



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT  
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION®

# **Engaging for Excellence: Alumni relations programmes in European Higher Education**

## **ICARS REPORT 2016**

Findings from data collected in the International CASE Alumni  
Relations Survey's data for 2015

*Data was collected from September 2015 to November 2015*

### **International CASE Alumni Relations Survey Committee**

The committee members helped manage the project by contributing their time and expertise at each stage of the research project. They were involved with survey review, script creation, survey promotions, data collection, data verification, analysis, report writing and dissemination. The 2015 committee consisted of:

Sue Rees, Head of Alumni Relations, City University

Vanessa Hack, Head of Alumni Relations, Oxford Brookes University

Cyrus Balsara, Alumni & Fundraising Operations Manager, University of Kent

Saffron Quaife, Analytics Manager, University of Bristol

Juul Mulder, Database Administrator, University of Amsterdam

Lucy Nicholson, Communications and Alumni Relations Manager, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

### **CASE staff**

Carolee Summers-Sparks, Deputy Director, CASE Europe

Gareth Jenkins, Head of Marketing and Communications, CASE Europe

Nena Grceva, Interim Membership Services Manager, CASE Europe

Philip Bakerman, Research Analyst, CASE

Yashraj Jain, Research Manager, CASE Europe [Report Author]

### **© 2015 CASE**

All rights reserved. No part of the material in this document may be reproduced or used in any form, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, posting or distributing, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written consent of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

### **Limit of Liability/Disclaimer**

While the publisher has used its best efforts in preparing this document, it makes no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this paper. No liability or responsibility of any kind (to extent permitted by law), including responsibility for negligence is accepted by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, its servants or agents. All information gathered is believed correct at publication date. Neither the publisher nor the author is engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

### **Publication date**

26 April 2015

### **For information**

Visit [www.case.org](http://www.case.org)

Call 020 7448 9940

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (Europe)

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Paxton House

30 Artillery Lane2

London E1 7LS

United Kingdom

# CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Findings.....	4
2.1. Alumni relations landscape in Europe .....	4
2.2. Stages of programme maturity .....	5
2.3. Successful alumni relations programmes.....	8
2.4. What are ‘successful’ alumni relations programmes doing more of? .....	11
3. Participating institutions .....	14
4. Methodology .....	14
5. Acknowledgements .....	15
6. About CASE .....	15

# 1. Introduction

The International CASE Alumni Relations Survey (ICARS), now in its tenth year and with questions developed by senior alumni relations professionals, has been instrumental in documenting the evolving alumni relations landscape in Europe and sharing best practices of successful programmes for benchmarking purposes.

The assessment of the 2015 survey builds on the analytical framework developed for the 2008 survey, which created a statistical picture of measuring success in alumni relations programmes.

What is benchmarking?

Benchmarking involves collecting multiple institutions' data on an issue of common interest, viewing your own institution's performance over time and from the perspectives of what your peers and industry leaders do, and then using the perspective gained for internal continuous improvement. Benchmarking is not a ranking system.

- What are the benchmarking questions?
- How do we compare to the whole population/our peer group/industry leaders/individual institutions-of-interest?
- How "different" are we? Are we different for the "right" reasons?
- What activities are the others doing that we are not? Are they doing the same things but doing them better?
- Who do we look at for best practices?
- How have we changed over time?

## 2. Findings

### 2.1. Alumni relations landscape in Europe

This picture of alumni relations in Europe is drawn from 84 respondents to the 2015 survey. These respondents are with institutions in 12 countries. More than three-fourths (76 percent) of respondents are from the United Kingdom and 24 percent are from other European countries. Altogether, these 84 institutions served 8.6 million living and contactable constituents, employed 358 alumni relations staff and had a budget of £9 million GBP (British pounds) in 2015. The 84 institutions staged 4,843 alumni events, which attracted nearly 107,000 attendees. They have clearly been busy.

On average (i.e. mean figures), they each:

- Offered nine different types of alumni programmes (events, websites, career support, etc.)
- Offered nine different types of member benefits (library access, social networks, discount offers, etc.).
- Served 102,604 living and contactable constituents
- Had a staff size of 4.3 full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- Had a budget of £2.19 per constituent
- Ran 58 events, which attracted 1,406 attendees

Fifty-five institutions are survey repeaters from 2014. They give us an added perspective on change over time (Table 1). For the group as a whole (the sum), the number of living and contactable constituents is up 5.21 percent; budgets, excluding salaries, have marginally increased by 0.93 percent; and staffing has increased by 10.3 percent. The increase in living and contactable constituents is not only due to graduates inevitably becoming alumni each year but also due to better data collection and data cleansing. Relative to constituents served, however, the growth in staffing resources is not quite as strong—median staff per 10,000 constituents fell by 3.8 percent.

<b>Table 1. Changes in key variables from 2014 to 2015 for institutions that provided data for both years</b>					
<i>(non-zero cases in both years)</i>					
		<b>BASE</b>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>SUM</b>
<b>LIVING &amp; CONTACTABLE CONSTITUENTS</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>104,941</b>	<b>107,847</b>	<b>5,931,578</b>
	2014	55	94,081	102,505	5,637,751
	CHANGE (no.)		10,860	5,342	293,827
	(%)		11.54%	5.21%	5.21%
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>265.4</b>
	2014	55	3.5	4.4	240.6
	CHANGE (no.)		0.5	0.5	24.8
	(%)		12.86%	10.32%	10.32%
<b>STAFF PER 10,000 LIVING &amp; CONTACTABLE CONSTITUENTS</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.71</b>	
	2014	55	0.39	0.69	
	CHANGE (no.)		-0.01	0.03	
	(%)		-3.78%	4.06%	
<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>£84,439</b>	<b>£129,774</b>	<b>£6,748,230</b>
	2014	52	£91,128	£128,574	£6,685,825
	CHANGE (no.)		-£6,690	£1,200	£62,405
	(%)		-7.34%	0.93%	0.93%
<b>BUDGET PER 10,000 LIVING &amp; CONTACTABLE CONSTITUENTS</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>£9,939</b>	<b>£12,632</b>	
	2014	52	£10,456	£13,566	
	CHANGE (no.)		-£517	-£933	
	(%)		-4.94%	-6.88%	

