Tips for event planning
Make sure your alumni gathering is a success

What kind of event are you planning?
- This will depend on your group’s tier - see the ‘geographic group tiers’ guidelines for more information.

Who will be attending?
- Think about other events you can take advantage of – those run by other alumni groups, the British Council or British Consulate, or social gatherings such as film festivals, sporting events, museum open days, etc.
- Will you invite all alumni or one specific group? Make sure that any language you use isn’t alienating - you want to ensure your event is as inclusive as possible.
- Are your invitees welcome to bring guests? If so, who (spouses, business partners)?
- How many people are expected to attend? This will affect other elements of the event, such as venue and format. You may want to set a deadline for RSVPs.

Where will the event take place?
- Consider using a relatively low-key venue, such as a local bar that is easy for people to access, and preferably one without a booking fee or minimum spend requirement
- For a less costly option, you might want to try using an alumnus’ home or workplace as a venue
- Ensure your venue is inclusive and accessible, and will be suitable for any discussions or activities you may have planned (consider noise levels)
- If you have special needs (e.g. AV, table for registrations) be sure to communicate this to the venue in advance

How will alumni register? How much will it cost?
- Will alumni register by emailing you? Or will you set up an online platform? Ensure that whatever method you use has good data security practices
- Will there be costs involved with your event – for example hiring a venue, catering? Be sure to think about payment when deciding how alumni will register, and clearly communicating cost implications to your guests. Be careful with your calculations to make sure that you can cover any costs, regardless of how many attendees you have
- If you will be serving food, remember to ask alumni if they have dietary requirements or allergies

When will the event be?
- You’ll need to decide this before publicising the event – to decide on the best time, use your knowledge of local/industry preference or ask around!

Additional things to consider
- Publicity: The Alumni Relations Office can assist by sending a targeted email to alumni in your area, but have you thought about also creating an event on Facebook, or sharing details with your alumni network on LinkedIn?
- Dropout rates: Based on past experience, you can generally expect about 30% of people who registered for a free event not to attend (and they probably won’t let you know in advance that they can’t make it). Consider this when booking venues, ordering catering, or planning activities for your event. However, turn up at events can be unpredictable, and sometimes you might have more guests than expected – try to keep this in mind also.
- Insurance: Depending on what you have planned, you might need to consider insurance for your event. In some cases, this will be covered by the venue.
- Merchandise: Once we have the date of the event, you can request some Imperial merchandise to give out to attendees, and an #OurImperial sign (if you don’t already have one) to be used in photos at the event.
- Communicating with your fellow alumni: You might like to contact alumni who have RSVP’d in the lead up to the event, or follow up afterwards. An email or social media post along the lines of “Looking forward to seeing you next week!” is a great way to remind invitees of details (venue, dress code, if they need to bring something along). It might also prompt people who are no longer able to attend to let you know in advance. A follow up email/social media post after an event is a great way to share photos, thank fellow alumni for coming along, ask for feedback, and remind them of ways to keep in touch.

Alumni Weekend Global Celebrations: In 2017, 18 alumni groups around the world organised gatherings, and next year’s event will take place on 28 and 29 April. Keep an eye out for further information on how your group can get involved!

These guidelines are accurate September 2017. They will be regularly updated to reflect Imperial’s strategic priorities and the feedback of alumni.

These guidelines are part of a set of resources for alumni geographic group leaders. Access the full set at www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/take-part/groups/regional-groups/