership, negotiation etc)
- Involving their friends, partners and colleagues

CHALLENGES:

- Transition to, and understanding relevance of maintaining alumni connections
- Competition with other value-add activities
- Scheduling activities into busy lifestyles

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Networking and socialising
- Professional development and postgraduate study
- Short-term reunions– 5-10 years out
- On-line connections and participation
- Possible mentoring of students/guest speaking
- Tapping into global network

MID-CAREER



AGE: 30-45

PROFILE:

- Busy work lives coupled with increasing relationship/family responsibilities
- Some women (and increasingly men) taking breaks from career for family responsibilities
- Expect value for money from activities
- Increasing income but constraints for family/ mortgage etc
- High mobile phone, email, social media use for work and keeping on top of technology in children's lives
- Concerned with **career progression and specialisation**
- Possibly reached mid-high level management positions or being groomed for these roles
- Focused on juggling roles and other's schedules
- Realistic view of work, priorities and sacrifices

INTERESTED IN:

- Maintaining contact with others and professions
- Meeting people who have coped with similar challenges
- Starting to share expertise with others
- Involving partners and colleagues

CHALLENGES:

- Relevance of activities
- Competing demands on time and money
- Maintaining connections when lives focused on other priorities

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Professional development and specialised/ customised programs
- Business development and networking
- On-line networks especially sharing of professional insights or maintaining networks if having a break from the workforce
- Lending skills to volunteer/short-term projects
- Mentoring and recruitment of young alumni
- Family-friendly targeted activities

Segmentation - know your audience!

PEAK-CAREER



AGE: 46-60

PROFILE:

- Peaking professional clout and influence
- Selective use of technology for work and social/family networking
- Continued family commitments
- Concerned with **career mark and professional expertise/recognition**
- Income directed to home, mortgage, family and increasingly towards personal interests/causes
- Looking for value-added career development
- Networking with peers and equals is critical
- Possible changes of career direction—uptake of other qualifications, down-sizing of responsibilities, new directions, re-skilling
- More open to sacrificing work opportunities for work/life balance and personal interests

INTERESTED IN:

- Meeting people who have life experience
- Making connections with people who can open up new experiences such as volunteering
- Staying at forefront of developments in their profession and consolidating their credentials
- New educational experiences
- Involving partners, family and friends

CHALLENGES:

- Re-establishing connections with fellow alumni
- Finding activities that make best use of skills

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Business networking and exclusive events
- Sharing expertise/ Guest lecturing
- Mentoring younger alumni/students
- Influence on committees, input into decision-making at high level
- Travel and educational programs (personal)
- Return to campus/ reunions / legacy or fundraising projects
- Helping children make education and career choices

MATURE



AGE: 60-up

PROFILE:

- Established careers and starting to withdraw from workforce or planning next stage (retirement)
- Empty nesters though possibly active with grandchildren and own interests (volunteering, social activities)
- Nostalgic and keen to meet up with old friends
- Disposable income used for maintaining lifestyle, social activities, health, travel and personal causes
- May dedicate significant amounts of time to giving back through volunteering and legacy activities such as philanthropy
- Possible mobile phone, email and social media use to communicate with family and friends (but not high uptake)
- Concerned with life-long learning and exposure to new things
- Realistic view of mark left on the world

INTERESTED IN:

- Re-establishing contact with friends
- Meeting people who are just like them
- Sharing knowledge with younger generations
- Involving partners

CHALLENGES:

- Reduced income
- Scheduling of activities—mobility, transport and timing may be issues

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Reunions
- Social activities and targeted opportunities to experience/re-visit places—tours etc
- Interesting education opportunities—life-long learning
- Oral history projects, research and story telling
- Fundraising and legacy projects
- Mentoring
- Sharing experiences with family/grandchildren

Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS

Committed volunteers are crucial to the success of an alumni chapter. In addition to filling positions on chapter committees, chapters can enlist volunteers to provide valuable support and assistance to events and chapter programs, projects and other activities which require specialised skills or a dedicated resource.

The key to recruiting volunteers is to (1) identify people who are enthusiastic and efficient and (2) matching them with activities that make the best use of their skills, knowledge and time.