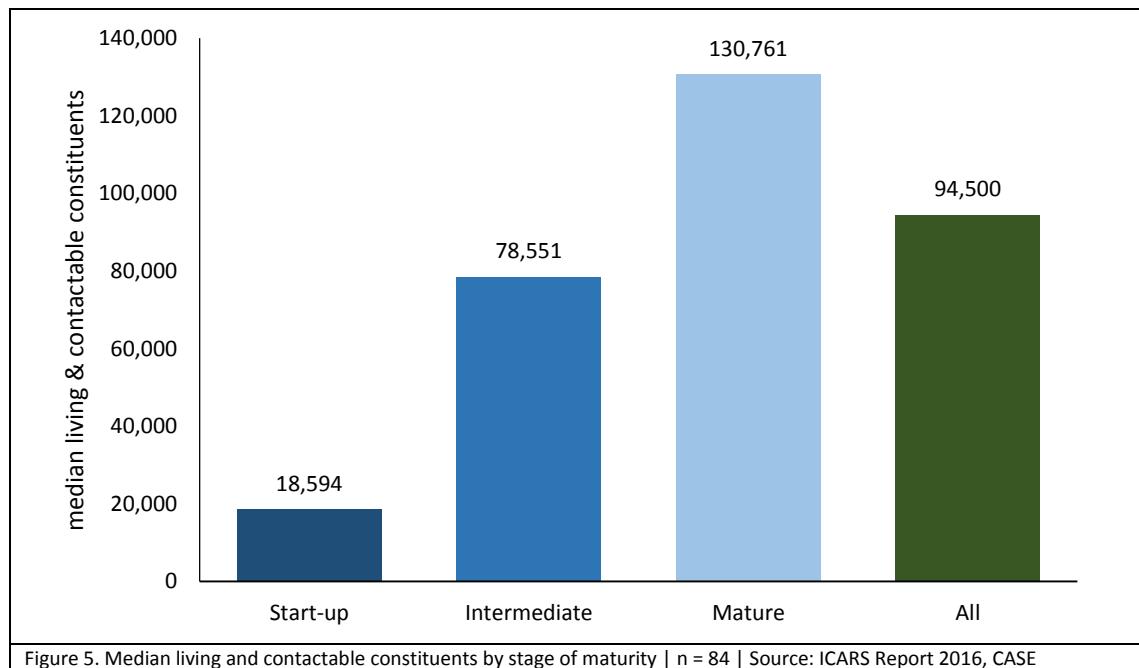
## 2.2. Stages of programme maturity

The 84 respondents are at different stages of programme maturity and this reflects their capabilities and offerings. The survey let respondents self-assess whether their alumni relations programme is in its start-up stage, intermediate stage or mature stage.

- Start-up: in the first year or two of operations and still at the ground-level stage of building staff and services
- Intermediate stage: in operation between two and 10 years, now gaining recognition but still growing staff and services and experimenting with directions
- Mature: has been up and running for several years with a portfolio of repeated events and services albeit still striving for further improvement and efficiencies in line with good business practices

Respondents are asked to make their choice with a holistic view of their alumni programme, and not just on the basis of the longest-offered individual service.

Of the 84 institutions, 14 percent are start-ups, 50 percent are intermediate and 36 percent are mature. The operational differences between these groups are shown in the charts below. Staff and budget do grow in absolute terms with maturity, but because increased activities are also associated with even more constituents over time, staff and budget appear to decrease relative to constituents as alumni relations programmes mature.



