

Establishing a Sweden Alumni Network

This step-by-step guide targets Swedish embassies and consulates and will provide support on how to facilitate the establishment of an alumni network in your country of operation.

What's the target?

Most foreign missions will probably agree that the desired target is an alumni network which...

1. is run by alumni for alumni. The network should not be reliant entirely on efforts by the embassy/consulate, but should be set up in such a way that alumni take care of all planning and practicalities themselves.
2. is run in a democratic, transparent and inclusive way. All alumni should have the chance to contribute, influence and participate.
3. creates value for its members. Alumni will only want to participate in activities if they are of value to them.
4. helps the embassy/consulate in its promotional activities (including attracting new students to Sweden). When you need alumni experience or expertise for an activity you should be able to expect alumni to be there for you.

A step-by-step guide

The Swedish Institute has many years' experience in building sustainable networks. We recommend that all of the below is done in dialogue with us.

These steps will require some effort from the embassy/consulate's part. However, if they are done right the alumni network will require much less of your time in the future.

1. Contact all alumni whom you have contact information for in your country. Inform them that an alumni network is being established and that you are looking for alumni who would like to *take an active role* as board members. Ask interested alumni to register with you.

If you struggle with finding alumni who would like to engage, please read the "Create engagement" section in the [Sweden Alumni Strategy Guide](#).

2. Gather alumni who would like to take an active role to a meeting where a chair person and board are appointed in a democratic manner.

It's important that the alumni network is not run by one single individual. Alumni who run a network in this way will be overwhelmed by the work load. Therefore, make sure to divide responsibility between the board members.

3. Decide in what manner and with what frequency the leadership should be changed in the future. Document what's decided and make it available for all alumni for the sake of transparency.

On [Sharing Sweden](#) you can find an example of how *Alumni Swedia*, the Sweden alumni network in Indonesia is run. Alumni Swedia elects a new chair person every two years. The chair person appoints the board.

4. Inform the alumni of what support they can expect from the Swedish Institute. Alumni networks can apply for event grants and get access to event toolkits, and the president will have the opportunity to attend an annual meeting in Stockholm together with other presidents of alumni networks from around the world. SI will be happy to brief you about these opportunities ahead of your meeting.
5. At the same meeting or at a separate occasion the alumni should discuss what they want to do for the coming year(s). For alumni to want to participate in the activities, the activities have to be of relevance.

Ideally the alumni network's activities should be in line with your mission's priorities. Make sure to inform the alumni of your your priorities and plans for the coming year.

6. Put SI in contact with the head of the alumni network. It's important that we know the alumnus/a so that we can keep him/her informed about different opportunities for the alumni network.

What to call the network

For cohesion we recommend that you name the network "Sweden Alumni Network [Country]".

Struggling to find alumni in your country?

Start by gathering the alumni you do know in a Facebook group or similar. SI can help you find alumni in your country. Continue with the above once you've reached a critical mass. To get certified by SI, giving the alumni network the possibility to apply for funding, there has to be at least 25 alumni members.

The Swedish Institute's Alumni Network Certification

Sweden alumni networks can get certified with the Swedish Institute on a yearly basis. This gives them the opportunity to apply for funding for events, use the SI Alumni Network Toolkits (readymade event concepts) and to send one delegate to Stockholm for a yearly meeting together with alumni from other parts of the world.

Read more about Alumni Network Certification here (written for alumni): <https://si.se/en/si-alumni-network/alumni-network-certification/>

Event funding

Swedish embassies and consulates can apply for funding for activities targeting alumni. The funding may for example be used for a meeting to appoint the alumni network board. Read more on how to apply for funding on [Sharing Sweden](#).

Contact

If you have any questions regarding alumni relations, please don't hesitate to contact the SI Alumni Team at alumni@si.se.