

Alumni Reunion Planning Guide

When you find yourself reminiscing about your ECU years, you know it's time to organise a reunion. Reunions provide an opportunity for alumni and staff alike to revisit the people and places that made their time at ECU unique. They are also a chance to expand your professional network and get up-to-date news on the latest developments on campus.

The Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) has developed this planning guide to help you in the process of coordinating your reunion, and provides you with the essential tools to create a memorable and successful event.



1. Form an organising committee

ECU reunions are volunteer-driven, so the first step is establishing an enthusiastic and keen volunteer committee. A successful and memorable reunion will require a certain amount of planning and work. Forming a group of key organisers is a great way of getting people involved and sharing responsibilities and tasks. If you can provide that, we can help you locate your fellow graduates and assist with the effective coordination and promotion of your reunion.

2. Select a date, theme and venue

Ensure you allow yourself adequate lead time to organise the event. This will allow time for the ECU Alumni Relations team to assist you with your reunion, and enable guest's time to plan ahead if attending from interstate or overseas. Ideally we ask for two months' notice, to ensure that quality assistance can be given on time.

Once a date has been chosen then the style of the function should be decided. Will it be a formal or informal event? Is it a cocktail function or sit down dinner? Will it be held at the University or in a hired venue? How are you going to fund the reunion?

Your main options are a small-scale gathering in a restaurant or bar, where everyone pays their own way requiring minimal organisation. Alternatively you can hire a venue, which is more complex and will involve significant planning and funding. There are also several venues on campus, which alumni can access free of charge.

Once the event details have been confirmed, it is important to approach guest speakers well in advance. You may wish to consider past lecturers. The ECU Alumni Relations team can also help you find potential speakers.

3. Determine target audience

Consider who you want to invite to the reunion and whether or not partners, family or friends will be included. You may also wish to invite former lecturers. It is important to ensure the group invited have a common interest, as this will dictate the nature/theme of your event.

Your guest list could include fellow graduates from your year or all alumni from a school, department or from a whole decade. Many groups decide to meet to celebrate an anniversary or special occasion (e.g. 5 or 10 years since graduation), or you may simply want to arrange a gathering of alumni from a particular Faculty/School, study area or geographic location.

4. Contact the ECU Alumni Relations team

Contact us to discuss your ideas and we'll guide you through the planning process. We want your reunion to be a success and we're here to help.

DAR provides a range of services to all reunion organisers that will make your event a great success, including:

- Access to University venues
- Advice on other organisational and marketing aspects of your reunion
- Source potential speakers
- Design and send email invitations
- Setup online event registration on the alumni website
- Promote events via our eNews, alumni website and social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter)
- Manage RSVP process
- Organise registration list and name tags
- Provide alumni branded gifts and brochures

To confirm the reunion we ask the organiser to complete the booking form. Ideally we ask for booking forms to be submitted at least 2 months prior to the event. We aim to send event invitations 4 weeks prior to the date and ask that you provide the final copy a week before the send date, to give us adequate time to prepare the invite. Unfortunately we are unable to provide funding assistance.

DAR maintains a comprehensive database of all graduates. However, keeping up-to-date information on all alumni is a real challenge and for one reason or another, some of our alumni get 'lost'. Due to privacy restrictions we are unable to provide you with details of alumni; however, we are able to contact alumni on your behalf. Once you have determined the criteria for who will be invited to attend your reunion, we will help you to get in touch with people by sending out an email or letter.

With regard to the RSVPs, as a rule we always coordinate these ourselves through our online registration system. This is very important as it lets us track what alumni are attending events and maintain the integrity of the data.

5. Lost Alumni

Help us find 'lost alumni' whom we have lost touch with, and no longer hold a current address for. This means they no longer receive information about alumni activities and benefits, which could be of great professional or personal interest to them.

If you know the whereabouts of fellow alumni who may not be receiving information from us, or who have recently moved address, please let us know or encourage them to update their details. Ask your friends if they are still in touch with anyone else from their course or year. Perhaps they've stayed in touch on Facebook, LinkedIn or other social media platforms.

6. Event Checklist

Your tasks – Pre Event	Our tasks – Pre Event
Form an organising committee	
Decide on the type of reunion you want to have	
Determine an event budget	
Choose a date and venue	
Determine target audience	
Contact the ECU Alumni Relations team	Develop your invitation list from our alumni database
	If relevant , contact the specific Faculty about your reunion
	Source potential speakers
Complete the event booking form and provide copy for the invitation	Design and send email invitation
Help us find lost alumni and promote the reunion via your own networks	Promote your reunion via our website, eNews and social media platforms
Coordinate event logistics	Manage the RSVP process and provide regular updates to the organiser
	Organise registration list and name tags
	Provide alumni branded gifts and brochures as necessary
Confirm final numbers and details with the venue	Arrange for ECU Alumni Relations staff to have a presence at the event, as necessary
Your tasks – Post Event	Our tasks – Post Event
Send a full list of attendees, post event summary and photographs to the ECU Alumni Relations team.	Send a follow up email to your guests and post photographs from the event on the ECU Alumni Facebook page.

7. Feedback

We appreciate hearing how your event went, so please send through some photographs and a brief update. We will then post them on the alumni website and social media platforms, so those who were unable to attend can share the occasion.