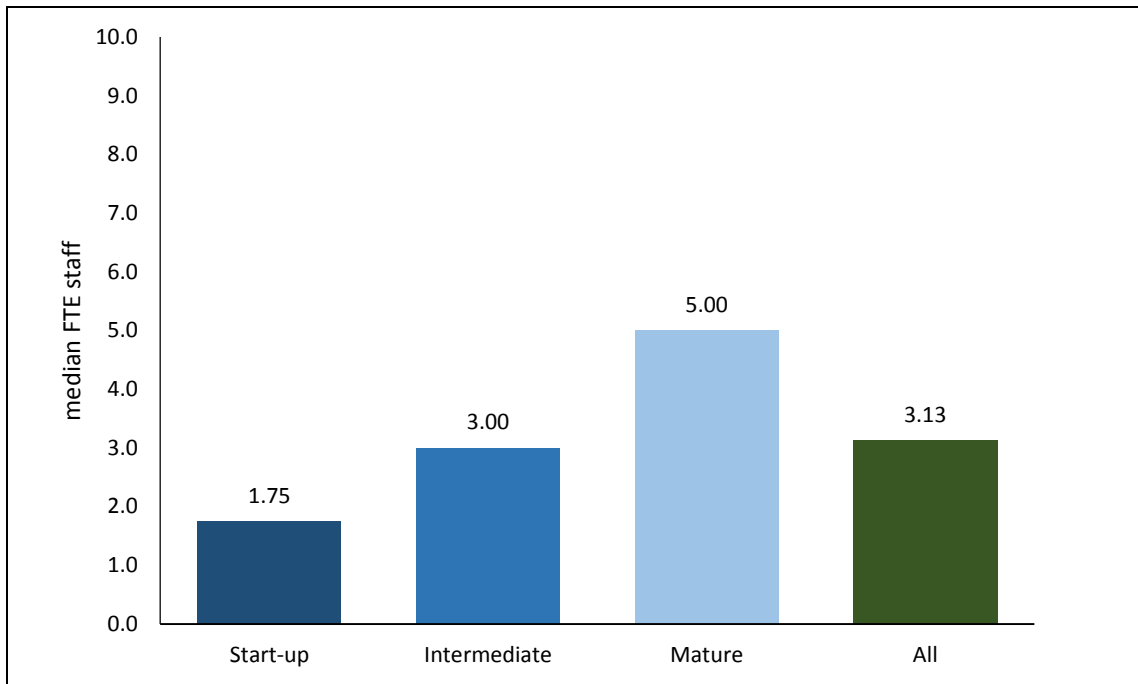


Figure 6. Median FTE staff by stage of maturity | n = 84 | Source: ICARS Report 2016, CASE

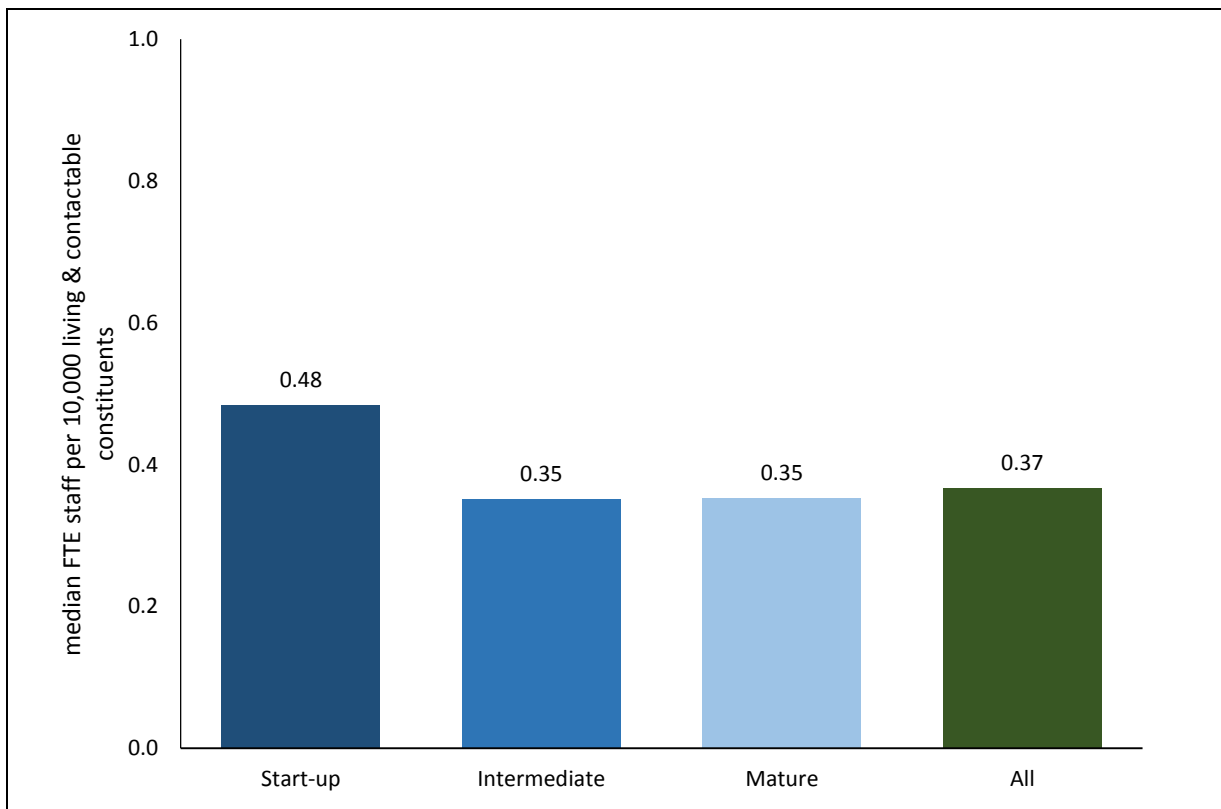


Figure 7. Median FTE staff per 10,000 living and contactable constituents by stage of maturity | n = 84 | Source: ICARS Report 2016, CASE

