

ALUMNI COMMUNITIES

# Volunteer Handbook

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JOHNS HOPKINS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (JHAA)  
& THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

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# Alumni Communities

# Groups and Communities Overview

Each alumni community is unique and its activities and exact volunteer/committee make-up are specific to each group. There are some best practices and common/potential volunteer roles that help to build each working group and to sustain it.



## Affinity

Affinity communities are groups of alumni, students, and friends of the university who are drawn together based on common interests and shared experiences. Interacting in person and virtually, our groups and communities encompass all divisions, graduating classes, regions, and professions, and reflect the remarkable diversity of interests, concerns, and activities of our alumni.

## Regional

Regional communities are groups of alumni that have formed an official relationship to, and represent, the JHAA in a given geographical region. These groups are normally led by a dedicated committee of volunteers that organize activities for their community. In other cases, regional groups are sometimes led by an executive committee, which typically includes a president and a variety of other volunteer leaders. There can also be cases where regional groups are served by a single regional representative.

## YAC

Young alumni communities (YAC) are regionally-based groups of Homewood (KSAS & WSE) undergraduate alumni who have graduated within the past 10 years. YACs often work closely with the regional communities by cosponsoring events. It's common for a YAC officer to serve on the regional community's executive committee. These committees were formed to meet the unique interests and needs of our most recent graduates.



# Divisional Clubs

A divisional club is a regionally-based group of Johns Hopkins alumni and friends of the university that represents the interests of a particular Hopkins division or school. Hopkins' nine divisions are:

- Krieger School of Arts & Sciences (KSAS)
- Whiting School of Engineering (WSE)
- Carey Business School
- School of Education
- School of Medicine
- School of Nursing
- Peabody Institute
- Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Nitze School of Advanced International Studies



# Role of Communities



## PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES

The role of Alumni Communities is to provide opportunities for alumni to engage with one another to further their connection to Johns Hopkins University.

## PROVIDE A CONSISTENT CALENDAR

Communities provide a consistent calendar of events that bring alumni together.

## REPRESENT JHAA

Communities are under the umbrella of the greater Johns Hopkins Alumni Association and receive ongoing support from the Office of Alumni Relations.



# Volunteer Driven Communities

Communities may be initiated and comprised of one or more alumni volunteers. The structure of many groups will depend on the members and how the group chooses to operate. For a comprehensive guide to large/formal communities, please see page 23.

Volunteers participate in brainstorming, planning, implementing, and promoting the group's events and activities with the assistance of their staff liaison.

Often, individual volunteers take on specific responsibilities within the group. These responsibilities depend upon the needs of the group.

Regular communications and meetings occur and can take place in person, virtually, or via conference call. Please refer to the descriptions of the volunteer roles on the following page.





# Alumni Communities Leadership

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## POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER ROLES

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### VOLUNTEER LEADER

A volunteer leader serves on behalf of a community as a leader or co-leader of a committee. Ideally, the duration of participation in the role will be discussed and mutually agreed upon at the outset.

Suggested responsibilities, in partnership with the OAR staff and other volunteer alumni, include:

- Engage other volunteer alumni;
- Participate in meetings, in person or virtual;
- Assist with planning events, activities, and programs;
- Assist in maintaining momentum;
- Communicate regularly with your staff liaison and volunteers, as needed;
- Serve as a volunteer leader and bridge to your division;
- Be respectful of your fellow volunteers.



### VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Promote events, activities, and programs;
- Participate in meetings;
- Participate in planning and content generation;
- Communicate with fellow committee member and volunteer leader(s) and/or staff member, as needed;
- Attend events;
- Be respectful of your fellow volunteers and their commitments.

# TERMS

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In order to cultivate new leadership and relationships within an alumni community, all committees are required to evaluate leadership and volunteer roles on an annual basis, engaging new volunteers as needed.

## **Regional & YAC Leaders**

The term for a primary leader is two years. Since this is a volunteer position, the term can be reduced if a two-year time commitment is challenging. All other committee chairs serve one-year terms. One year terms for each position other than the alumni community leader can be renewed indefinitely. However, we strongly recommend that committee chairs serve no more than two consecutive terms in any single role. We also recommend that a leadership track be established so that committee leaders have planning experience before they assume the role. Domestic regional leaders are appointed by the Office of Alumni Relations. International leaders are decided upon by their respective committee.

