



Alumni Advisory Panel

Panel Member Handbook

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Introduction to the Alumni Advisory Panel

The Alumni Advisory Panel is a platform for Commonwealth Alumni to take an active role in supporting the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) and contribute to the delivery of the [CSC Strategy 2025 – 2028](#).

As a panel member, you will share your personal insight and expertise to steer the direction of the CSC's activities and support future cohorts to flourish. The panel will also provide an opportunity to contribute to the global knowledge pool regarding the evaluation of higher education, scholarships, and postgraduate study.

Panels are comprised of Commonwealth Alumni representing a range of backgrounds, countries, disciplines, and Scholarship/Fellowship programmes and cohorts to ensure the panel reflects the diversity of the Commonwealth Scholarships community and future applicants.

Panel members are appointed for a two-year term and expected to advise on **at least one** activity per year.

Role profile

The primary role of an Alumni Advisory Panel Member is to participate in consultation exercises and pilot studies to advise CSC Secretariat teams on specific projects. Panel members are also expected to represent the CSC at all CSC events and any external events you attend, as appropriate.

Panel members are recruited via the general application route. In countries where there is a CSC Alumni Association, associations may also nominate a member of their Executive/Coordinator group or a key engaged alumni member to take up a place on the panel.

Panel members nominated by their local CSC Alumni Association are expected to promote national alumni priorities through their participation in advisory panel activities. This means representing the challenges and opportunities for national alumni and/or CSC Alumni Associations, where appropriate.

Panel members will be expected to advise on **at least one activity** per year. It is estimated that each activity will require a minimum commitment of 3-hours. Panel members not participating in at least one activity per year will **not** be eligible to reapply at the end of their term.

Representing Commonwealth Scholarships

You may have the opportunity to attend/participate in Commonwealth Alumni events in your capacity as a panel member. You are expected to use these opportunities to share information about your role and encourage alumni to engage in CSC activities.

We ask that you promote the importance of staying engaged with the CSC and in completing evaluation surveys. Information shared in these surveys is used to provide evidence to our funders and partners on the impact of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships and amplify the value of continuing to fund these opportunities.

Areas of expertise and interest

Activities in 2025-2027 may address one or more of the following areas of expertise and interest:

- Communications and public relations

- Corporate and philanthropic partnerships
- Evaluation surveys and approaches
- Widening access
- Equity, access and inclusion in education
- International development
- Working with disadvantaged and under-represented groups
- Research skills (quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis)

Engaging in panel consultations

All activities will be comprised of the following:

- Activity brief, providing initial introduction and background on the activity for consultation, how it is relevant to the CSC Strategy 2025 – 2028 and the mode of submitting your feedback.
- Supplementary reading and/or related documents which will enable you to effectively participate in the consultation
- Details on how your insights and feedback will be gathered. This is typically in the form of:
 - Online survey. Surveys are username and password protected and you will receive log-in details via email.
 - Focus Group Discussions. Details of the FGD sessions and registration information will be shared via email.

Panel members are not required to meet in person to participate in consultations.

We aim to provide three activities per year for panel members to participate in. Updates on the activities for the year will be shared via email and in induction and informal meet-up sessions.

Panel members can select the activities they wish to participate in. In some cases, certain groups or demographics of panel members may be requested to participate in activities. This will be clearly communicated in mailings and supporting documents.

Panel members may select the activities to participate in based on their knowledge and expertise, general interest, and learning and development opportunities. Approximate information on when activities will be open for consultation will be provided as far as possible to enable panel members to plan their time.

Communications

All queries about the panel should be sent to the Alumni Team at alumni@cscuk.org.uk

Mailings

Panel members will receive communications throughout the year via email with information on upcoming activities and how to participate.

Summary reports detailing panel findings and recommendations, as well as next steps on developing/implementing the activity area, will be shared via email and published on the CSC website post-activity. An archive of all reports on panel consultations are published on the [CSC website](#) and can be searched by panel.

It is important to check your emails regularly. Please ensure you keep Alumni Team up to date with your correct contact email address.

LinkedIn group

You can connect with current and former panel members via the [CSC's Alumni Advisory Panel Member Group](#) on LinkedIn. You can use the group to share information about your work and expertise and liaise with members about the panel activities you are engaged in.

