



Alumni Council Report 2023

Council Meeting 2/2024 (13 March 2024)

APPROVAL

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Date: 21 February 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to **note** the Alumni Council Report 2023.

PURPOSE

This report is submitted under Council Regulation section 15(2)(f) which requires the Alumni Council to report annually to the Council on its activities and performance against the goals developed under section 15(2)(b).

KEY INFORMATION

The report details the progress made by the Alumni Council in the following areas throughout 2023:

- Engagement activity undertaken in support of the Alumni Council core pillars; Inform, Engage, Inspire
- Efforts to increase diversity within the Alumni Council membership
- Changes to the Alumni Council leadership
- Progress against Alumni Council Goal 1 – Increased linkage with international alumni associations and local community
- Progress against Alumni Council Goal 2 - Raising the visibility of the Alumni Council within the alumni community

BACKGROUND

In 2020, members agreed on three core pillars to guide their activity: to keep alumni Informed, Engaged and Inspired. In order to do this, the Alumni Council seeks to:

- Inform fellow alumni of the activities of the University
- Advise university management on key issues on behalf of the alumni community
- Advocate in the public sphere on behalf of the alumni community & the University of Melbourne.

In 2023, The Alumni Council President set two goals for the Alumni Council to achieve throughout 2023 and 2024. The goals were set following consultation with alumni community locally and globally.

- Goal 1 – Increased linkage with international alumni associations and the local community
- Goal 2 – Raising visibility of the Alumni Council within the alumni community

STRATEGY

To support the Advancing Melbourne Strategy, a three-year Alumni Engagement Strategy is in development and due to be completed in mid-2024. The annual review of the functions and goals for the Alumni Council has been postponed until the completion of the strategy.

FINANCIAL

Not applicable

RISK

Not applicable

CONSULTATION

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A - ALUMNI COUNCIL REPORT 2023

Alumni Council

The Alumni Council met four times in 2023. In addition to these regular meetings, Alumni Council members were actively engaged in mentoring and volunteer programs, attended events such as the annual volunteer thank you event and advocated for the University by regularly sharing news and events with their alumni networks, with particular reach on social media platforms such as LinkedIn.

Members located overseas contributed to their local associations and alumni communities, supporting University initiatives to establish and maintain connection with our widespread alumni community. Several focus groups were run internationally, and the results informed the goals of the Alumni Council for 2023/2024.

The election conducted at the end of 2022 resulted in six new members joining their first meeting in February 2023. New members added to the breadth and strength of capability on the Alumni Council through increasing the number of alumni who represent early-career alumni (3 members), post career alumni (1 member) and international/interstate (3 members). Outgoing members were Australian based, mid to senior career alumni.

Throughout 2023, the Alumni Council continued to work on activities supporting the pillars by seeking to **advocate, advise, inform** as detailed below:

Advise

One of the Alumni Council's primary functions is to provide advice to university staff on a variety of topics. In 2023, the Alumni Council was briefed on and provided input on the following topics:

- Global Strategy (presented by Professor Michael Wesley, DVC Global Culture and Engagement)
- Advancing Students and Education Strategy / Student Satisfaction Results 2022 (presented by Professor Jamie Evans, Pro Vice-Chancellor Education)
- Indigenous Strategy (presented by Karen van Saker, Senior Director of Advancement, STEM)
- Alumni Relations Strategy Consultation Session (facilitated by Mark Sollis from D3 Advancement Strategies and Communications)

Inform

The 2022 report to University Council reported that a focus for 2023 was to ensure that member enthusiasm to share content demonstrating the impact of the university priority areas was to be a focus. To address this, a 'communication toolkit' template was developed and tested with members to be rolled out in 2024. The purpose is to ensure requests for support for social sharing is given to members in a consistent format. It is hoped that this will enable more initiatives across the University to benefit from the Alumni Council's reach into the community and that the Alumni Council will be better informed on the activity of the University.

Advocacy

The Alumni Council has provided input to the design of the new Alumni Engagement Strategy and will continue to be engaged in the development of the strategy which is due for completion in mid-2024.

Alumni Council members contribute individually to advance the objectives of the Alumni Relations strategy by modelling and advocating participation in other alumni-related programs. These include engagement via attendance at events, giving, mentoring, offering insights through surveys/focus groups, and speaking at events.

Increasing Diversity

As reported in 2022, the goal to increase diversity to better reflect the alumni community was a focus of 2020 recruitment and resulted in an increase in representation from interstate and international alumni. Recruitment in 2022 continued to focus on diversity and membership has stayed stable in terms of location.

	Alumni Council as reported in 2022	Alumni Council 2023 membership	Alumni Community*
Melbourne/Victoria	6 (42%)	5 (38%)	220,272 (47%)
Interstate	4 (28%)	3 (24%)	23,749 (5%)
International	4 (28%)	5 (38%)	58,890 (12%)
Unspecified			169,821 (36%)

*figures as at 15 November 2021.

Current members reside in Melbourne, Sydney, Tasmania, China, Singapore, UAE, Malaysia, India.

Leadership

An out-of-session appointment of a new President was required in August 2023, following the resignation of Dr Rachel Baird due to a potential perceived conflict of interest given her new position as an employee at another University. For her short term as President, Jane Wayland has set two goals. She has also identified the need to address succession planning given that in early 2025 two experienced members will see out their final term on the Alumni Council.

Goal 1 – Increased linkage with International Alumni Associations and local community

During 2022 and 2023, several focus group sessions were conducted with international alumni community members by the Senior Director of Alumni and Donor Relations. It was identified that there is appetite within the international alumni community to engage mid and senior career alumni in association activities, to contribute to career conversations and community building. Alumni Council members will contribute to facilitating this activity, with an action plan to be developed in 2024.

For those members based in Melbourne, there is an interest in building greater connection with the alumni community through in-person events. It is intended that the implementation of the Alumni Relations strategy in 2024 will provide structure for this and enhance guidance on the role of Alumni Council members.

Goal 2 – Raising Visibility of the Alumni Council

Consultation throughout 2023 with the alumni community, including new Alumni Council members, informs us that awareness of the Alumni Council and its purpose within the broader alumni community is low. As a first step to enhance awareness, support was secured from University Communications and Marketing to develop a series of member profiles articles to be shared on social media. The profiles aim to demonstrate the unique stories of members, showing them as relatable, inspiring, and reflective of the diverse community. Through this engaging format, the community will learn about the Alumni Council, the impact of volunteering, and it is hoped, will be inspired to become involved. Two articles were developed in 2023:

<https://www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/impact/volunteering/alumni-council-welcomes-early-career-alumni>

<https://www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/impact/volunteering/raising-the-alumni-councils-profile>

This project will continue throughout 2024.