# ESTABLISHING A STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY ALUMNI HUB

## Guidelines

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DEPARTMENT OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

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# 1. Introduction

The Department of Alumni Relations [DAR] has drafted this document to assist volunteers who wish to establish a SU Alumni Hub in the country where they are currently located.

The document provides clear, concise guidelines and recommendations to assist volunteers embarking on this exciting project.

What you will need is enthusiasm and a passion for the university. An ability to work with the DAR and fellow alumni, as well as good organisational skills, are essential. We will provide the guidance and expertise to support you.

By definition, a Hub is based in a specific geographical area where there are sufficient numbers to organise either a formal or informal hub. The nature of the Hub will be determined by your ambitions, willingness and the needs of the alumni in your area. We will help you draft an online mini- survey to determine their needs.

Please read the following document and should you have any further queries, please contact the Alumni Relations Manager, Shaun Stuart at sstuart@sun.ac.za. Moreover, you can contact our USA and UK Regional Alumni Hub Co-ordinators should your proposed hub be located in these aforementioned countries

The establishment of SU Hubs across the globe is part of our strategic engagement of alumni as outlined in our vision and mission. Our purpose in the Alumni Relations Office to link the past, the present and the future by creating, nurturing, supporting and managing a inclusive and strongly united global community of Stellenbosch University alumni, wherever they are located across the world!

The Alumni Relations team is certainly looking forward to engaging with our hubs across the globe as we seek to provide opportunities for Maties to remain connected to each other and their alma mater. We also appreciate and acknowledge the continued contribution of our alumni to SU and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that the university continues to be guided by our motto: *Pectora roborant cultus recti*, which means 'A sound education strengthens the spirit'

The support of our alumni, such as yourself, provides current Maties with a sense of optimism in their future as the next generation of Maties seek to achieve their full potential.

We look forward to ensuring that our international alumni hubs will provide opportunities for Maties across the generations to be proud to say, '*Once a Matie, Always a Matie*!'

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## 2. Outline of Process

Should you consider establishing or reactivating an SU Alumni Hub, please follow the processes outlined below:

2.1    Contact the Alumni Relations Office. Discuss your thoughts and ideas.

2.2    Draft an e-mail outlining your intentions

2.3    The Development and Alumni Relations team (referred to as DAR )will provide you with the recorded number of alumni in your area as indicated on our SU alumni database

2.4    If sufficient, and it makes sense to pursue, the DAR co-ordinator will assist to distribute an e- mail to alumni in your area. The e- mail will include a covering letter drafted by you along with an online survey.

2.5    The DAR co-ordinator will collate the responses, analyse the data and forward the information to you. We will also inform alumni that we will be sharing their contact details with you.

2.6    Should you wish to proceed in setting up the hub, you will then be required to sign the Alumni Hub Recognition Agreement [See Point 6 below: Recognition Agreement] before your Hub is formally recognised by the university. Please note that a minimum quorum of 20 alumni are required to support the hub initiative in your region before it would be feasible to proceed to formally establish the hub.

2.7    Your next step is to contact a number of alumni who showed an interest. Arrange a time to meet, discuss and draft a Management Committee [MC] with roles and responsibilities. [See Point 7 below: Management Committee]

2.8    Forward to DAR.

2.9    Begin coordinating activities and events through a detailed set of objectives outlined in your strategic plan [See Point 8 below: Strategic Plan] with a list of activities.

### Alumni Hub Best Practices:

• Organise at least two alumni events per year, which are in line with the needs and interests of the community.

• For each event, one or two hub members must serve as the event manager. This entails co-ordinating communication about the event with the alumni relations office, as well as overseeing event logistics (venue selection, registration, set up, break down, etc.). The alumni relations office will assist and support all of these efforts to ensure a successful event.

• Take at least two photos and submit these to the alumni relations office within one week of each event, along with a short summary of the event.

• Help update University records by obtaining address, phone, and email changes for alumni by submitting new information to alumni@sun.ac.za. These updates ensure alumni receive hub information and are important to ensure that we can reach as many alumni in a city / country as possible.

• Hub leadership representatives will have access to SU Alumni Hub conference calls, which will allow for sharing of best practices and an exchange of ideas across the various international hubs.