## **Affinity Leaders**

Affinity Groups and Communities generally function as working planning committees sharing the work across the committee without chair roles. Affinity committees do not have set volunteer terms. The terms are fluid and based on the bandwidth to engage. Committee transitions should be managed with staff liaisons.

## **Divisional Clubs**

Each division sets its own parameters for volunteer structure.

## TRANSITIONS

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In the interest of preserving the continuity of a community, we encourage our volunteers to make us aware of transitions that exclude participation in the community in any manner. For example, if a volunteer is no longer able to participate in a community, please let your staff liaison know.



Office of  
Alumni  
Relations



# RESPONSIBILITIES

To aid in the success of your community and its activities, the Office of Alumni Relations provides continuous support and resources to community leadership.

Here are some of the ways that we are prepared to help your community:

- Assign a staff liaison to work with your community leadership
- Coordinate online registrations and ticketing for events
- Promote events and programs through email announcements (sent from our database-driven listservs)
- Send JHU paraphernalia for events (e.g. nametags, pens, banners, giveaways, sign-up sheets, etc.)
- Manage the financial side of events, including the signing of contracts and payments to venues and vendors
- Oversee your community's group website ([alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu)) and event webpages



## STAFF LIAISON

- Your staff liaison can meet with groups online, virtually, or in person as possible.
- They are also able to attend signature events as their schedule permits.
- Finally, your liaison can help you arrange committee meetings (virtually, conference call, in person), as needed, to organize the group.





# Event Best Practices & Tips

# SUGGESTED EVENT BEST PRACTICES & TIPS

## KEEP IN MIND

- Determine the goal of the event and the target audience.
- Consider fees that make all events, programs, and activities accessible for all alumni.
- Be mindful of the budget restrictions and work closely with staff liaison when planning events.
- When possible, plan events four to 6+ weeks in advance. The earlier we are able to plan, the more promotion of the activity we are able to provide.

## COMMON ALUMNI EVENTS

- Industry Networking Events (e.g. roundtables, speed networking, etc.)
- Student Engagement Opportunities (e.g. intersession programs, career-driven boot camps, etc.)
- Alumni Talks and Panels (e.g. fireside chats, etc.)
- Online webinars
- Community/ Cultural Events
- Social Events (e.g. crab feasts, baseball games, etc.)

## PROHIBITED EVENTS

Certain types of events are prohibited by the JHAA, including:

- Partisan political events
- Fundraisers or Sponsorship of fundraising events
- Gambling events
- Events that financially benefit a particular business or individual
- Please consult your staff liaison before planning an event





# Event Planning

## BRAINSTORM

This meeting is the time to think through the purpose, audience, content, and logistics of the event with your committee and staff liaison. As a tool to guide you, use the ***Event Submission Form*** available at [alumni.jhu.edu](http://alumni.jhu.edu).

## EVENT LOGISTICS

Your staff liaison will manage several event logistics, including contracts and payments, setting up event webpage, creating and managing online registration, promoting the event through broadcast e-mails, setting up the virtual event platform (if applicable), and providing supplies such as name tags, sign-up sheets, and JHU paraphernalia (if applicable).

## PROMOTIONS

Committee members will assist by promoting the activity to their individual networks and directing registrants to the online registration located on the event web page.

## VOLUNTEERS

Committee members may be asked to volunteer at events. If you are asked to volunteer, please take the following steps on the next page.



## Volunteering at Events

### ARRIVE EARLY

If planning an in-person event, we recommend you arrive an hour before the event begins in order to meet the venue's point of contact and to make sure everything is set up properly. If you have requested audio/visual equipment, make sure to test the equipment to ensure that everything is working.

If planning a virtual event, we recommend you log-in 15 minutes before the event begins in order to make sure everything is set up properly and guests can arrive early. Please make sure all audio and visual technology is working properly.

### SET UP A REGISTRATION TABLE

Set up a guest registration table near the venue entrance. Your registration table may include nametags, sign-in sheets, and giveaways. Keep track of walk-ins and no-shows and share these with your staff liaison.

### CHECK IN WITH STAFF LIAISON

After the event, check in with your staff liaison to discuss the event. Email your staff liaison with any sign-in sheets along with the names of any walk-ins and/or no-shows, so our office can maintain accurate records of attendance. Mail or email any receipts or final invoices to your staff liaison.



