



Alumni activities in the student organisation: what, why, how?



Alumniworkshop for student organisations
28.1.2026

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The University of Oulu in brief

We respond to global challenges with our expertise

Mitigating climate change and safeguarding biodiversity

A resilient and secure society

Digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and data at the service of humanity

Human health and well-being

Natural Sciences and Mathematics



Biosciences



Medicine and Health



Economics and Business Administration



Engineering and Architecture



Information and Communication Technologies



Education and Psychology



Humanities



14 381

Students

4 059

Staff

65 000+

Alumni



Who is alum?

- Alum / alumni = A person who has graduated from the University of Oulu with a degree
- Bachelor, Master's, Architect, graduate engineer (Master of Science in Technology), Licentiate of Medicine and Dentistry, Licentiate degrees, Doctoral degrees
- Nearly 70 000 alumni from the University of Oulu from all the faculties





Exercise

Think for a couple of minutes.

- How well do you think the graduates, alumni, are reflected in the university's operations and everyday life?
 - What is done well? What could be done better?
- How would you personally like to participate in the university's activities as an alum?
- What would you like to learn / hear from alumni?



Alumni Relations coordinates and develops

- university-level alumni relations
- the university's official alumni network, register and data
- alumni events, e.g. class meetings and Alumni Day “homecoming day”, in the spring
- graduate communication
- alumni stories and interviews
- the announcement process of the Alum of the Year together with the University of Oulu Association
- remembering the graduates (pins, letters, emails)
- cooperation with the University of Oulu Association in alumni affairs



Why alumni activities?

- Supports the university's strategy and values "We succeed together"— Alumni are friends and a support.
- Alumni activities create
 - effectiveness and bridges to working life and society
 - development and improvements to education, e.g. national career monitoring surveys
 - skills and professional development
 - social events
 - networking, community and a good vibes
 - history and continuity



Join Alumni Community already when you graduate as a Bachelor!

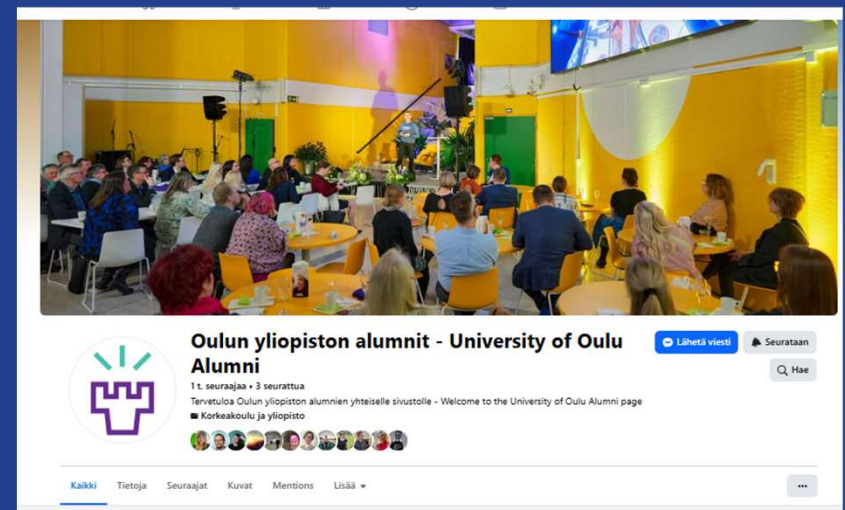
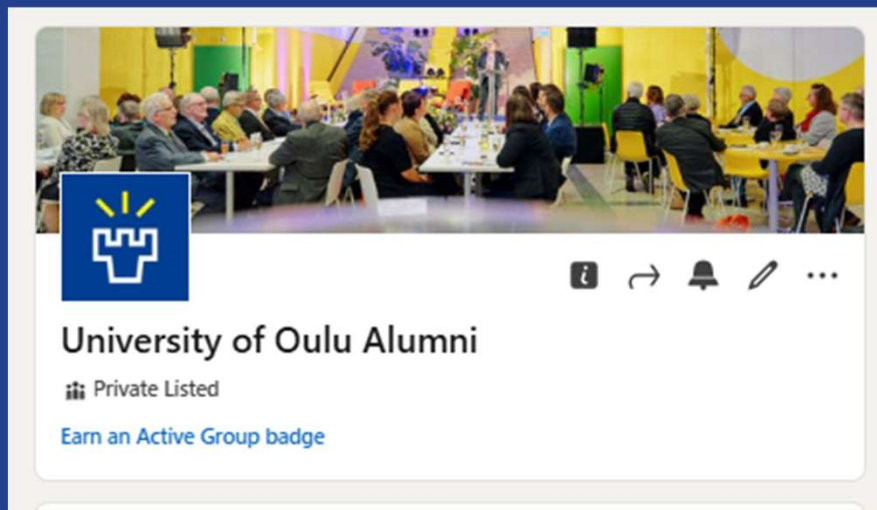
- ✓ You can conveniently join at the same time as you apply for graduation in Peppi
- ✓ You can also join later or update your information: alumni oulu.fi





Alumni in social media – welcome!