• Communicate the hub's activities and events through social media, keeping within SU social media guidelines, and ensure consistent information is fed through to the alumni relations office accordingly.

## 3. Guidelines for Running Your Hub

The effective operation of a Hub will be determined by the dedication, commitment, PASSION and efficiency of the Management Committee [MC].

3.1   To liaise with the SU alumni office regularly

3.2   To ensure that all communications sent out is cleared with the alumni office, is appropriately drafted and branded correctly on a template provided by the alumni office.

3.3   To have a clear understanding of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI). To ensure that hub members' individual private information is kept confidential and not distributed to anyone other than hub members who have requested that they be copied. No details may be passed onto a third party under any circumstances.

3.4   Create institutional networks that assist in professional development opportunities

3.5   Submission of contributions for publication in alumni office publications

3.6   Regular feedback to alumni office

3.7   To submit invitations to alumni to attend events

3.8   Provide effective feedback to hub alumni as and when requested by alumni office

3.9   Drafting and distributing of regular newsletters. Please note that these need to be submitted to the DAR to ensure the communication, branding, tone and content are consistent with the DAR.

3.10  Planning and organising events both formal, and informal

3.11  That the activities and communication of the hub is in no way in contravention of SU's vision, mission and values. That the hub does not in any way cause reputational risk or damage to the institution.

3.12  Communicate this to the targeted group of alumni and the DAR.

3.13  Regular events and activities should all be sent to the alumni office beforehand for approval.

3.14  Reports and photographs must be provided to the alumni office after each event.

3.15  An annual report on the hub's activities should be forwarded to the Alumni Relations Manager in December of each year.

# 4. Alumni Relations Office Support

The following is the support and advice the Alumni Relations Office can afford to its hubs:

4.1   Assistance in establishing and drafting a recognition agreement for your Hub

4.2   Providing advice on drafting your strategic plan.

4.3   Advice and recommendations on the administration and management of Hub

4.4   Providing advice on events and activities including reunions*

4.5   Communicating with and contacting alumni. Please contact us for more information on the Protection of Personal Information Act [PoPI]

4.6   Assisting with finance and accounts by: administering all funds deposited by Hub members (where required). Keeping a record of deposits and payments. Ensuring all deposits are clearly referenced. Ensuring all payments are made on pre-agreed upon submission of invoices.

4.7   Providing a template for all reporting to alumni office.

4.8   Annual General Meeting Report Template:
- Welcome,
- Attendance**,**
- Chairperson's Report,
- Financials,
- Strategic Plan,
- Budget,
- and General

## 5. Role of Volunteers in your Hub

Effective, well directed volunteer programmes are the single biggest source of engagement for alumni organisations. It is no different for Hubs. It is our experience that when most alumni are asked why they are not engaged they respond, "Because no one asked me!" Volunteers respond positively to a well organised, well structured, focused strategy where they can make a difference and in doing so have some FUN.

There are many examples of programmes designed to engage alumni. These will vary in nature depending on the geographical position of the Hub, the number of alumni and the focus of the Hub Management Committee.

Examples of volunteer programmes you may wish to consider include; special interest groups [hobbies, sporting and cultural interests], leadership groups [business and NGO hubs], entrepreneur groups, dinners, talks, lectures, coaching, and mentoring. Engaging alumni in you Hub will create a passionate, committed, strong and resilient network. They have shared values & experience. They can offer: **Time, Talent, and Treasure!**

You develop the programme by:

- Listening to them – hear their passion and interests, determine how these can be used in your programme
- Enable them by giving them ownership of their projects – delegate and obtain feedback as to progress
- Train them – we will provide basic skills required to run various projects
- Help them realise their goals, passions & plans
- Recognise and celebrate their achievements
- If you treat volunteers with respect, gratitude – supporting them with passion and enthusiasm that allows them to fulfil their dreams and goals of giving back, they will reward you in return.

