



# CASE Global Alumni Engagement Metrics Survey, 2019

## Guidance Documentation

August 2019

### Introduction

The CASE Global Alumni Engagement Metrics Survey, 2019, is the inaugural data collection for CASE's alumni engagement metrics framework.

A task force of global alumni relations professionals was created in 2016 by the CASE Commission on Alumni Relations to establish an industry-wide framework for measuring alumni engagement. A White Paper with the task force's framework recommendations was published in August 2018. The White Paper defined alumni engagement as

Activities that are valued by alumni, build enduring and mutually beneficial relationships, inspire loyalty and financial support, strengthen the institution's reputation and involve alumni in meaningful activities to advance the institution's mission.

Following the White Paper, a beta group of institutions was formed to refine the framework using input from representatives of CASE's global membership, including both alumni relations and advancement services professionals. That work resulted in the launch of this survey.

The CASE Global Alumni Engagement Metrics survey is designed to provide a simple and basic way of capturing various types of alumni engagement on an annual basis. These metrics can be applied across the broad range of CASE member institutions in more than 80 countries. Institutions include independent schools serving the primary and secondary sectors and colleges and universities of varying sizes and types. The inaugural version of the survey specifically only counts individuals who are engaged, without weighting or scoring various types of engagement. Our goal is to start simply and evolve the survey over time.

The survey results will:

- Measure alumni engagement, where the numerator would be the number of alumni who are uniquely engaged, in any way or a multiple of ways, divided by the number of alumni at an institution;
- Provide longitudinal data sets as surveys continue;
- Provide data to inform initiatives supporting educational advancement;
- Potentially replace other perceived measures of engagement (e.g., alumni participation);
- Enable participating institutions to measure and compare metrics across global peers and aspirational peers year-over-year;

- Help institutional leaders set goals, assess performance, build capacity, and make informed, strategic decisions regarding investments in advancement.

We suggest reading this entire document before beginning to enter data into the survey. Note that we are not collecting any constituent-level data as part of this survey.

Because this is a global survey, CASE staff have tried to frame language in this document and in the survey tool in such a way to make it globally encompassing. Please let us know if there is something that does not feel right. If you do not recognize a phrase, you might reasonably assume it is because it reflects language in a geographic region different from your own, and you can ignore it.

If you have questions about specific types of programs you have and where to count them, contact [aem@case.org](mailto:aem@case.org)

You may agree or disagree about the areas in which some engagement is categorized, or you may agree or disagree about what we have included or not included. We understand and want that feedback for future instruments. Please understand, though, that we had to start somewhere using the input of the volunteers we convened in this process.

We hope that your institution might build upon this framework to enhance its own measure of engagement, including ways that reflect the culture and history of your institution.

We know that the survey is not perfect, and you may not have all the data we seek. Also, the survey may not be comprehensive enough for some institutions' purposes. We encourage your participation even if you have only partial data or wish the survey asked for more data or data in a different way. This is a significant step forward in having an industry-wide global framework for measuring alumni engagement. All institutions will benefit from the participation of as many institutions as possible.

There is no charge for institutions to submit data using CASE's survey tool. All CASE members, as a benefit of membership, will have complimentary access to survey results using CASE's online reporting tool. This reporting tool will allow you to see your own institution's data, to see any other submitting institution's data, and to select and save a group of peers and/or aspirational peers in order to see your data aligned with others'. All participating institutions, thereby, are agreeing to share their data with other institutions; the data will not be anonymized when shared. Participating institutions agree not to share any other institution's data with third parties or in the public domain. CASE will only share aggregate anonymized information in the public domain.

Should you have any questions or comments, feel free to email [aem@case.org](mailto:aem@case.org).

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## OVERVIEW

When you or a representative from your institution completes the *CASE Global Alumni Engagement Metrics* survey online through CASE’s survey tool, the tool automatically will associate the individual completing the survey with their institution. Only one person per institution is permitted to enter data into that institution’s survey.

When you are done entering data, you should check the box that says, “We are done with the survey.”

The survey has two sections. Even if an institution cannot complete them in their entirety, it should supply as much data as possible.

The first section collects “inputs” on alumni counts in a variety of categories and information on staffing and expenditures, as well as a handful of other items.