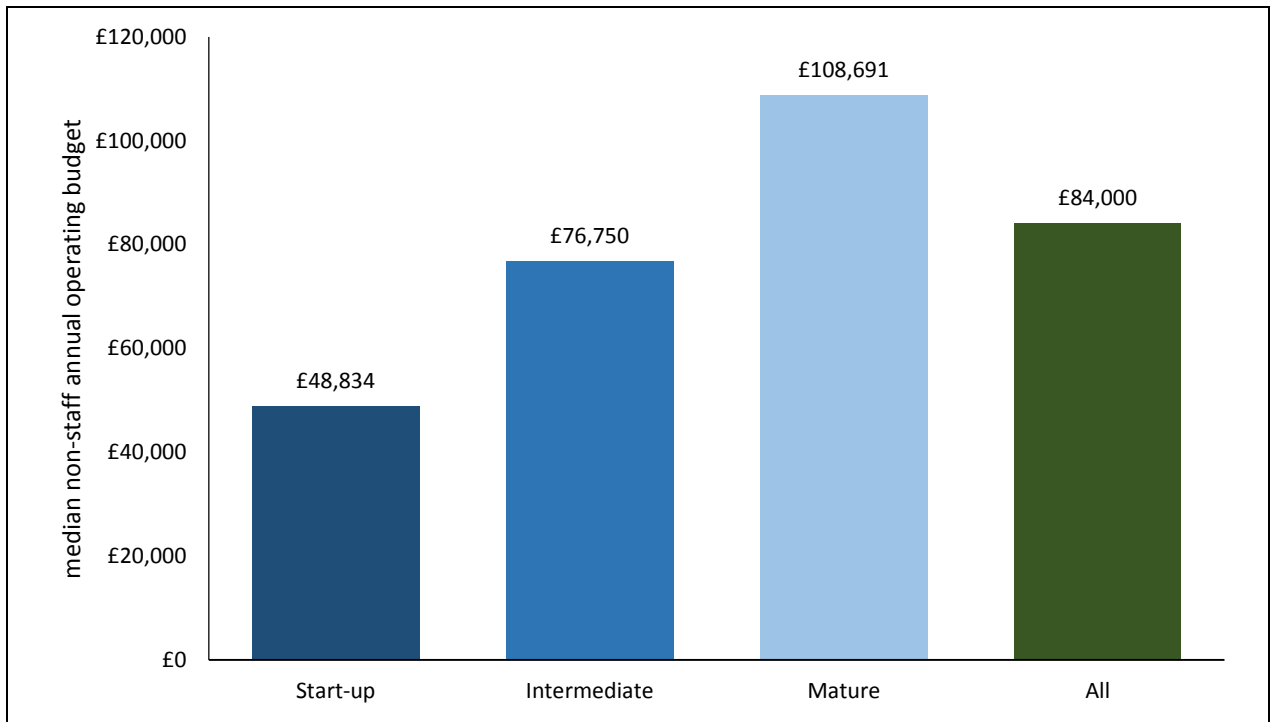


Figure 8. Median non-staff annual operating budget by stage of maturity | n = 79 | Source: ICARS Report 2016, CASE

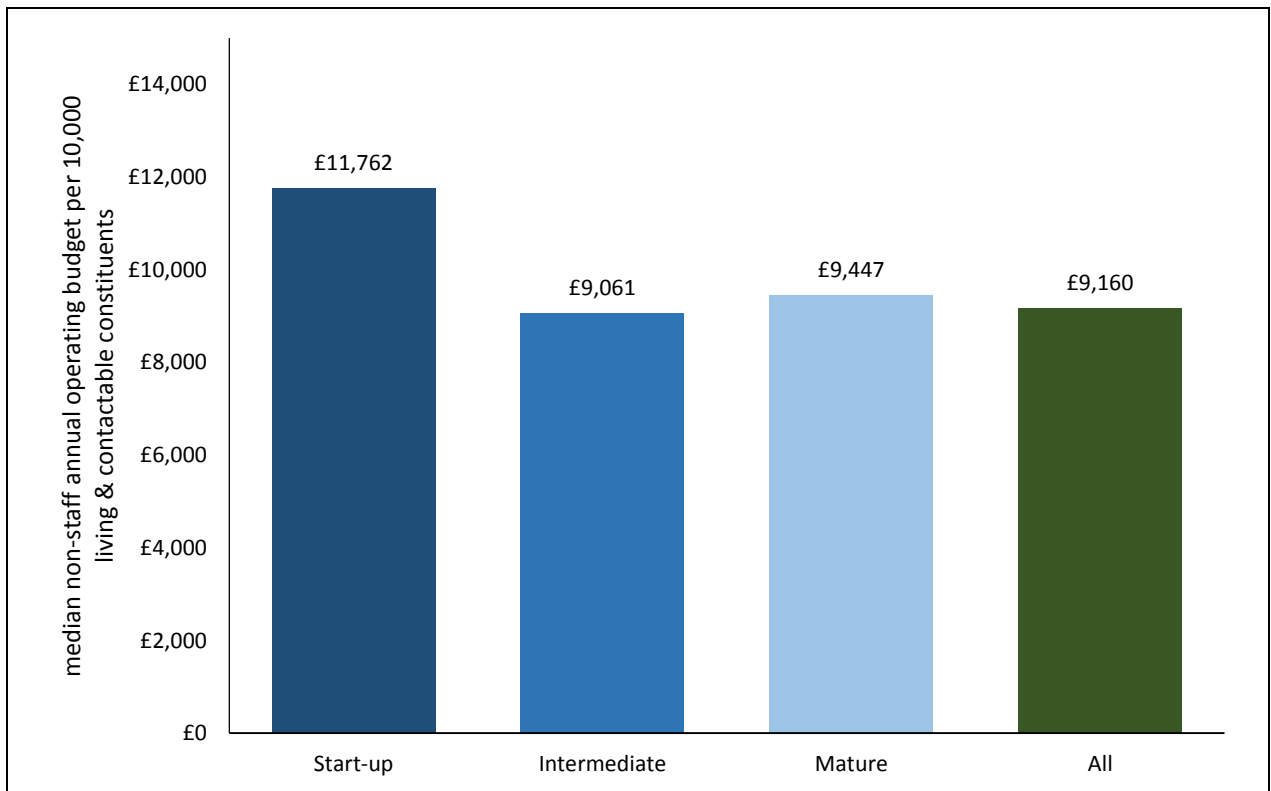


Figure 9. Median non-staff annual operating budget per 10,000 living and contactable constituents by stage of maturity | n = 79 | Source: ICARS Report 2016, CASE



### 2.3. Successful alumni relations programmes

We now know from these statistics how the size and shape of alumni relations programmes at institutions in Europe are evolving, but what makes a successful alumni relations programme? If we want to identify what factors contribute to a successful programme, we first have to define what constitutes success and then be able to measure that. The survey's advisory group of seasoned alumni relations professionals decided on three measures of success: the number of attendees, volunteers and donors in the last 12 months (all expressed per 10,000 constituents, to standardize for size). The group was interested in identifying links between the activities under their control and these three measures of success.