- University of Oulu Alumni group in LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/groups/12900456/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12900456/)
- UniOulu Alumni, Facebook page facebook.com/unioulualumni/





65 000 alumni – including



Martti Ahtisaari
(- 2023)
Teacher education
Peace mediator
United Nations diplomat
Nobel Peace Prize laureate 2008
President of Finland 1994–2000



Leena Peltonen-Palotie
(- 2010)
Medicine
2009 Finnish Science Academician



Heli Jantunen
Physics, microelectronics
Professor, Technical Physics
2023 Finnish Science Academician



Jussi Pesonen
Process Engineering
President and Chief Executive Officer, UPM



Pekka Timonen
History
City Manager, Vantaa



Mari-Leena Talvitie
Environmental Engineering
Minister of Science and Culture
Member of the Parliament of Finland



Sari Heinonen
Marketing
Chief Executive Officer, LähiTapiola



Risto Murto
Economics
Chief Executive Officer, Varma
Chairman of the board, E2 research



Kaisa Hietala
Geophysics
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Tracegrow Oy
Board member, ExxonMobil, Rio Tinto



Antti Nousjoki
Architecture
One of the architects of the Helsinki Central Library Oodi
Winner of the World's Best Public Library Award 2019



Markku Heikura
Process Engineering
Chief Executive Officer, Verohallinto



Anni Rapinoja
Biology
Visual artist, environmental artist
Honorary member of the Association of Finnish Sculptors



Baylie Damtie Yeshita Alum of the Year 2025

- PhD Space Physics, University of Oulu
- Professor, Vice Chancellor at Kepler College, Rwanda
- The Alum of the Year is nominated annually from among the graduates by the University of Oulu Association together with the University of Oulu





Information about alumni and work life

ICT

During the past decades ICT has had a significant impact into our daily lives. The field is developing constantly and new jobs are being born. Our alumni have received relevant skills and core knowledge of the latest methods, tools and technologies, when studying in the ICT programmes at the University of Oulu, and now they are working as experts in Finland and all around the world.



High-ranking university and a friend's experience made Md Shariful Alam choose Oulu >



Working with cool things to solve real-world problems >



Came here for the top-tier education – stayed for the feeling of being home >

“Työ toki itsessään opettaa, mutta tutkinnosta sain kattavan pohjan ja tietotaidot.”
- Lauri Rannaste, biokemian alumni

Lääketieteet	+
Terveys- ja hyvinvointialat	+
Tekniikan alat ja arkkitehtuuri	+
Tietojenkäsittely ja tietoliikenne (ICT-alat)	+
Kauppätieteet	+
Humanistiset tieteet	+
Kasvatustieteet, opettajankoulutus ja psykologia	+
Luonnontieteet	+