The second section collects counts of alumni in the various modes of engagement and in combinations of modes. There are four modes of engagement as defined by the Alumni Engagement Metrics Task Force in the White Paper published by CASE in August 2018. These four, with their brief descriptions, are:

- **Philanthropic Engagement:** Financial support that is meaningful to the donor and supports the institution’s mission and strategic goals.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Formally defined and rewarding volunteer roles that are endorsed by and valued by the institution.
- **Experiential Engagement:** Meaningful experiences that inspire alumni, are valued by the institution, promote its mission, celebrate its achievements and strengthen its reputation.
- **Communication Engagement:** Interactive, meaningful, and informative communication that supports the institution’s mission, strategic goals, and reputation.

This guidance document provides definitions and descriptions of what to include in your institution’s alumni counts for each of the above modes. In addition to the online survey tool, which is where you will enter your institution’s data, we have provided a spreadsheet (samples of which are included in this document) so that you can, if you wish, first enter the data there before entering it online.

The survey doesn’t ask for any core institutional information, such as the type or location of the institution for which data is being entered, as CASE already has this data about your institution. This data will enable peer group creation in the CASE reporting tool once the survey results are released.

Note that we only are collecting data at the “institutional” level; that is, for higher education institutions, for example, we are not gathering data for individual schools, colleges, or faculties.

For all survey questions that require an input, leaving a field blank means you are skipping the question; if you enter a “zero,” that is interpreted to be an answer of “0” to the question.

In future years, we may choose to gather more granular information – the details of engagement within each of the four modes above.

For all submitted data, we seek the data as of the end of your institution’s most recent fiscal year, for that fiscal year only.

## ALUMNI DEFINITIONS

In all sections of the survey, alumni are defined and numbered as described here.

Alumni are former students of the institution. This population includes current students who previously received a credential but are currently engaged in further study-- for example, an individual who received an undergraduate degree and who is currently working on a graduate degree.

Each individual should be counted in only one category – the last level achieved.

These categories include alumni who earned a credential on premise or online.

We recognize that these definitions are different than those currently used in other CASE surveys. Our goal is to ultimately consolidate these definitions so that we have only one set of definitions across all CASE survey instruments.

We do not expect every institution to provide a count in every one of the seven categories. Only provide counts for those that are salient for your institution. For example, if you are an independent school, you may only have counts for item 1 and 4 below. If you are an undergraduate-only higher education institution, you may not have any counts for item 3 below.

1. **Associate/Diploma Degreed:**

- For higher education institutions, for geographies that award Associate’s Degrees (e.g., Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, and the US, among others) and for geographies that award Diplomas of Higher Education (e.g., the UK, among others) or a Higher National Diploma (e.g., the UK among others): Individuals who hold one or more of these types of qualifications, but no other type of qualification.
- Independent schools should count individuals who received a diploma or, if the school does not award diplomas, completed the highest level of education available at the institution.

2. **Undergraduate Degreed:** Individuals who hold one or more undergraduate degrees, but no other type of degree, diploma, or certificate.

3. **Postgraduate Degreed:** Individuals who hold one or more graduate degrees (e.g., MBA, PhD, etc.) and/or a higher diploma, but no other type of degree or certificate.

4. **Multiple Degreed:** Individuals who hold more than one associate’s, diploma, undergraduate, or other postgraduate degree. Independent schools that award diplomas should include individuals who received multiple diplomas by completing both primary and secondary education.

5. **Certificate or Award:** Individuals who received an award or credential and who are not counted in any of the preceding categories. Included in this category would be those who received a Postgraduate Certificate in Education or other professional certifications.

6. **Non-Graduates:** Individuals who completed at least one term or one semester or at least one degree-credit course with passing grades, but who are not counted in any of the preceding categories.

7. **Other:** this can include honorary graduates (e.g., the only degree from your institution is an honorary one), post-docs, visiting students—such as study abroad students—and any other individual your institution considers an alumnus/a not already counted in another category.

## SECTION 1. ALUMNI COUNTS AND INPUTS

### Alumni Counts

In this question, indicate the number of alumni in each category. Only count each individual once.

**Note About Means of Contact:** Please limit your count of contactable to individuals for whom you have one or more of the following means of contact: email, postal mail, or telephone number. A social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) contact without another method of contact is not enough to make someone contactable.

Types of alumni are defined and lettered as follows.