In years prior to 2010, we measured event attendees per 10,000 constituents in the last 12 months but volunteers and donors per 10,000 constituents over time. The survey analysis changed in 2010 to show each variable per 10,000 constituents during the past 12 months. This should give organisations a clearer picture of their own performance in the current year and will allow organisations to compare their own results (as well as compare themselves against other institutions) year-on-year going forward.

We looked at a list of 27 variables associated with constituent databases, programmes offered, resources, communications, events and member benefits for their degrees of correlation with each of the three success measures. Our statistical indicator of any association is the *r* value, and Table 2 shows which alumni relations variables are significantly associated with success.

The *r* statistic, also known as the Pearson bivariate product-moment correlation coefficient, measures the statistical covariation (strength of relationship) between two variables, i.e., the extent to which one variable changes in value as the other variable changes. The *r* statistic can vary between -1.0 (indicating perfect negative correlation), through 0.0 (no correlation at all) to +1.0 (perfect positive correlation). Subject to the relationship being statistically significant, a higher *r* statistic is better (i.e. it has a low probability the number was obtained by chance when there is no real relationship). Statistical significance is checked at 0.01 level and 0.05 level. The 0.01 means that there is a 1 percent chance that the result was obtained by chance; and at the 0.05 level, there is a 5 percent chance. It must be noted that the *r* statistic measures association, not causation, and there is no direction of influence to the relationship between the two variables.

<b>Table 2. Correlations between alumni relations operations and success measures 2015</b>				
All 84 Respondents	POTENTIALLY RELATED VARIABLES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS		
		n = 76	n = 55	n = 69
		Attendees per 10,000 contactable constituents	Volunteers per 10,000 contactable constituents	Donors per 10,000 contactable constituents
		G9 / (C7/10,000)	J11 / (C7/10,000)	K3 / (C7/10,000)
<b>Database:</b>				
With phone numbers per 10,000 cons.	C8 / (C7/10,000)	-0.381**	-0.202	0.064
With mobile/cell numbers per 10,000 cons.	C9 / (C7/10,000)	-0.206	-0.119	-0.219
With postal addresses per 10,000 cons.	C10 / (C7/10,000)	.020	.047	0.175
With email addresses per 10,000 cons.	C11 / (C7/10,000)	0.260*	0.439**	0.192
<b>Programmes:</b>				
Number of different programmes	D1 + ... + D14	0.025	0.043	0.251*
<b>Resources:</b>				
Budget per 10,000 cons.	E4 / (C7/10,000)	0.544**	0.869**	0.262*
FTE staff per 10,000 cons.	E1 / (C7/10,000)	0.588**	0.837**	0.269*
<b>Communications:</b>				
Issues of magazine a year	F1	0.242*	-0.008	0.366**
Percent of constituents receiving magazine by post	F2 / C7	-0.181	-0.215	0.238*
Percent of constituents receiving magazine electronically	F3/C7	0.565**	-0.072	-0.069
Years offered dedicated e-newsletters	F10	-0.132	0.090	-0.070
Frequency of e-newsletter sent each year	F6	0.460**	-0.109	0.282*
Percent of cons. recvg. e-newsletter	F7 / C7	-0.129	-0.171	-0.105
E-newsletter open rate	F9	0.010	-0.087	0.100
Years offered dedicated website	D5	-0.057	-0.040	-0.025
<b>Events:</b>				
Years offered dedicated events	G16	-0.140	-0.144	0.251*
Number of events per 10,000 cons.	G6 / (C7/10,000)	0.529**	0.740**	0.272*
Total expenditure per event	G14 / (G6)	0.152	0.076	0.102
Percent of cons. invited to events/reunions	G7 / C7	0.342**	0.179	0.323**
Percent of cons. accepted invitation to events/reunions	G8 / C7	0.842**	0.679**	0.386**
Reunions org'd globally by alumni, per 10,000 cons.	G10 / (C7/10,000)	0.395**	0.756**	0.309**
Prof. devpt./career networking events, per 10,000 cons.	G11 / (C7/10,000)	0.638**	0.893**	0.284*
Personal interest/hobby-based events, per 10,000 cons.	G12 / (C7/10,000)	0.191	0.027	0.116
Holiday/excursion events, per 10,000 cons.	G13 / (C7/10,000)	0.330**	0.136	0.105
<b>Benefits:</b>				
Number of member benefits offered	I1 + ... + I120	-0.144	-0.091	0.032
<b>Opportunities offered:</b>				
Years offered volunteering opportunities	J17	-0.112	0.021	-0.085
Years members asked to support fundraising	K5	-0.112	-0.050	0.136

\* significant at 0.05 level; \*\* significant at 0.01 level.

Not surprisingly, staff and budget are positively correlated with number of attendees and volunteers as alumni relations programmes with more resources can support more events and engage more volunteers. It is also interesting to note that staff and budget are correlated with donors. It should be emphasized that we are talking about alumni relations staff here, not fundraising staff, but the inter-connected responsibilities mean that alumni relations staff have an effect on donor numbers, it is key for them to keep their alumni engaged who may then go on to become donors when contacted by fundraising staff. Although some alumni relations staff work on cultivating current and prospective donors, this is not their principal charge. Among the communication variables 'receipt of magazines electronically' seems to have a strong relationship with attendees.

Professional development events are correlated with attendees and volunteers while constituents who 'accepted event invitations' are correlated to attendees, volunteers and donors.

