



ROBERT H. SMITH  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

# Regional Alumni Clubs Volunteer Handbook

**Smith Office of Alumni Relations**

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## Welcome

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Thank you for your involvement as a regional club volunteer! Your service and commitment are crucial to building and sustaining a vibrant alumni community. We want to make your volunteer experience with Smith one that is easy, fun and truly makes a positive impact on the Smith alumni community. Service within our regional clubs is a great way to meet interesting people, think creatively, hone leadership skills, and support the Smith School. The resources below include everything you need to know about managing a successful club or regional event.

## Mission Statement

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The Office of Development & Alumni Relations furthers the vision of the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland by:

1. Engaging alumni, families, friends, corporations and foundations in the life of the Smith School
2. Nurturing lifelong, mutually beneficial relationships throughout the Smith community
3. Building and supporting an active, connected and dynamic Smith School community
4. Promoting a vibrant culture of philanthropy and securing financial resources

Our work supports the needs of our outstanding alumni and students, and fuels the future success of our world class business school, respected faculty, and centers of excellence.

## Volunteer Leadership at Maryland

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The Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) is dedicated to creating and maintaining a vibrant alumni community. To that end, we have created volunteer leadership opportunities that help us advance the mission of the school and maintain relationships between alumni and one another. The Smith School works in conjunction with the University of Maryland Alumni Association who also have volunteer leadership structures open to all UMD alumni:

### UMD Alumni Association

- Board of Governors
- Regional and Affinity Networks

### Smith Alumni Association

- Alumni Chapter Board
- Young Alumni Council
- Regional Clubs

## How It Works

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The primary goals of our regional clubs is to strengthen the Smith community through alumni events that are well attended and executed. How programs are developed and executed are at the discretion of the club volunteers in keeping with the needs and culture of each region.

Running a regional alumni club is a joint effort between club leaders and the Office of Alumni Relations. It is crucial for the Alumni Relations team and the leaders to communicate on a regular basis. Alumni Relations is here to share their expertise and guidance, and will provide the following support for each event:

- Coordination of venue and catering
- All event related contracts
- Event marketing
- Online event registration and payment tools
- RSVP tracking
- Payments
- Event kits (nametags, registration lists)
- Registration lists
- Management of club budget
- Conference call capabilities for volunteer meetings
- Surveying alumni in the region
- Providing list for event outreach

### Privacy Policy

The University of Maryland respects the privacy of alumni contact information. If an Alumni Relations team member shares a contact list with you it should only be used for purposes of promoting club events. Alumni contact information should not be utilized for personal gain. If an alumnus/a provides you with updated contact information please also share this with the Alumni Relations team in order to update our records and congratulate them through email or class notes in the alumni magazine.

### Contracts

All contracts are subject to review by Alumni Relations. To avoid personal liability, all contracts should be issued to the Robert H. Smith School of Business and signed by the University.

### Budgets

Club budgets are issued and managed by the Alumni Relations office. Given this, all event-related payments must be issued by the University. To keep within budget and reduce no show rates, registration fees will be added to each event.

## Event Marketing

Your event will be marketed in the following ways. We also ask that you share event information with your alumni networks on social media and personal invitations.

- Posted to alumni website and event calendar
- Included in the monthly SmithBiz alumni e-newsletter
- Included in the Smith Business Magazine event calendar (when possible)
- Email invitation
- Promoted on social media

## Alumni Club Leadership Structure

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Each regional Alumni Club will be governed by a group of volunteer leaders. The Office of Alumni Relations will work with the chair to appoint new club volunteers. Diversity in programs and graduation years will be considered during the recruitment process.

### Regional Club Leaders

Leaders will plan and manage the activities of the organization. The basic organizational structure for all regional clubs is to have 1-2 chairs and at least 3 other club leaders. However, based on the region there may be a need for additional leaders. **Term:** two years, renewable (July 1-June 30).

Expectations include:

- Demonstrate a commitment to the Smith School's and Alumni Association's purpose and mission
- Support the efforts of the club volunteers
- Attend Club events
- Brainstorm new and creative program ideas
- Participate in the planning of the yearly club activity calendar for the period July 1-June 30
- Serve as a volunteer lead for at least one event each year
- Collect and report event attendance when Alumni Relations staff are not present
- Assist with promotion of events through social media, personal email invitations, etc.
- Encourage local alumni to become active in the club's activities
- Identify and recruit future leadership committee members
- Participate in year-end feedback/assessment efforts
- Share updates as you receive them about fellow alumni with the Office of Alumni Relations
- *Highly encouraged:* be a member of the UMD Alumni Association and give annually at any level to the Smith School Annual Fund.

## **Chair(s)**

The chair(s) will provide leadership and direction to the regional club volunteers and will ensure the club is meeting its responsibilities. **Term:** two years (July 1-June 30)

## **Responsibilities**

- Provide overall direction and leadership
- Set meeting agendas and preside over regional club meetings
- Maintain regular contact with club leaders
- Serve as liaison between the Club and Alumni Relations
- Prepare and submit an event calendar for the following fiscal year by August 1
- Develop a succession plan in partnership with the Office of Alumni Relations
- Work with Alumni Relations on recruitment of new volunteers

## **Adding New Club Leaders**

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Once a year, Alumni Relations and the club chair will review current activity of club leaders and assess if additional volunteers are needed. Alumni Relations and/or the club chair will then reach out to those who have expressed interest in becoming club leaders to gauge interest and review expectations and responsibilities.

### **Onboarding**

New members will be asked to participate in a new member orientation either in-person or over conference call leading up to their official onboarding to the leadership committee. The goal of the orientation is to ensure new members feel up to speed upon their first meeting and to offer a platform to ask questions.

