



Ideas for successful research alumni activities



CHECKLIST FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Research alumni work has become a firm feature in the German research landscape. Our checklist can be used as a point of reference for Higher Education and Research Institutions at all stages of their research alumni work: from its establishment and further development to the intensification of activities.

STEP 1 DEVELOP A RESEARCH ALUMNI STRATEGY

- ✓ Formulate strategic ideas for implementing research alumni work in a separate strategy paper or as part of your institution's internationalisation concept
- ✓ When developing the strategy, take account of your institution's specialist and regional focus areas, specific goals and prevailing local conditions

STEP 2 CREATE AND EXPAND STRUCTURES FOR RESEARCH ALUMNI WORK

- ✓ Integrate research alumni work into the existing structures of your alumni work (Welcome Centre, International Office, Alumni Office) or establish a coordination unit at the interface between them
- ✓ Define responsibilities and tasks clearly, and establish staffing continuity within the respective team handling research alumni work
- ✓ Ensure that the topic receives adequate support from your university administration (e.g. by pointing out the positive effects for university marketing)
- ✓ Engage in lobby work at institutions and departments in order to address the topic together and create synergies
- ✓ Clarify the legal requirements (e.g. data protection) and the technical options for data processing and use





STEP 3 CUSTOMISE OFFERINGS AND MEASURES TO MEET RESEARCH ALUMNI NEEDS

- ✔ Develop informational offerings with appropriate, target group-specific content (such as job vacancies and sponsorship programmes)
- ✔ Adapt informational material, webinars and dedicated further education and training measures (such as career development and sponsorship programmes) to the needs of research alumni in different phases of their careers
- ✔ Provide research alumni with access to your university's existing career, skills and contact networks
- ✔ Disseminate information about the university's offerings using a variety of analogue and digital channels
- ✔ Offer dedicated platforms where research alumni can publish their profiles and draw attention to themselves and their work
- ✔ Use social networks to provide opportunities for networking and exchange
- ✔ Create opportunities for personal exchange in connection with professional settings (such as at side events during specialist conferences, at events held by the German host institution abroad)
- ✔ Take a flexible approach to funding allocations for renewed exchange with former colleagues (such as re-invitation fellowships for further research stays, sponsoring research stays for researchers from your own university to visit the research alumni's institution, funding for joint mentoring of doctoral students)
- ✔ Recognise and honour the work of especially active committed research alumni by awarding prizes and special titles (such as "ambassador")

STEP 4 USE THE POTENTIAL RESEARCH ALUMNI OFFER AND INVOLVE THEM IN YOUR UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

- ✔ Prepare research alumni to be ambassadors who share their experience. Provide them with informational material about the university and Germany's research landscape
- ✔ Involve research alumni in establishing and maintaining research collaborations (e.g. by establishing contacts and preparing joint applications for third-party funding)
- ✔ Use research alumni's contacts when embarking on university partnerships
- ✔ Involve research alumni in the recruiting, advising and mentoring of young research talents (for example, in career planning and mentoring programmes)
- ✔ Use collaboration programmes to enable young researchers to conduct research stays at the home universities of research alumni
- ✔ Encourage research alumni to support your university in strategic matters concerning internationalisation (e.g. advising university administrators when designing/ revising their internationalisation strategies)
- ✔ Make use of the specialist and international expertise of research alumni, for example, for expert reports, selection committees, (specialist) presentations, workshops and summer schools

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