The number of benefits is not associated with any of the three success measures, although the number of events are correlated with both attendees and volunteers. Completeness of the constituent database with regard to postal addresses also seems to have no relationship with attendees, volunteers or donors; however, the completeness of email addresses is significantly related to the number of attendees and volunteers.

The main messages in Table 2 seem to be:

- (1) Stewardship - To increase the number of attendees, instead of increasing the size of the same existing events, you need to have sufficient staff and budget to put on more events and be able to connect with potential attendees via email and e-newsletters;
- (2) Ongoing contact - To increase the number of volunteers, you need to be able to connect with them via e-newsletters, magazines and professional development events; and
- (3) Engagement opportunities - To increase the number of donors, you need to have the staff and budget to offer relevant programmes and events which allow you to engage the constituents regularly.

It is important to recognise the contributions that alumni are making to institutions' strategic objectives through contributions of time: 94 percent of universities offer alumni volunteering opportunities. Practices across the sector suggest that alumni are mostly engaged in the activities relating to student recruitment, mentoring and student employability. On average, institutions have 57 alumni volunteers per 10,000 constituents.

While anecdotal evidence points towards the value of these programmes, there is currently limited evidence about the most effective models of alumni volunteer engagement, and the scale of impact that graduates are achieving for institutions. CASE is working with thought leaders in the sector to develop metrics that measure the impact of these volunteer contributions, using a standardised approach that will enable benchmarking and assessment of efficiency.

If we look at relationships over several years, as in Table 3, we also see statistically significant relationships. The long-term links between attendance, volunteering and donations display an interesting pattern. According to the correlation results across three years of data (2013, 2014 and 2015) for the 55 repeating respondents, attendance seems to predict future attendance, and to a more limited extent, an increase in volunteers and donors from 2014 to 2015. The number of attendees in 2013 was positively linked to the number of attendees in both 2014 and 2015. These relationships suggest that attendance, as a form of engagement with minimal investment, has an enduring quality.

Simply attending events, however, does not appear to foster a path of ascension to other philanthropic activities. The correlations between the number of attendees at events in 2013 was not significant with the number of donors in future years. On the other hand, engaging alumni who make the progression into

volunteering or gift-giving tends to remain at that level, at least for the immediate future. The number of volunteers in 2013 and 2014 was correlated with the number of donors in 2015. Although the data does not suggest a long-term connection for donors, both volunteering and events seem to have more positive impact in the near-term.

		2014	2014	2014	2015	2015	2015
		Attendees	Volunteers	Donors	Attendees	Volunteers	Donors
<b>2013</b>	r	0.791**	-0.076	-0.089	0.733**	-0.079	0.261
<b>Attendees</b>	N	42	30	41	41	33	42
<b>2013</b>	r	0.007	0.354*	0.032	0.048	0.342	0.553**
<b>Volunteers</b>	N	32	30	32	32	32	32
<b>2013</b>	r	0.171	0.653**	0.369*	0.082	0.551**	0.963**
<b>Donors</b>	N	40	30	40	40	33	40
<b>2014</b>	r				0.947**	0.146	0.318*
<b>Attendees</b>	N				41	33	43
<b>2014</b>	r				0.223	0.919**	0.624**
<b>Volunteers</b>	N				30	30	30
<b>2014</b>	r				0.031	0.740**	0.313*
<b>Donors</b>	N				41	33	41

\* significant at 0.05 level; \*\* significant at 0.01 level.

#### 2.4. What are 'successful' alumni relations programmes doing more of?

Another way of asking about success is to identify institutions with successful alumni relations programmes and then to examine what they are doing more than anyone else. The survey group defines a successful alumni relations programme as one in the top one-third of the distribution of survey results on a given success measure. The absolute numbers for these cut-offs are shown in the sidebar. Institutions recording higher numbers than those shown are in the top one-third for that measure and are successful.

Your alumni relations operation would be in the top third of each measure of success (per 10,000 constituents. See Table 4) if you have more than:

- 174 attendees
- 45 volunteers
- 145 donors

Forty-seven of the 84 respondents are among the top-third (successful) on at least one of the three measures (attendees, volunteers and donors) with 29 of the 35 being successful on just one measure. Clearly, different institutions emphasize different aspects of success, and there is hope that most institutions can be successful at one of the measures.

Of note:

- Eighteen of the 84 institutions were successful on any two of the three measures; four of which were successful on all three measures (Table 5 and 6).
- Thirty-three percent of those successful on two of the three measures were at the intermediate stage of maturity and 50 percent were mature.
- From the institutions that were successful on all three variables three were mature and one was start-up.

Measures of Success	From Questions	N	Median	Mean	Min	Max	33rd %ile Value	66th %ile Value
<b>Attendees per 10,000 contactable constituents</b>	G9 / (C7/10,000)	76	106	187	1.8	1,362	60	174
<b>Volunteers per 10,000 contactable constituents</b>	J11 / (C7/10,000)	55	30	57	1.0	688	17	45
<b>Donors per 10,000 contactable constituents</b>	K3 / (C7/10,000)	69	106	143	0.4	1,098	51	145

Maturity stage	Respondents in survey		Attendees per 10,000 constituents		Volunteers per 10,000 constituents		Donors per 10,000 constituents	
	(N)	%	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Start-up	12	14.29%	5	19.23%	3	15.79%	1	4.17%
Intermediate	42	50%	13	50%	7	36.84%	9	37.5%
Mature	30	35.71%	8	30.77%	9	47.37%	14	58.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>

Maturity stage	Any two of the three success measures		All three success measures	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Start-up	3	16.67%	1	25%
Intermediate	6	33.33%	0	0%
Mature	9	50%	3	75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>

The facets of greatest difference in the operations already listed in the correlations table (Table 2), between successful institutions and the rest, are generally the same for all three success measures. Table 7 presents, for 26 of the survey variables, the median values for the top-third institutions on the three measures of success versus the other respondents.