## **Planning Club Events**

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One of the leadership committee's key responsibilities is to plan a yearly calendar of events each spring for the next fiscal year (July 1-June 30). The number of events each year will depend upon the Club's size, but each club is expected to coordinate or partner on at least 4 events per fiscal year. When planning, be sure to consider the diverse characteristics of alumni (class year, program, work and family commitments, interests, etc...). Providing a variety of events will reach and engage more alumni. Planning should begin at least 12 weeks in advance to ensure event logistics and communications are completed in a timely manner.

The following events take place annually in club regions and should be considered when local events are organized as alumni are invited. Please note these are subject to change so check in with Alumni Relations and/or review the Smith School online events calendar.

### **Smith School Events**

- Smith Day (Worldwide)
- Smith Alumni at Maryland Day (College Park)
- Smith in the City (NYC)
- Reunion Weekend (College Park)
- CEO@Smith (College Park)
- Women Leading Women (College Park, alumnae only)
- Industry-Focused Super Days (DC)

### **University/Alumni Association Events**

- Homecoming (Fall - College Park)
- Maryland in Manhattan (NYC)
- Maryland Day (Spring - College Park)
- Fearless Ideas Campaign Regional Events

### **Ideas to Consider**

- Community service event or component for [UMD Do Good Month](#) (April)
- Welcome to the City: an event to welcome new grads to your region (Fall)
- Content events: speakers, panels, professional development workshops, etc...
- Events at alumni-owned businesses, such as behind-the-scenes tours or insider opportunities
- Family-friendly events
- Cultural programs, such as a theatrical production or a museum exhibit
- Social events: happy hours, wine or beer tastings

## Social Media

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We need your help spreading the word about our events and programs! Alumni are more likely to attend an event if invited by a peer or if they know their classmates are going. Below is a list of our social networks. Please follow, like, retweet and use #SmithAlumni at your events!

### Channels



Facebook.com/umdsmithalumni



Robert H. Smith School of Business Alumni Group



@SmithAlumni



SmithAlumni



RHSmithAlumni

### Hashtags

#SmithAlumni

#UMDSmithProud



## Event Timeline

### Minimum 12 Weeks Prior

*NOTE: Check dates for possible conflicts with other University events, holidays and peak vacation times.*

- Discuss event with the Office of Alumni Relations
- Decide on an ideal date, location and venue

### 10 Weeks Prior

*NOTE: Smith volunteers do not have the authority to sign any contracts. All contracts must be submitted to the office of alumni relations well in advance of the event to be signed by university officials. Additionally all alcohol must be on a separate bill and be paid through the University Foundation.*

- Date and venue secured
- Send contracts and any event-related documents to Alumni Relations staff liaison
- Confirm any speakers or panelists

### 6-8 Weeks Prior

- Send details to be included in email invitation to Alumni Relations staff liaison
- Work with Alumni Relations to determine ideal geographical area to include on invitation list
- Registration page built and opened (*Alumni Relations*)

### 4 Weeks Prior

- Send first email invitation (*Alumni Relations*)
- Spread the word through social media, email, with your Smith colleagues, etc...

### 2 Weeks Prior

- Send reminder email (*Alumni Relations*)
- Provide venue with menu and drink selections

### 1 Week Prior

- Provide final numbers to venue and catering
- Check in with venue
- Receive event kit if no staff member is attending

### 1 Day Prior

- Office of Alumni Relations provides final guest list
- Send reminder email to registrants (*Alumni Relations*)

### Event Day

- Arrive an hour early to set up registration table, decorate, etc...
- Greet guests, make remarks on behalf of Smith (talking points will be provided in advance)
- Manage registration table and check in attendees
- Take photos and share on social media

### Next Day

- Send alumni relations staff final attendee list and photos
- Post event thank you email with survey sent to attendees (*Alumni Relations*)
- Send copies of any receipts to staff member

## Starting a New Regional Alumni Club

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Clubs must be approved by the Smith Office of Alumni Relations. Each alumni club is expected to have at least one alumnus/a committed to serving as a club chair and at least two alumni club volunteers to help with organizing events and assisting in promotion. This club volunteers will be charged with organizing at least 2 events in the first year.

While the alumni relations staff is always interested in expanding the reach of our regional clubs, the following requirements must be met prior to an official launch:

- **Express interest to alumni relations staff:** Let us know this is something you are interested in and we will schedule a meeting with you to discuss next steps and review the requirements!
- **Organize several *Smith in Your Town* events to gauge interest:** The best way to see if other alumni in your area are interested in starting a regional club is by organizing an event! This will help you gauge their interest in attending events as well as who may be interested in serving on the leadership committee.
- **Review geographic area:** The alumni relations office will work with you to determine if the number of alumni in your geographical area is large enough to sustain a regional club or if it would be better suited for the *Smith in Your Town* program.
- **Plan a meeting with interested alumni volunteers:** Get other alumni in your area together to have a brainstorming session and to review the expectations of the leadership committee. Put together a tentative list of feasible events you think alumni would be interested in attending, including a rough outline of dates.
- **Submit your plan to the alumni relations office:** Once you have created your plan, submit it to your staff contact to discuss next steps.

### **If the alumni population in your area is not sufficient to start a regional club:**

Alumni clubs require a good deal of work and participation to maintain. Sometimes, there is just not enough population to sustain an active club. In those instances, we encourage you to participate in our *Smith in Your Town* program. We will also work with you in cases where school representatives may be traveling to your area to assist with any programming and outreach that may take place.

## Contact Us

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Have any unanswered questions? Please don't hesitate to contact us at [alumni@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:alumni@rhsmith.umd.edu) or 301.405.4206! You can also visit our website at <https://www.rhsmith.umd.edu/alumni>.

Thank you for all you do for Smith, and we look forward to working with you!