## 6. Alumni Hub Recognition Agreement

**Agreement entered into by**

**_____**

**(Hub Coordinator)**

**And**

**_____**

**(Alumni Office Representative)**

1.  Name of the Hub: _____.

2.  Geographical location:_____.

3.  Name of Hub Coordinator:_____.

4.  Purpose of the Hub:_____.

5.  Office Bearers
    Management committee structure: Names, Portfolios, and Contact Details:

    *   Chairperson:_____.

    *   Treasurer:_____.

    *   Secretary:_____.

The parties hereby agree that the criteria for the establishment of a Hub have been met and the office bearers undertake to fulfil their respective duties as defined in these guidelines.

The Office Bearers hereby agree to comply with the Protection of Personal Information Act.

The DAR reserves the right, for whatever reasonable reason, to revoke the rights of any and all of its Hubs.

Signed on this the ___day of_____20___at_____

_____

(For and on behalf of the Alumni Office)

Signed on this the ___day of_____20___at_____

_____

(For and on behalf of the Hub)

## 7. Establishing your Management Committee

In order to operate effectively and efficiently, your Hub will need a basic management structure. Past practice indicates that this should include [but is not limited to] the following positions:

- **Chairperson:**
    - To lead, manage and coordinate the Hub.
    - To ensure good effective governance.
    - To ensure the hub supports the universities vision, mission and objectives.
    - To chair meetings, keep effective minutes, liaise directly with alumni office.
    - Draft annual report and annual strategy.
    - Provide regular feedback regarding activities.
- **Secretary:**
    - Deputises for chairperson when he / she is not available.
    - Maintains sound administrative practices including calling meetings, minutes of meetings, record of activities and reports for AO.
- **Treasurer:**
    - Is responsible for setting budgets, keeping a set of financials including actual against budget, for presentation at meetings.
    - As hubs are not registered non-profit organisations, all finances, deposits and payments must be made through the AO.
- **Other positions:** Once the Chairperson has determined the needs of the alumni in his / her Hub, he / she may want to add alumni with specific skills to assist him in achieving his objectives. These skills may include the following: marketing, legal, communication, IT and entertainment/events coordination.
- A list of office bearers including any changes must be forwarded to the AO as and when they occur.

# 8. Annual Strategic Plan and Budget
*(including an outline of events planned)*

Strategy is a synonym for choice. The choices your Hub will make in order to effectively serve the needs of your alumni. The Management Team will need to set aside time to develop a simple strategy – a clear indication of the objectives you intend to pursue in order to serve the alumni in your hub. Below are a few aspects to consider when drafting your strategic plan.

**Drafting your strategic plan**

Thought without action is just dreaming. Action without thought is just activity. You will need both well considered thought and enthusiastic action to run your Hub effectively.

To establish an effective Hub, you will need to use all the information contained in the survey to draft a comprehensive and effective strategic plan. You will need to establish clear concise, measurable strategies that allow you to attain your objectives. You will need a financial plan including a budget that is a numerical reflection of your strategy.

Finally you will need a set of measurements to gauge your progress.

**SWOT Analysis**
The SWOT analysis is the final step of introspection, review, and information gathering prior to developing your strategy.
It is critical to formulate all the information gathered so far into a usable document. Circulate it prior to holding a workshop that looks at the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats** of your Hub.
A SWOT analysis looks at the Hub using the following process:
**Internal factors** – the *strengths* and *weaknesses* internal to the Hub.
**External factors** – the *opportunities* and *threats* presented by the environment external to the Hub.

- **Strengths:** characteristics of the Hub that will allow it to succeed
- **Weaknesses:** characteristics of the Hub that could cause it to fail
- **Opportunities**: elements in the environment that the Hub could exploit to its advantage
- **Threats:** elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the Hub

Once you have considered the above then draft a simple set of objectives with clear strategies, timeframes and a budget for achieving them. Submit the draft to the DAR for advice, assistance and final approval.

An example could be:

1. **Objective:** To bring alumni in XYZ Hub together informally on a regular basis
    **Strategies**
    - Organise informal after work drinks at Bar X on the last Thursday of every month at 17h30
    - Invites sent out by AB on the Monday prior to the event
    - CD to host the event
    - No speeches, first round covered by Hub. Annual budget £300 or & $500 for example.

The DAR will provide you with advice as to what events work well in other Hubs.