As can be seen in Table 7, the top one-third of institutions put on more events and invited a higher percentage of constituents per event than other institutions. They also have larger budgets and more staff (for top-third of institutions as per volunteers and donors). In addition, they organised more events and more of their constituents receive invitations to reunions/events and attend them. Interestingly, top-third institutions by attendees and volunteers had lesser contactable constituents per 10,000 with information about phone, postal and email addresses as compared to those in the bottom two-thirds. But the top-third institutions as per number of donors had more contactable constituents per 10,000 with information about phone, postal and email addresses as compared to those in the bottom two-thirds.

In general, the top one-third of successful institutions provide somewhat more programmes and benefits and have been offering a dedicated website and dedicated events longer than the other institutions. Again, time spent developing events and cultivating volunteers and donors leads to success; the long haul pays off.

Statistics can provide powerful support for our beliefs about how different phenomena relate to each other in the world, but they also need to be accompanied by some cautions over interpretation. The *r* values used here measure strength of association, which is not necessarily the same as a direct causal relationship: other intervening and unmeasured variables may explain some of the relationships found. A more complex statistical technique, like multiple regression analysis, might give a better picture of other relationships.

**Table 7. Median Values on Key Variables for the Top Third and Others, 2015, All 84 Respondents**

POTENTIALLY RELATED VARIABLES		MEASURES OF SUCCESS					
		Attendees per 10,000 constituents		Volunteers per 10,000 constituents		Donors per 10,000 constituents	
		G9 / (C7/10,000)		J11 / (C7/10,000)		K3 / (C7/10,000)	
		Top Third	Others	Top Third	Others	Top Third	Others
<b>Database:</b>							
With phone numbers per 10,000 contactable alumni	C6 / (C7/10,000)	24312	62723	47049	57007	66960	44986
With mobile/cell numbers per 10,000 contactable alumni	C7 / (C7/10,000)	10278	23832	17049	23380	27313	19170
With postal addresses per 10,000 contactable alumni	C8 / (C7/10,000)	54043	83662	52082	72262	91681	60450
With email addresses per 10,000 contactable alumni	C9 / (C7/10,000)	30612	48685	36384	42110	52476	35885
<b>Programmes:</b>							
Number of different programmes	D1 + ... + D14	9	8.5	10	8	10	7.5
<b>Resources:</b>							
Total operating budget	E4	£87,000	£81,527	£88,675	£81,527	£140,825	£71,375
Budget per 10,000 contactable alumni	E4 / (C7/10,000)	£13,182	£8,947	£13,613	£7,437	£14,501	£8,838
FTE staff	E1	3	3.3	4.2	3	5.7	2.5
FTE staff per 10,000 contactable alumni	E1 / (C7/10,000)	0.64	0.33	0.65	0.34	0.63	0.34
<b>Communications:</b>							
Issues of magazine a year	F1	1.5	1	1	1	1	1
Percent of contactable alumni receiving magazine by post	F2 / C7	72%	69%	74%	68%	71%	67%
Percent of constituents receiving magazine electronically	F3/C7	4%	1.8%	2.6%	1.9%	2.4%	1.9%
Years offered dedicated e-newsletters	A9	6	8	6	7	7	7
Frequency of e-newsletter sent each year	F6	10	6	6	6.5	11	6
Percentage of contactable alumni receiving e-newsletter	F6 / C7	48%	50%	53%	48%	53%	48%
Years offered dedicated website	A10	10	14	13	12	10	12
<b>Events:*</b>							
Years offering dedicated events	A8	10	15	12	15	20	11
Number of events	(G1 + G2 + G3)	49	31	43	35	47	31
Number of events per 10,000 contactable alumni	(G1 + G2 + G3) / (C7/10,000)	7.9	3.2	8.3	3.8	5.9	3.7
Total expenditures per event	G12 / (G1 + G2 + G3)	£649	£548	£447	£606	£628	£484
Percentage of contactable alumni invited to events/reunions	G5 / C7	55%	32%	40%	37%	52%	36%
Percentage contactable alumni attending events/reunions	G7 / C7	3.3%	0.6%	1.4%	0.9%	1.6%	0.9%
Reunions org'd globally by alumni, per 10,000 contactable alumni	G8 / (C7/10,000)	1.48	0.81	2.63	0.77	1.57	0.80
Prof. devpt./career networking events, per 10,000 contactable alumni	G9 / (C7/10,000)	1.30	0.29	1.01	0.44	0.76	0.44
Personal interest/hobby-based events, per 10,000 contactable alumni	G10 / (C7/10,000)	0.35	0.17	0.46	0.29	0.24	0.29
Holiday/excursion events, per 10,000 contactable alumni	G11 / (C7/10,000)	0	0	0.25	0	0	0
<b>Benefits:</b>							
Number of member benefits offered	I1 + ... + I20	9	9	10	9	11	8
Number of activities constituents are recruited for	J1 + ... + J8	5	5	6	4	7	4
<b>Opportunities Offered:</b>							
Years offered volunteering opportunities	A11	4	11	8	10	14	8
Years members asked to support fundraising	A12	14	11	14	11	18	11

How to Use This Table: Another way of asking about success is to identify institutions with successful alumni relations programmes and then to examine what more than anyone else. The survey group defines a successful AR programme as one in the top one-third of the distribution of survey results on one or more of three success measures—number of attendees, number of volunteers and number of donors. This table presents, for 26 of the survey variables, the median for the top-third institutions on those three measures of success versus the other respondents. For example, looking at successful programmes as measured by number of donors, the top one-third have more mobile/cell numbers recorded in their databases than do the other programmes.