- A. **Living Alumni:** An individual who is not marked as deceased on your files, whether or not you have contact information. If an individual was alive at any point during the year for which data are being submitted, include that individual in the living count.
- B. **Opted Out:** An individual who is not marked as deceased, and for whom you have contact information (email, postal mail, or telephone number), but who has asked not to be contacted for any purpose, by any method. If the institution has opted-out a constituent, that individual should be also be included here. If an individual was *not* opted-out at any point during the year for which data are being submitted, do not include the person here.
- C. **Legally Contactable:** An individual who is not marked as deceased, for whom you have a means of contact, and who does not have a total (for all purposes and by all means) no contact status. Because of privacy laws, individuals may specifically need to provide opt-in consent to allow the institution to be in touch with them. In those cases, only individuals who provided such consent should be counted here as legally contactable. Another way to interpret this definition is that there is nothing that restricts you from legally contacting this person because a) you have at least one of the three means of contact, b) the person is not marked as fully opted-out, and/or c) the institution would be compliant with applicable law should it contact the individual.

Alumni Counts				
Category	Category	Living Count	Opted-Out Count	Legally Contactable Count
1	Associate/Diploma Degreed			
2	Undergraduate Degreed			
3	Postgraduate Degreed			
4	Multiple Degreed			
5	Certificate or Award			
6	Non-Graduates			
7	Other			

## Alumni Relations Inputs

These questions seek to identify the staff size and expenditures of the Alumni Relations function(s) at your institution.

### Staff

We are seeking a count of full-time equivalents (FTEs), including both salaried and hourly employees. Staff specifically identified as advancement staff (regardless of where they report) should be allocated to alumni relations on a percentage basis, based upon the work they do. For example, someone who is a full-time alumni relations staff-person should be counted as 1. Alternatively, if someone works in advancement and is split 50/50 between alumni relations and fundraising; that individual should be allocated as .5 in this calculation, regardless of whether the person actually reports to alumni relations, the central advancement office, president or vice-chancellor, dean, central advancement office, foundation, career services, or association. Individuals who are not considered advancement staff, but who may spend some time on alumni relations (such as a professor) should not be counted in this total. Temporary staff or volunteers such as student callers, individuals who help with mailings, or those who work at fundraising/alumni events should not be included.

As you calculate staff FTE, please include partial percentages. For example, a person who works for one month out of a full twelve months in alumni relations, would be counted here as 8.3% of an FTE.

### Expenditures

The measurement of alumni relations expenditures should only include the staff and non-staff direct costs involved in alumni relations activities. Thus, the costs to be included here should be the costs provided for the staff salary budget PLUS other programming and operational costs that comprise the alumni relations function. We would like you to report these costs in four buckets: staff, technology-related, alumni magazine-related, and non-technology-related.

Expenditures should appear only in one of the categories. Do not count any expenditure twice.

Report the actual expenditures incurred for the fiscal year, not the original budget. However, if you do not have the actual expenditures, provide the budget information. For the purposes of these expenditure questions, costs **exclude** the indirect costs associated with alumni relations. For example, exclude academic staff and administrative staff who may sometimes play a role in alumni relations and who are NOT included in the staff FTE calculation, the costs associated with the recruitment of students, or the promotion of the research activities of your institution.

Please use your institution's domestic currency when submitting financial information. The input fields are numeric in format and will not have a currency symbol. You will be separately asked for your domestic currency from a drop-down list of common currencies.

In the three columns for other expenditures, do NOT include staff costs.

## Input Questions

- A. **Alumni Relations Staff FTEs:** Report the number of alumni relations staff FTEs as described above.
- B. **Alumni Relations Staff FTE Expenditures:** Allocate to the FTEs reported the amount paid in salary, in proportion to the time the person spends on alumni relations. Do not include taxes or benefits, such as insurance, qualified plan contributions, or similar.
- C. **Alumni Relations Technology Expenditures:** Costs should include those for which alumni relations is directly responsible, whether they are paid directly to a vendor or paid internally to another institutional department by alumni relations for the use of a technology product. Do not calculate your own technology allocations if you do not actually incur the expense.

For example:

- if alumni relations pays vendor “x” directly for an email marketing platform, those costs should be included in this technology bucket.
- if the advancement department pays vendor “x” for an email marketing platform, and 50% of that fee is paid out of the alumni relations budget, that 50% should be included in this bucket
- if the advancement department pays vendor “x” for an email marketing platform, and no portion of it is paid for out of the alumni relations budget, you would NOT include any of the costs in this bucket.

