

How to launch a chapter/regional club

Mission

The mission of the chapter/regional club must be in line with the mission of the Geneva Graduate Institute, which strives to promote international cooperation and make a contribution to the progress of developing societies. More broadly, the Institute endeavours to develop creative thinking on the major challenges of our time, foster global responsibility, and advance respect for diversity.

Steps

1. Gather the alumni.ae-i

The success of a chapter/regional club hinges on the alumni's level of involvement.

Chapters/regional clubs are essentially a group of alumni whose close geographic proximity enables them to support and contribute to the Geneva Graduate Institute's projects in a given country or region.

In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the chapter/regional club, the Alumni Association Committee recommends that you create a chapter/regional club committee of 3-5 alumni and agree on the roles of each committee member. Functions could include: President, Vice President, Communications, Treasurer, etc.

Ask the Alumni Relations (AR) to provide you with a list of alumni in your region, edit the information you get if possible, and contact your fellow alumni for a first get-together!

In case you choose to communicate through mass emailing, please ensure that everyone is blind copied (Bcc).

2. Set your goals

Once you have formed a group of motivated alumni, you should start to think about the long-term goals of your chapter/regional club. A couple of questions you may want to take into consideration are:

- What do we want to accomplish as a chapter/regional club? What is your mission?
- What kind of activities do you want to engage in (e.g., monthly online calls, intellectual talks with experts, representing the Institute during student higher education forums, offering internships and jobs, organising conferences or events – with or without other chapters/regional clubs, networking, etc.)

Do not hesitate to contact other existing chapters/regional clubs for advice and inspiration.

3. Apply to be approved by the Committee Association

Once you have agreed on the long-term goals of your chapter/regional club, submit your ideas to the Alumni Association Committee (via AR) for approval.

Minimum criteria for AAID-recognised chapters

1. Basic leadership structure
 - At least three core committee members, with an understanding of term of office.
 - One person clearly designated as the main contact point for AAID and the Alumni Office.
2. Potential membership base
 - An indicative target of at least 10 reachable alumni. (no differentiation between 'big' and 'small' chapters, and Chapters may be organised flexibly based on the membership at the level of a city region country or across several countries)
 - Note: "Reachable" can include alumni who are locally based and/or alumni who are chapter-affiliated and willing to participate virtually. It should be understood as alumni who are potentially contactable/mobilisable, not a participation requirement.
3. Activities and planning
 - A plan for a first launch/revival event, including an approximate timeframe (e.g. within the next 3–6 months), format (in-person/online) and expected size.
 - Thereafter, a simple expectation of at least one activity per year, in any format (social gathering, talk, online meet-up, etc.).
4. Alignment with by-laws
 - An explicit commitment to align with the common chapter by-laws once they are finalised by the Alumni Office and AAID.
 - Where needed, chapters could add very light local provisions (for example on term length or rotation), as long as these do not contradict the Association's by-laws.

NOTE: For significantly smaller chapters, the basic leadership structure and membership base criteria can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

4. OPTIONAL: Ask for a @graduateinstitute email

A couple of days before the formal launch of your chapter/regional club, ask AR for a "XYZchapter@graduateinstitute.ch" address.

5. Promote your existence!

All done! You can now go ahead and launch your chapter/regional club, promote it through the news section on the Alumni website, as well as through alumni social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Bluesky, and Instagram). You can also ask AR to help with your communications (sending invitations, layout, yearly new list of alumni, getting paper copies of Globe – the semestrial review of the Institute, etc.).

IMPORTANT: If you would like to contact the Swiss Embassy of your country of residence to organise a reception, please get in touch with AR. Such events are

usually organised by the Director of the Institute when he or she is visiting a particular region. Alternatively, if you are contacted by the Swiss Embassy in your country for a Swiss Alumni Network event, make sure to get in touch with us first!

Financing

Chapters/regional clubs do not have dedicated budgets.

Under certain circumstances, your chapter/regional club may be eligible for reimbursement. For instance, if a Professor is visiting your region and is invited to one of your events, the Institute can help cover the costs of their participation, so long as they notify AR beforehand of their intention to partake in this event.

Guidance and ideas on organisation and activities

- Establish a list of chapter/regional club members, and agree on who will manage it and keep it updated. AR can assist with creating and keeping the list updated.
- Agree on an annual plan of events that could include 1-2 big events (annual reception), regular social meetings (e.g., Happy Hours) and their frequency (once a month/every 6 weeks/quarterly), and outings or meetings.
- Be in routine contact with AR on new members and happenings. Discuss several months in advance how someone from the Geneva Graduate Institute (Director, Professor, researcher, etc.) could attend your big event. See if any professors are travelling through your city and try to organise a happy hour or social gathering with them.
- Discuss possible chapter/regional club projects, such as sponsoring a student or funding a scholarship, with the support of chapter/regional club members (e.g., the Washington chapter had created a scholarship funded by chapter members, with a matching grant from a local foundation associated with the Institute).
- Make plans to attend the annual Alumni Reunion and represent your chapter/regional club every fall (in September).
- Take leadership in promoting content of the Geneva Graduate Institute on social media platforms such as [Bluesky](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).
- Identify alumni profiles for the Geneva Graduate Institute to share on their website and newsletters (i.e., any alumni you would like to highlight in terms of their work).
- Get in touch with prospective and/or admitted students. Be in touch with AR on how this can be done in your area.
- Participate in the annual conference call with the Institute Alumni Committee (usually in May).

Other

If you have any other suggestions or wish to get some support from the Institute for the organisation of your chapter/regional club, please contact AR (carine.leu@graduateinstitute.ch or alumni@graduateinstitute.ch).