Many of the measures here are taken at the aggregate or group scale, and that is not the same as the individual mind of the alumnus or donor. We have uncovered “average relationships,” but the results of individual institutions may vary, and there is no deterministic outcome in the sense of a reunion automatically generating donors. We have also measured things that are easily measurable on a quantitative scale—number of emails, events, attendees, etc. Aspects like quality, satisfaction and personal experience are intangible factors that are just as important in determining future connectivity and engagement.

### 3. Participating institutions

1. Aberystwyth University
2. Birkbeck, University of London
3. Birmingham City University
4. Brunel University London
5. Cardiff Metropolitan University
6. Cardiff University
7. Central European University
8. City University London
9. Cork Institute of Technology
10. Coventry University
11. De Montfort University
12. Delft University of Technology/TU Delft
13. Dublin City University Educational Trust
14. Franklin University Switzerland
15. Guildhall School of Music & Drama
16. Heriot-Watt University
17. Higher School of Economics
18. Imperial College London
19. Keele University
20. KTH - Royal Institute of Technology
21. Lancaster University
22. Leiden University
23. London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
24. London South Bank University
25. Maastricht University
26. Manchester Metropolitan University
27. Newcastle University
28. Northumbria University
29. Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences
30. Oxford Brookes University
31. Queen Mary University of London
32. Queen's University Belfast
33. Regent's University London
34. Robert Gordon University Aberdeen
35. Royal College of Music
36. Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
37. Sheffield Hallam University
38. Stockholm University
39. Swansea University
40. Teesside University
41. The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA)
42. The London School of Economics and Political Science
43. The University of Nottingham
44. The University of Sheffield
45. The University of Warwick
46. Tilburg University
47. Trinity College Dublin
48. Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
49. University Campus Suffolk
50. University College Dublin
51. University College London
52. University of Aberdeen
53. University of Amsterdam
54. University of Brighton
55. University of Bristol
56. University of Cambridge
57. University of Cyprus
58. University of East Anglia
59. University of Essex
60. University of Exeter
61. University of Glasgow
62. University of Greenwich
63. University of Hertfordshire
64. University of Huddersfield
65. University of Kent
66. University of Leicester
67. University of Lincoln
68. University of Liverpool
69. University of Manchester
70. University of Oslo
71. University of Oxford
72. University of Reading
73. University of South Wales
74. University of Southampton
75. University of Stirling
76. University of Surrey
77. University of Sussex
78. University of the Arts London
79. University of the West of England
80. University of the West of Scotland
81. University of Wolverhampton
82. University of York
83. University of Zurich, Fundraising
84. Utrecht University

### 4. Methodology

The ICARS Survey Committee reviewed the survey and approved a final version. The survey was created in the CASE Benchmarking Toolkit. This eighth year of benchmarking invited over 240 institutions from CASE's database to participate in an online survey in autumn 2015. The survey was closed on 10 November 2015. Eighty-seven institutions started the survey and 85 completed it. Data from 84 completed surveys was used for analysis. All the data submitted to the survey is self-reported data; it is not audited.

Not all participating institutions provided usable responses to every question in the survey. The number of institutions given in the base in tables and figures refers to the number of institutions answering a particular question or set of questions, rather than the total number participating in the survey. Where a table or chart brings together responses to a number of different questions, the smallest base size is always reported.

Data processing was carried out by CASE. Data checks were included in the online survey. A further data management procedure was carried out to check outliers and to resolve observable errors. Where possible, missing or inconsistent data was queried with the schools to check that they were correct before analysis was performed.

Some institutions may have found it difficult to collect the appropriate data for submission or may have misinterpreted some of the guidelines for completion. Therefore, CASE contacted institutions whose data raised some issues and in many cases the data returns were improved. A systematic and multi-stage checking process was also implemented in an effort to improve the quality of the data.

There was a variation in results between the institutions. This meant that the mean figures were usually much higher than the median figures. Median figures should be used as the preferred benchmarking measure, but we have also retained mean figures in our findings for reference purposes.

Further analysis across questions helped get a better understanding of alumni relations performance. It must be noted that this analysis was done by using answers submitted in the survey, and thus it suffers from the same bias that might be present in the original answers. Findings for sub-groups should only be used as a guide as their sample size is not robust enough.

CASE Europe compiled this overview report (this document) which was disseminated in April 2016. Individual reports were also available to participating institutions from March 2016. These reports allow each institution to benchmark its results against other similarly structured institutions using the [online CASE Benchmarking Toolkit](#).

## 5. Acknowledgements

Firstly we would like to thank all the institutions and alumni relations office staff who gave their time to complete the International CASE Alumni Relations Survey.

We would also like to thank members of the ICARS Survey Committee, who have been involved in the development of the survey from the very beginning. Between them, they have helped chair committee meetings, provided design advice for the online survey, contributed content for this overview report and gave moral support, wisdom and guidance throughout.

## 6. About CASE

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) is the professional organisation for advancement professionals at all levels who work in alumni relations, communications and marketing, development and advancement services.

CASE's membership includes more than 3,600 colleges, universities and independent and secondary schools in more than 80 countries. This makes CASE one of the largest non-profit education associations in the world in terms of institutional membership. CASE also serves more than 80,000 advancement professionals and staff of member institutions and has nearly 15,000 individual "premier-level members" and nearly 170 Educational Partner corporate members.

CASE has offices in Washington, D.C., London, Singapore and Mexico City. The association produces high-quality and timely content, publications, conferences, institutes and workshops that assist advancement professionals to more effectively serve their institutions.