The motivations for volunteering one's time to a committee or chapter activities are varied but usually result from:

- Receiving **personal attention** from friendly leaders the first time they attend a chapter event.
- Seeing a cohesive, professional group of people dedicated to accomplishing particular goals. If an individual **cares about the mission** of the chapter, it is easy to want to be part of it.
- Hearing from other chapter leaders that they are **growing professionally** or developing a useful network of contacts through participation.
- Seeing other volunteers enjoying the fellowship of the chapter and having a great time—for many, a

key motivation for becoming involved in chapters (or any volunteering activity for that matter) is the opportunity it provides for **social interaction**.

- Being **asked**—dedicated and hard-working committee members and volunteers don't just magically appear. Recruit in person at meetings and events or by email. Follow-up any expressions of interest to determine if the chapter can meet the needs of the volunteer and vice-versa. Keep an eye out for your most committed supporters who attend all events and reply to surveys.

Encouraging and supporting volunteers

When volunteers have agreed to organise an event or take on a specific role for the chapter, they need to know what to do, how to do it and by when.

You should approach your volunteer recruitment as you would appointing a new staff member to your organisation.

Support your volunteers through:

Job Descriptions

No matter how small or large the role, volunteers should always receive a thorough and current job description. This should clearly outline the specific requirements of

the job, who it reports to, expectations and resources.

Orientation

Ensure the volunteer receives a proper orientation to the chapter and its goals, rules and regulations. Arrange for the volunteer to meet key personnel and provide them with opportunities to ask questions about the chapter and their role in it.

Resources & guidelines

Provide the volunteer with relevant resources and guidelines to help them perform their role. Supply checklists and templates as well as necessary resources such as access to networks, equipment or people as required.

Training

Help volunteers achieve their goals and meet the needs of the chapter by providing both 'on-the-job' training as well as broader training opportunities. Encourage volunteer participation in training and networking opportunities offered by the Alumni Office, and take advantage of training and development provided by volunteering peak bodies or professional networks. Offering opportunities to develop new skills and acquire knowledge is one of the key ways you can show appreciation to your volunteers.

Support and Feedback

It is important for the President and other committee members to regularly 'check-in' with volunteers to see how they are feeling about their responsibilities and to identify any concerns or problems which may affect their performance, confidence or continued interest in the chapter. Provide positive and constructive feedback and give genuine praise and thanks for their efforts. It is important that all volunteers feel valued and appreciated.



Volunteer Recruitment & Retention continued



Retaining Volunteers

One of the most important responsibilities of a chapter President and other committee members is volunteer management.

It is important to keep volunteers interested and involved. Some simple ways to do this include:

- **Allocate tasks based on skills, interests and availability**—asking people to do tasks related to their interests and skill levels increases their confidence in successfully completing the task. Ensure that volunteers who are highly skilled are given more challenging tasks to encourage personal development and keep their interest levels up. Find out before-hand how much time and effort people have to dedicate to an activity.
- **Encourage new ideas and input**—invite input and ideas from volunteers about the best way to carry out a task. If a task needs to be performed in a specific way because of policies or regulations, ensure this is explained clearly to the volunteer. If there is no outlined format for a task then allow the volunteer to suggest the best approach. This will give them more ownership over the activity and investment in the final outcome.

- **Provide an immediate opportunity wherever possible**—once an alumnus has been asked to be involved it is important to have something specific for them to do within a short time period. This will show that their support was indeed required and lays the groundwork for future involvement.
- **Share the workload**—whether you are working with committee volunteers or project volunteers it is important that everyone has something to do. Resist the temptation to have a small number of people do all the work. Other volunteers will soon lose interest and move on, possibly when you need them most.
- **Give real responsibility**—most people do not want to be volunteers in name only. Having a long list of people who are *willing* to help out is not the same as having a small group of dedicated people who are regularly *doing things*.

If you call for volunteers be clear about how many you need and for how long and ensure they are not only allocated tasks but the responsibility of seeing that task through. Set deadlines and expectations as you would with any job role.

Managing expectations is an important component of good volunteer management.

