



Info sheet on founding a Humboldt Alumni Association

Since the first Humboldt Alumni Associations were founded in the 1960s, their number has been steadily increasing. Today, there are around 110 Humboldt Alumni Associations in more than 70 countries worldwide. Many of them have their own websites:

<https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/en/connect/alumni-associations>

1) What are the objectives and tasks of a Humboldt Alumni Association?

The Humboldt Alumni Associations abroad encourage regional and international academic and cultural exchange (in particular with Germany) between Humboldt alumni and other experienced as well as junior researchers in the respective country.

The activities of many Humboldt Alumni Associations include: providing a platform for academic and personal networking between Humboldt alumni, promoting the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and its programmes, as well as approaching and counselling junior researchers about the Foundation's programmes in their respective countries.

Humboldt Alumni Associations work closely with [Ambassador Scientists](#) and other associations in their country and region.

2) Who benefits from the establishment of a Humboldt Alumni Association?

Humboldt-Alumni	The Foundation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ academic and personal networking as well as experience sharing with other Humboldt alumni in the same country➤ ... which facilitates finding colleagues in the field for events, seminars etc.➤ sharing experiences of Germany➤ easier to maintain contacts with the Humboldt Foundation and keep updated on its (alumni) programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ central communication point and lifelong contact with alumni➤ advertising programmes and reaching out to junior researchers via alumni associations➤ support and advice from the associations in organising Foundation events locally➤ up-to-date information on the research landscape in the respective country via alumni



Local (Science) Organisations and Government Agencies	Junior Researchers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ facilitates reaching out to a network of excellent researchers (e.g. for recruiting speakers at conferences)➤ enhancing academic and cultural cooperation with Germany via contacts and mediators among the alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ easy access to information about the Foundation and its programmes as well as Germany as a research destination via contacts in the alumni associations➤ easier networking and collaboration with expert colleagues in the respective country

3) How does the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation support the establishment of a Humboldt Alumni Association?

- The contact data and name of the president of your alumni association will appear on the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's website and can be linked to your association's own website.
- We regularly provide information on current developments within the Foundation and on Germany as a research location, e.g. via our magazine "Humboldt Kosmos" or our annual report. Many publications can be ordered online: [Promote the Humboldt Foundation](#)
- We keep you updated on the Foundation's current fellowship and alumni programmes.
- You can research Humboldtians around the globe on the "Humboldt Network online" using specific search criteria: <http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/humboldt-network.html>
- Possibility to use "Humboldt Life" on the Alumniportal Deutschland: The [Alumniportal Deutschland](#) is a free digital platform for persons who have studied, conducted research, worked, undergone training or attended a language course in Germany or a German institution abroad. In the restricted-access "[Humboldt Life](#)" section, Humboldtians can network with each other and will also find current information by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In addition, the Alumniportal community can be used to communicate and share information and expertise with other "Germany alumni" around the world and with representatives of German universities, enterprises, and organisations. Moreover, it offers access to a large selection of calls, job offers, (virtual) events, plus mentoring offers. The Alumniportal Deutschland can also support you with the realization of digital events or the publicizing of your information. In case you have any questions in this regard please get in touch with Ms. Daniela Becker (daniela.becker@avh.de).
- You may apply for financial support to organise a "[Humboldt Kolleg](#)" to strengthen regional and interdisciplinary cooperation amongst Humboldtians.
- The Foundation invites representatives of alumni associations to join our network strategy meetings.

4) What would the Humboldt Foundation like Humboldt Alumni Associations to do?

- intensively foster contacts with Humboldt alumni and other alumni associations, e.g. by way of frequent meetings and events
- integrate the younger generation of Humboldt alumni into the work of your association
- share information about developments within the Foundation as well as about Germany as a research location with the scientific community in your own country
- pass on information about individual Humboldtians' important career developments (e.g. honours, appointments etc.)
- provide initial counselling for candidates who want to apply for research fellowships
- keep the Foundation updated on your association's activities
- support the Ambassador Scientists

5) What do you need to observe when establishing a Humboldt Alumni Association?

Basically, each alumni association defines its own concept and legal status and is effectively free to choose its own objectives and activities. A country may have local associations (so-called chapters) as well as umbrella organisations.

6) First steps

First of all, the Humboldt alumni in a country or region who are interested in establishing a Humboldt Alumni Association decide to join forces. The "Humboldt Network online" or personal interaction at conferences (e.g. at the Humboldt Foundation's Annual Meeting) and other events will help you contact other Humboldt alumni in your country or region. If needed, the foundation can provide a list of names with contact information.

In a second step, all interested founding members should define the objectives and tasks of the future alumni association. Based on these, the association's legal status may be determined. For example, many Humboldt Alumni Associations are set up as registered associations.

You should name a contact person who will organise a constitutive meeting (this person will contact the Humboldt alumni in your country or region, set a date etc.) The constitutive meeting can then establish a governing body, e.g. headed by a president, a vice-president, a general secretary etc.

The president of the association, his or her deputy, or general secretary should send out invitations to events and serve as contact for the Humboldt alumni in your country and region. They should also keep in regular contact with the foundation.



7) Defining your statutes

Many Humboldt alumni associations define their objectives, the structure of their organisation, as well as other important aspects in their statutes. Often, the statutes will govern the following aspects of the alumni association:

- Name/title
- Legal status
- Objectives/mission
- Tasks and activities
- Membership (and membership fees, if applicable)
- Administration
- General assemblies
- Resolutions/votes
- Finances
- Election of the board members (President, Secretary General etc,)
- Duration of the term of office

Some Humboldt Alumni Associations have published their statutes on their websites: <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/en/connect/alumni-associations>

Existing associations will certainly be willing to advise new associations on how to proceed.

8) Experience of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

The Humboldt Alumni Associations are active to a varied extent. Especially for some of the long existing Alumni Associations it is challenging to win the younger generation of Humboldtians and enthuse them for the activities of the association. A rotational change of the members of the board could enhance the association`s activities and contribute to a cross-generational identification of the members with the aims of the Alumni Association.

According to our experience, a proximity of the place of residence of the members of the board to the “location” of the Alumni Association is beneficial to the networking among the Humboldtians in the region and the activities of the association. Where necessary, the formation of regional chapters should be considered.

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