## 9. Events

It is important that you design each event with a specific purpose linked to your strategic plan. The nature of the event will depend on the geographical area [suburban/urban/rural], numbers, requirements of the alumni as established in your survey. Start by asking yourself these questions: what is the purpose of this event? What is the outcome I desire? Who do I want to attend? What will attract them to the event – cause them to attend? How will I know if the event has been successful?

You may wish to consider approaching DAR for assistance in establishing a blog, online newsletter or Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram page that allows you to inform your Hub of upcoming events and share reports on it.

In general, you might want to consider the following events:

Planning and organising events both formal, and informal:

1. Alumni guest speakers
2. Coordinate visits with the SU alumni office
3. Standing Last Friday events at set venue
4. Functions with likeminded alumni organisations
5. Quiz evenings
6. Family braais / barbeques
7. Cocktails
8. Wine tastings
9. Cheese and wine evenings
10. South African special days, eg. Freedom Day, Heritage Day, Africa Day, etc.
11. Pre-game and post-game parties or cocktail events (eg. Springbok matches, Proteas test matches, Bafana Bafana or World Cup games, etc.)
12. Game watching party at the residence of an alumnus or at a South African establishment
13. Visits to Museums or Book Launches of South African or related artists
14. Gathering around local events (parades, art festivals, etc.) or events co-ordinated by the South African Embassy or High Commission
15. Day trip to nearby city or attraction (especially where a Matie or a popular South African artist is performing)

When considering events, take cognisance of the fact that a number of informal events held regularly can be more successful than one large formal annual event. An example of an informal event is the Yale Fed Club Emeritus events in February: no speeches, no fundraising just drinks and music! The event has its own website [ www.fedclubs.web.com ] with that lets people know on social media when they will be. It is a great way to get people involved who may not be interested in formal black-tie events. Remember the success of events are not gauged solely on numbers, but rather on the fact that alumni get together, network and find interacting with fellow

alumni meaningful and useful and feel connected to their alma mater wherever they may find themselves located in the world.

**Event Reporting Template:**
- o Hub name
- o Chairperson
- o Contact details
- o Nature of Event
- o Event date
- o Event venue
- o Number of attendees
- o Purpose of event: outcomes desired and how we know it will be regarded as successful
- o Main activities
- o Report back on event
- o Photographs attached
- o Outstanding invoices of pre-agreed payments (Important as SU is governed by the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and we need to ensure that all international payments are correctly allocated
- o Clearly referenced deposits of payments received for event (where applicable)

## 10.    Conclusion

In conclusion, the document is simply a guideline in assisting you to get your Hub started. The nature of your Hub will be determined by the strategy you compile, the activities you offer, the number of alumni engaged, and the geographical area of your Hub. We are looking forward to having Hubs located across the world, so feel free to speak to us as we build our global network of alumni hubs internationally.

Please note that this document is designed to offer guidelines, ideas, and support to our enthusiastic alumni volunteers in their efforts to build a solid, proactive, and self-sustained alumni hub in the country where they are currently located. It is envisioned that the alumni hub will create a platform for networking and maintaining lifelong relationships, and will strengthen and perpetuate the bonds between the local alumni community and SU.

NB: If your proposed alumni hub is based in a city or state in the USA or the UK, you will have additional in-country support from our USA and UK Alumni Relations Co-ordinators as indicated below.

For the **USA** liaise with:

Ms Reanne Olivier

USA Alumni Relations & Fundraising Director

Development and Alumni Relations

US: +1 516-619-6022 | SA +27 (0)72-135-6818  | e: reanne@sun.ac.za

For the **UK** liaise with:

Mr Darryn Havenga

UK Development and Alumni Relations Director

Development and Alumni Relations darrynh@sun.ac.za Tel: +44 7555 160631

UK:      149 Westfield Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 4LU, United Kingdom

For **Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg (Benelux)** liaise with**:**

Ms Alison April

Benelux Development and Alumni Relations Director Tel:  +32(0)494-33 57 95

E-mail: alisonapril.brussels@gmail.com


For all other countries, liaise with the Alumni Relations Manager, Shaun Stuart via alumni@sun.ac.za in the first instance.

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