Please note, the CSC will not monitor this group regularly and responses to panel activities must be submitted through the channels outlined.

CSC website

A list of current members will be published on the CSC website (where consent has been given). The list will be accessible through the main [Alumni Advisory Panel webpage](#).

An archive of all reports on panel consultations are published on the [CSC website](#) and can be searched by panel.

Accessing information and resources

CSC website

Resources, such as the Alumni Advisory Panel Handbook, induction materials, and information on current and upcoming activities, will be made available on the [Alumni Advisory Panel Resources webpage](#).

Induction session

All panel members are required to attend an induction session to find out more about the role, learn from previous panel members on their experiences and what to expect, planned activities for the first year, and to ask any questions.

Panel members are expected to make every effort to attend an induction session. Where they cannot, they must email alumni@cscuk.org.uk

Informal meet-ups

Two informal meet-ups will be held in each year of the panel. The meet-ups are an opportunity for panel members to learn about the activities that have been consulted on and how insights shared have or will be used, find out about upcoming activities, connect with fellow panel members, and ask questions and share their experiences of being a panel member.

Informal meet-ups are optional.

Benefits

The Alumni Advisory Panel is one of the most senior positions an alumnus can hold within the CSC Alumni Network. Alongside the benefits panel members bring to the CSC, there are multiple ways in which panel members also gain skills and recognition:

- Representing the CSC's 31,000+ alumni using your knowledge of the issues that matter to alumni
- Giving back to the CSC by sharing your personal expertise, insights and experiences to ensure the future of the programme and support Scholars
- Informing the delivery of the [CSC Strategy 2025 – 2028](#) by supporting the work of different CSC Secretariat teams

- Connecting with fellow alumni panel members across the Commonwealth to advise on activities
- Contributing to the global knowledge pool regarding the evaluation of higher education, scholarships and postgraduate study
- Sharpening your research skills by participating in evolving evaluation work and research in a non-work environment
- Featuring on the CSC website and CSC Annual Report (name and scholarship details only)

Expectations of Alumni Advisory Panel members

As a panel member you agree to adhere to the [CSC Code of Conduct for Alumni](#).

Confidentiality

You may be asked to advise on activities and CSC policies in their initial draft stages and which have not been shared with the wider CSC community. It is important that you **do not share** information about activities with those outside of the panel unless you are asked to do so.

Where you are representing your national CSC Alumni Association, you will be notified what can be shared with the CSC Alumni Association Leadership to enable you to effectively represent the interests of national alumni.

Participation

All panel members must complete and return a signed Alumni Advisory Panel Member Agreement form. You will not be invited to participate in activities until this has been returned and may be withdrawn from the panel on failure to do so.

You are expected to make every effort to assist in advisory panel activities. You are required to advise on **at least one** activity per year of your two-year term. It is estimated that each activity will require the minimum commitment of 3 hours. Panel members **not** participating in at least one activity per year will not be eligible to reapply in future.

You are also expected to make every effort to attend an online induction session. If you are unable to attend a session, you must inform the Alumni Team who will schedule a one-to-one meeting with you.

Representing the CSC

You may have the opportunity to attend/participate in Commonwealth Alumni events in your capacity as a panel member. You are expected to use these opportunities to share information about your role and encourage alumni to engage in CSC activities.

We ask that you promote the importance of staying engaged with the CSC and in completing evaluation surveys. Information shared in these surveys is used to provide evidence to our funders and stakeholders on the impact of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships and the value of continuing to fund these opportunities.

You will also be expected to represent the CSC at external events you attend in your professional capacity, as appropriate.

Liaising with the CSC Secretariat

The Alumni Team will be your primary contact throughout your time on the panel. Some activities may be developed and delivered by other teams within the CSC Secretariat. You are expected to respond to all correspondence received from the CSC Secretariat regarding the advisory panel.

The primary mode of communication will be via email however you may be required to participate in wider discussions hosted through online platforms.

Resigning and reapplying to the panel

You should notify the Alumni Team at alumni@cscuk.org.uk if you feel you can no longer commit to the Alumni Advisory Panel or are not able to assist in activities. You may still re-apply to take part in this opportunity during the next round of applications.

Panel members **not** participating in at least one activity per year will not be eligible to reapply in future.