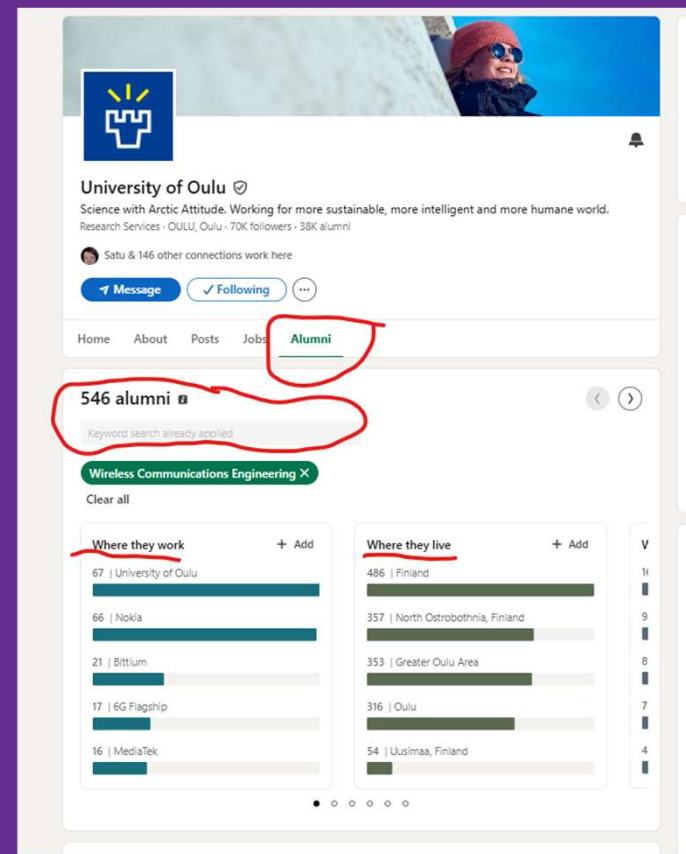
- LinkedIn: use the LinkedIn alumni search function on the website of the University of Oulu, e.g. with the name of your own degree program or company and network boldly
- Trade unions, companies and organizations
- Job search portals, e.g. aarresaari, valojobs.fi
- <https://toissa.fi/>, national career tracking survey
- Alumni stories of the University of Oulu:
www oulu fi/cooperation/alumni-activities/brilliant-alumni
<https://www oulu fi/fi/yhteistyö/alumnitoiminta/loistavat-alumnimme>
- The University of Oulu's mentoring program
- Pestipäivät and other career and recruitment events
- Career guidance services
- Alumni and annual course meetings at the university
- Alumni Day, homecoming day, every spring!



Exercise

Look for alumni of your own area on LinkedIn

- LinkedIn: use the LinkedIn alumni search function on the website of the University of Oulu, e.g. with the name of your own degree program or company and network boldly
- English is more commonly used





Alumni Day, Homecoming Day 24.4.2026

- Alumni Day is an annual, free of charge event on campus for alumni, staff and students
- Friday 24th from 12:00 to 17:00 on campus main lobby and lecture halls
- Sign up will be opened soon:
oulu.fi/alumnipaiva / oulu.fi/alumni-day
- This year also an evening programme from 19.30 in the City Centre Radisson Blu, tickets 20 eur/ person
- Official programme of the Oulu 2026 European Capital of Culture



Exercise for a group of 2-3

For about 10 min.

University nostalgia

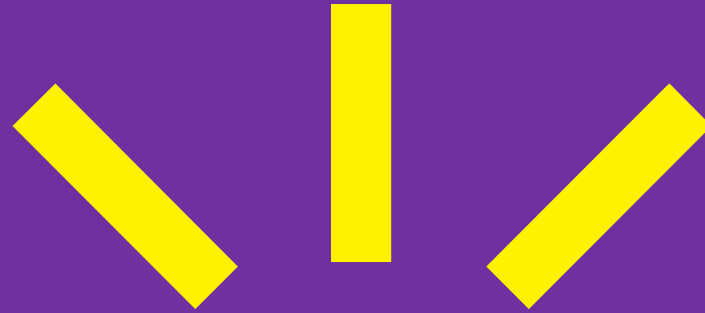
- What are your favourite things at the University of Oulu?
- What are your favourite locations, architecture, cafeterias etc.?
- Do you have any special people with whom you always hang out? Who are they?
- Do you have any memorable teachers and courses?
- What are the things that make you happy as a student?



Exercise for a group of 2-3

For about 20 min.

- What kind of alumni activity / visibility would you like to see as students at the university level?
- What do students / organisations have to offer for alumni?
- How are alumni considered in your organisation? What communication channels are used with alumni?
- What kind of alumni activities do you have? What tips regarding alumni activities would you like to share with others?
- In which matters could the organisations / university cooperate regarding alumni?
- What open questions arise regarding alumni activities?



Support for alumni activities at student organisations



Why alumni activities?

- Alumni provide knowledge, skills and different perspectives on working life
- Facilitates the transition to working life
- No need to reinvent the wheel
- You get peer support and ideas for your career
- Networking
- Social events



Goals of alumni activities

- Define the goal and target group(s) for the activity
- What do alumni and students benefit from the activity?
- Collaborators: who does what and how often? E.g. faculty or other organisations. Not everyone should do everything.
- One step at a time: feedback collection, interest, etc.
- Cooperation model examples
 - alumni as experts and speakers: career afternoon, courses, alumni cafes
 - alumni as guests: annual parties, guild activities, excursions
 - content production social media & other publications: interviews and stories
 - communication to alumni
 - cooperation with alumni in professional organisations and companies



