



Alumni – building loyalty by networking

Advisory Service

The challenge

Many approaches to development policy are geared toward international professionals and managers engaged in the fields of business, science, administration and education. These types of programmes and training courses forge valuable contacts with local key figures and partners. However, when it comes to securing the long-term impact of a project, the challenge lies in cooperating with these actors in a way that will encourage them to continue initiating innovations and change processes on their own and to team up with others to implement them – even after the programme has run its course.

Intelligent relationship management, e.g. through the creation of active (expert) networks, is therefore a particularly valuable tool. Ultimately, the programmes that achieve sustainable success are the ones that manage to identify the key local experts and managers, to attract them to the programme and keep them on board in the long term.

The core issues here are: what methods and formats promote the formation of active networks and cooperative working relationships? How can I keep partners and former employees ('alumni') loyal to my organisation in the long term? What do I stand to gain by involving alumni in my programme work? Which alumni on the ground can I approach as local experts or to help open doors?

Our approach

We facilitate the creation of active networks to establish ongoing contacts with key individuals and partners. A network is not an end in itself but needs appropriate tools that will enable it to specifically promote cooperation and develop competence. This is the only way to generate a sustainable, win-win situation all round. Our strategy is one of 'building loyalty by networking'. Worldwide, this makes for the creation of networks consisting of many

thousands of experts, knowledge holders and key persons whose talents we can harness to further our cooperation inputs and produce joint solutions. Expert communities and networks enable members to engage in self-motivated cooperation and (knowledge) exchanges with each other and with other partners. They also provide a platform for sustainable processes of learning and change.

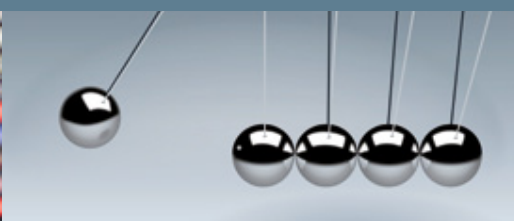
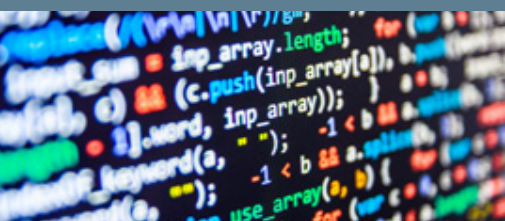
Our customised solutions promote equal partnerships. Alumni assume ownership of topics and become expert or financial partners, enablers and multipliers.

Our services

We optimise your alumni work. We identify your core needs and produce a bespoke concept that matches your programme's objectives with your alumni's interests. You will receive a work plan that is moulded to your requirements, based on the following lead questions: How can alumni work be integrated into the planning of international (education) offers? What should a relationship cycle between institutions and alumni look like? What sort of incentive systems and cooperation management mechanisms produce what kind of results?

We help you bring partners and alumni together in active and independent networks and expert communities. We advise on various cooperation formats – depending on your requirements, this could be a more exclusive club for high-ranking alumni or an open innovation workshop. It could equally be a local or regional alumni association or a global exchange forum. No matter what the scenario, our methods encourage people to join in. They generate practical knowledge, foster sustainable learning processes and facilitate innovation.

We design and provide advice for your alumni network events both in Germany and abroad. We help you choose the best methods and formats and, if required, can even



run the events for you. The main focus here is on strategic issues concerning the respective network's objectives, resources, instruments and portfolio development. We aim to build up independent, self-financed networks that are proactively committed to cooperation, innovation and change.

We create vibrant alumni communities with virtual platforms. The Alumniportal Deutschland is Germany's largest online alumni network. Members can showcase their professional skills via digital profiles, consult and advise each other in expert groups, exchange knowledge in virtual conferences (e.g. webinars) and seek out new career prospects (e.g. in virtual job fairs).

We will show you how to make optimum use of this platform for your alumni work and explain how you can connect your alumni, not only with each other but also beyond your organisation with partners around the globe. We can advise you on the use of our tried-and-tested online tools and on the construction of your own alumni platforms.

We arrange contact with key figures and facilitators. Alumni are key knowledge holders who ideally volunteer to be responsible for change processes. Using our alumni databases (the 'Who-is-Who' service from GIZ and Alumniportal Deutschland), we establish contact with qualified experts and management executives around the world as well as with hundreds of active alumni networks.

In concrete terms, that means:

- » We source expert partners, co-workers and resource people for your programme work
- » We open up options for cooperation between partners and for strategic alliances
- » We help you identify alumni to help open doors and relevant key figures for joint project work
- » We arrange contact with active networks that have specialist and local expertise – as service providers, and knowledge and learning partners

All our services can be booked individually as a bespoke consultancy session or bundled in a course.

Your benefits

GIZ has invested more than 50 years in international alumni work. How will this benefit you?

- » Our reliable knowledge of instruments and methods is a success factor that drives modern alumni and networking activities.
- » Our access to a pool of highly trained professionals who are partners with Germany will help you advance your programme work on site. We know who is currently climbing which career ladder, who knows who, and who has the best expertise in a certain area.
- » Our networking know-how connects alumni locally, regionally and globally, enabling them to focus single-mindedly on your subject area and challenges and thereby foster sustainable results for your programme.

An example from the field

Commissioned by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the 'Alumni Capacity Development Initiative Cameroon' aims to involve alumni more closely in cooperation between the two countries and to make greater use of their know-how for development programmes. Our support covers this measure's design and its implementation. We first gained an overview of the alumni scene in Cameroon and identified key figures and interesting networks in the country. Our recommendations resulted in an 18-month pilot phase designed to strengthen cooperation between selected international cooperation projects in the health and environment sectors and a number of specialist alumni associations. Together with the alumni and the GIZ programmes, we are currently mapping out the framework and considering our next move (some of the options under discussion include the service portfolio and cooperation formats).

Imprint

Edited by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1 - 5
65760 Eschborn, Germany
T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de

Responsible/Contact:
Raphaela Kühn, Sabine Olthof
IC Partnership Models

E raphaela.kuehn@giz.de; sabine.olthof@giz.de
T +49 228 4460-1674; 1410

Photo credits:
Front page: Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock.com
Back page (f.l.t.r.): McLek/Shutterstock.com; CC0 Public Domain; [iStock.com/Christopher Futcher](http://iStock.com/Christopher_Futcher)

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

Eschborn 2017