# Important University Policies

# Reimbursements & Insurance Information

## Reimbursements

If you need to make a purchase on behalf of your community, save the original, itemized receipts so you can be reimbursed. Receipts can be mailed, scanned, or even sent as a photo through your phone. Reimbursement checks generally take up to four (4) weeks to be processed and mailed.

Whenever possible, work with your staff liaison to make purchases via a university credit card or university check. It is rare that a volunteer leader must spend their own money.

## Insurance Information

If you have specific questions about insurance coverage for an event, please contact your staff liaison to discuss. For example, you may have a question about insurance coverage if you are hosting an alumni event in your personal residence or if a venue has asked for proof of insurance from the university. In these and similar cases, work with your staff liaison to obtain proper coverage.

# Tax Information & Gifts in Kind

## Tax Information

The university is exempt from sales tax in 36 states. If you find yourself making purchases on behalf of your community, please contact your staff liaison to ensure that you are not charged sales tax. A copy of the university's tax-exempt card can be sent to you in advance of your purchasing, as well as certificates of exemption for applicable states. If a volunteer makes a purchase personally, without the tax exemption accounted for, that portion of the payment will not be reimbursed.

## Gifts in Kind

If a volunteer makes an in-kind donation to an event, or to a portion of that event, a gift-in-kind letter may be sent to the individual. Examples of gifts in kind include when alumni purchase food or alcohol for an event and cover the cost of renting a venue. Please work with your staff liaison if a gift-in-kind situation arises.

# Fundraising

## Fundraising

Alumni communities are extensions of the Johns Hopkins Alumni Association; they are not considered separate 501(c) 3 organizations. Because of this, alumni community leaders should not solicit funds for their specific groups or events. If a volunteer would like to donate funds toward activities, the donation should be made as a gift-in-kind. In such cases, your staff liaison is available to help move the process along (see “Gifts in Kind” above).

Alumni communities should not sell merchandise or hold raffles or other gaming events to raise money for their communities. Alumni communities are to work within the funds allocated by the Office of Alumni Relations. If money is needed beyond the allocated amount, communities should set ticket prices as to break even on event costs.

# Alumni Leader Agreement

## Code of Conduct

Volunteers are dedicated alumni who have been invited to serve as advocates and champions for Johns Hopkins University. Our volunteers play a significant role, supporting the university by engaging alumni, students, parents, and friends through activities, programs, events, and individual outreach. Volunteers perform tasks without compensation and are not considered employees of the university.

## Confidentiality Agreement

The Johns Hopkins Alumni Association respects the privacy of our alumni and university community and is committed to guarding against the unauthorized use or distribution of personal alumni information. Alumni records are proprietary information maintained by Johns Hopkins University for official use and are not released to the general public or business community.

The full volunteer [Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Agreement](#) is posted on our website and should be signed by volunteer leaders.



# Large/Formal Communities





## Alumni Communities Leadership

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### FORMAL COMMITTEE POSITIONS

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**President/Chair** -This position embodies the ideal alumni volunteer characteristics and as such serves as the primary volunteer leader on behalf of the community.

Suggested responsibilities include:

- Build a cohesive team amongst the committee members.
- Convene regular meetings and create the agenda.
- Maintain momentum through follow-up with individual committee members.
- Communicate regularly with your community's staff liaison.

**Vice President** – supports the President and steps in where needed

**Secretary/Communications Chair** – manages the committee mailing lists, takes and distributes minutes at committee meetings

**Social Media Chair** – manages any social network group pages, promotes events on Facebook, Twitter, etc.; assures that photos are taken at events and posted online

**Young Alumni Chair/Liaison** – represents the interests of undergraduates of the past 10 years; organizes programming for young alumni, assures that price points are reasonable for young alumni

**Family Chair** – organizes events and experiences geared towards families with young children

**Food and Drink Chair** – organizes foodie dinners, beer and wine tastings or happy hours

**Programming Chairs** – Volunteers can take on event planning roles based on interests.

For example:

- Community Service Chair – organizes volunteer events such as a local President’s Day of Service or Hopkins In Action event
- Cultural Chair – organizes theater performances, concerts, or museum tours
- Educational Chair – organizes guest speaker events or faculty talks
- Signature Events Chair – organizes crab feasts, holiday gatherings, or any annual event unique to your region
- Sports and Recreation Chair – organizes recreational sports leagues, lacrosse game watches, or events with local professional sports teams (e.g. MLS, NBA, NHL, MLB, etc.)



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