How to start alumni activities in an organisation

- What kind of alumni cooperation do you dream of and what is the next step towards it?
- How often do you stay connected with alumni? Annually, semi-annually, etc.?
- Invitations e.g. for a ball, working life day, interview, occasion, Alumni Day, panel discussion
- Alumni, communications and event manager in your organisation
- Can alumni join the communication circle and how? Think about the ease and longevity of the channel
- Use your own networks, ask the faculty and the Alumni Coordinator for help in connecting with alumni



Establishing alumni activities

- Building continuity and concepts
- Write down the actions taken, the number of participants and tips for the next active participants
- Share good experiences with others in the organisation and interdisciplinary
- Message about events and activities in different channels
- Growing the network and establishing operations is a long process that does not happen all at once. Patience and continuity pays off 😊



Cooperation with alumni

- Feel free to approach alumni, they are happy to get to know current students and contribute to the university's activities
- Be polite and plan your message / communication carefully (Remember that you represent not only yourself but also your organisation and the students at the University of Oulu)
- Consider the busy work and family life of alumni in communication, planning and schedules
- Consider how alumni could be engaged in activities in the longer term (e.g., events, communication, etc.)
- Cooperation with alumni creates important networks for you already during your studies and when moving into working life, take advantage of this!



Activating alumni activities

One step at a time

- Define the goal for the activity
- Collaborators: who does what and how often?
- What can be implemented realistically: budget, resources, time (cf. benefit)
- One step at a time: feedback collection, interest, etc.
- Building continuity and concepts
- Share good experiences with others
- Message about events and activities in different channels



Activating alumni activities

Goals and activities

- Define the goal and target group(s) for the activity
- What do alumni and students benefit from the activity?
- Collaborators: who does what and how often? E.g., faculty or other organisations.
- One step at a time: feedback collecting, interest, etc.
- Alumni as speakers and commentators, e.g., career afternoon, alumni cafes, courses, annual parties



Activating alumni activities

Communication

- Social channels and email lists and in connection with events
- Collect the contact information of those who are interested already before graduation in a suitable situation or start your own group, e.g., LinkedIn / Facebook and message there → little by little the group size increases and students become alumni.
- Pay attention to the GDPR requirements and make the Privacy Statement visible already at the stage of collecting possible contact information.
- Alumni can also be asked to invite other alumni to the group or to join the mailing list.
- Alumni should also be encouraged to join the university's official alumni registry:
alumni oulu.fi



Activating alumni activities

Events

- Alumni as speakers and commentators, e.g. career afternoon, alumni cafes, courses, annual parties
- Alumni could be invited to existing events or organize a separate event for alumni in connection with the events. E.g., low-threshold afterwork or hobby activities when going on excursions in Oulu or other places → alumni who live in the area are included.
- Workplace visits, e.g., for alumni workplaces (alumni can talk about their own work and present opportunities at their own employer)
- A campus tour and a visit to the guild hall in the spirit of nostalgia.
- Visits to possible alumni annual course meetings (often information about the annual course meeting comes to the faculty or the Alumni Coordinator)



Activating alumni activities

Other consideration

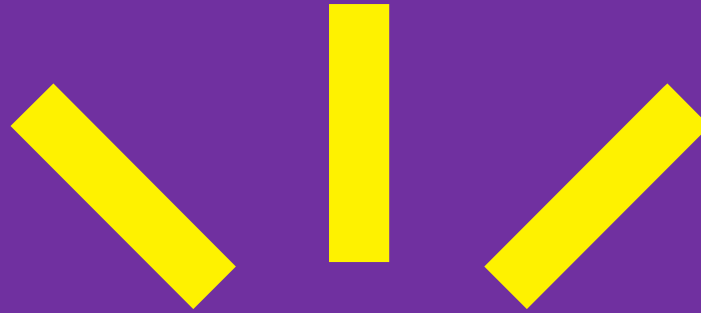
- Collecting alumni presentations for the organisation's own publication or social media.
- The university collects alumni stories from alumni of various fields on the university's alumni activities website:
www oulu.fi/cooperation/alumni-activities/brilliant-alumni
- Alumni badges (cf. the university's silver alumni pin, which is given to graduates)
- Naming Alum of the Year annually / at certain intervals from among former Active Members (cf. Alumni of the Year appointed by University of Oulu Association and the university) in connection with an event.



Activating alumni activities

Monitoring and continuity of activities

- Message about events and activities in different channels
- Building continuity and concepts (e.g., annual clock)
- Share good experiences with others in various interdisciplinary trainings, etc.
- Write down the actions taken, the number of participants and tips for the next active participants
- Growing the network and establishing operations is a long process that does not happen all at once.



Thank you!

Riitta Arffman, Alumni Coordinator

Communication, Marketing, Community Relations

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