- **Emphasise the importance of working as team**—invite everyone’s input and highlight the importance of each person’s task to the overall goals of the chapter. No task is too small or insignificant.
- **Publicly acknowledge the contribution of volunteers**—after an event or project is completed let everyone who played a part know of the success. Unappreciated effort often won’t be repeated.
- **Work hard but have fun too**—it’s important to remember that volunteers have social needs which help them feel connected to the chapter/cause they are working with. If a chapter is too task driven it will wear people out and feel too much like ‘work’. Volunteering is meant to be an uplifting outlet for people from their everyday lives. Build in opportunities for volunteers to get-together in a social setting and have fun so they can express their personalities.
- **Celebrate the chapter’s successes**—everyone loves to feel like they are part of a successful group. Give due attention to the chapter’s achievements and celebrate them accordingly—a few drinks out with fellow volunteers is often a great boost to morale.



Volunteer Recruitment & Retention continued

Recognising Volunteer Efforts

Most people will tell you they don't volunteer to receive recognition but it is important to acknowledge the contributions made by your volunteers. Make sure you include your committee volunteers when acknowledging support—often they are overlooked with thanks being directed to short-term event volunteers and guest speakers.

Recognition should be appropriate to the contribution that has been made and most importantly, it should be **sincere**.

Ways to recognise your volunteers include:

- A **public acknowledgment** at an event is important for those who have worked behind the scenes.
- A **memento**, such as a certificate or small gift, serves as a special appreciation for a larger effort, or recognises a long-time volunteer's departure from special office.
- A special **thank you event** such as lunch or drinks with all volunteers is another way for the whole team to celebrate their success.



The Alumni Office can provide certificate templates for activities and may be able to arrange for certificates to be presented by a senior QUT staff member if requested with enough notice.



Alumni Awards

The Alumni Office participates in a range of alumni award programs globally. The programs provide an excellent opportunity to recognise alumni for achievements in their professions and their communities. Chapters are encouraged to work closely with the Alumni Office to identify potential nominees for these awards and to

QUT-managed awards include

- Alumni Service Award
- Outstanding Alumni Awards

Examples of external awards

- Advance Global Australian Awards
- Honours awards eg Australian of the Year
- International alumni awards in countries such as China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and others

OTHER VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Refer to Chapter Management (Part B) for detailed information on communication, code of conduct, managing performance and conflict, and risk management policies in relation to volunteers.

PART C: APPENDICES

Membership & Volunteers

APPENDICES

C-A

A: Chapter Membership Form

C-A1

Template: Chapter Membership Form

<NAME OF CHAPTER> Membership Form		
Please return to QUT Alumni Office Email: alumni@qut.edu.au Fax: +61 7 3138 1514 Mail: QUT Alumni Office, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane QLD Australia 4001		
PERSONAL DETAILS		
Title (Mr, Ms etc):	Date of Birth:	
First Name:	Preferred Name:	
Surname:	Maiden Name:	
QUT Course/s:		
Year/s Graduated:	Student/Alumni ID:	
CONTACT DETAILS		
Preferred Email:		Preferred Phone:
Home Address:		
State/Province:	Postcode:	Country:
EMPLOYMENT DETAILS		
Position:		
Employer:		
ADDITIONAL CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT		
<input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in being involved as a volunteer on the chapter committee		
<input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in volunteering my time/skills for chapter activities <i>(please list any specific areas of interest or skills you would like to contribute eg event support, administration, communications, design, technical, photography etc)</i>		
INTERESTS		
So that we can provide you with the best service and programming, please tell us the type of events and activities you would be most interested in <i>(choose all that apply)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Development <i>(leadership, presentations etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <i>(networking, seminars etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Career Management/Services <i>(mentoring, career decisions/change)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social or cultural activities <i>(sports, theatre, informal drinks etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer-to-Peer collaboration <i>(B2B, business/entrepreneurial)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service Projects <i>(charity events, community projects)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)		
How/where did you hear about the chapter?		
What communication tools do you prefer to use/receive information via?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn	<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook
<input type="checkbox"/> Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/> Instagram	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify)
Any other comments?		
<p>Thank you for your interest in the <name of chapter>. We look forward to seeing you soon!</p> <p><i>Privacy Statement: The personal information provided on this form is for QUT use only. It is collected for the purpose of informing you about Chapter, Alumni and other QUT activities and opportunities. Your details will not be passed to a third party without your prior consent.</i></p>		