Technology costs might include CRM platforms, mobile applications, career mentoring platforms, email marketing, or website hosting, among other things.

- D. **Alumni Magazine Expenditures:** Include direct gross costs associated with non-staff expenditures on designing, creating, digital or print publishing, and mailing alumni magazines if the alumni magazine expenses come out of the alumni relations budget. Do not include newsletters in this category (these should be captured under Non-Technology).
- E. **Non-Technology Expenditures:** Non-technology costs include newsletters, graphic design fees, outside/external consulting services, events expenses, and printing and mailing expenses (not including alumni magazines).
- F. **Dues-paying Alumni Association:** Is membership in your institutional alumni association dependent upon an individual paying dues? Only respond Yes if there is an over-arching, institutional alumni association. The count of participants in the association will be included in the Experiential mode of engagement. Do not respond Yes if you only have school/college/regionally/special interest-based dues-paying associations.
- G. **Fiscal Year End:** What date is the end of the fiscal year on which you are reporting? The online survey will ask that you provide the month in which your fiscal year ends.



H. **Currency:** What is the currency you are using for reporting purposes? The online survey will ask for the three-letter abbreviation of that currency (e.g., AUD, CAD, EUR, USD, etc.).

<b>Alumni Relations Staff FTE</b>	<b>AR Staff FTE</b>
Total Institutional alumni relations staff FTE (full time equivalent)	
<b>Alumni Relations Expenditures</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures (Domestic Currency)</b>
Alumni Relations Staff FTE Expenditures	
Alumni Relations Technology Expenditures	
Alumni Magazine Expenditures	
Alumni Relations Non-Technology Expenditures	
<b>Alumni Association - Dues paying or not?</b>	<b>Yes/No?</b>
Dues Paying-Alumni Assoc?	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>End Month</b>
Fiscal Year End Month	
<b>Reporting Currency</b>	<b>Currency Type</b>
Reporting Currency	

## SECTION 2. MODES OF ENGAGEMENT (SUMMARY)

Section 2 is a grid, with the rows representing each of the seven alumni definitions.

The first four columns (A-D) seek the unique number of individuals in each of the indicated Modes of Engagement.

The next six columns (E- J) seek the unique number of individuals in both of the two Modes as indicated. Someone must have been engaged in both the Modes in the column to be counted. For example, in Column E, count individuals who engaged both in Philanthropic and Volunteer activities, not one or the other.

The next four columns (K-N) seek the unique number of individuals in all three of the indicated Modes.

Column O seeks the unique number of individuals in ALL four of the Modes.

Finally, in Column P, count individuals who engaged in ANY of the four Modes—one or more than one. Count each person only once. This column will yield the total unduplicated number of alumni who were engaged in at least one Mode. Even if someone engaged in more than one Mode, count an individual just once in Column P.

Someone can be counted in more than one column. For example, if someone engaged in all four basic Modes, he or she would be counted in every column of that single row, as long as there is an alumni count for that row.

The following are descriptions of what you should include in each Mode for which the survey is asking for a count. You may have questions about other programs you have at your institution that are not specifically referenced here. Use your best judgement as to where to include them or, if you are not sure, feel free to contact [aem@case.org](mailto:aem@case.org).

## Philanthropic Engagement

**“Financial support that is meaningful to the donor and supports the institution’s mission and strategic goals.” (Definition from the *Alumni Engagement Metrics* white paper, August 2018)**

This should be a unique count of individuals in each alumni category who received either a legal credit, hard credit, direct contribution credit, soft credit, or recognition credit, inclusive of outright gifts and pledge payments. Soft or recognition credit philanthropic support might include a gift jointly made with someone else, or a gift made through a family foundation, a privately-held corporation, or a donor advised fund. In summary, if, in your advancement system of record, you have given an individual soft or recognition credit for a transaction, that individual should be counted here.

Each individual should be counted only once. If a single individual made more than one legal, hard, or direct contribution credit philanthropic contribution and/or received more than one recognition or soft credit, they would be counted only once.

The counts are regardless of the size and/or purpose of the philanthropic gift(s).

Specifically excluded from these counts would be:

- An individual who only made a pledge (including bequest and/or legacy pledges) in the reporting year
- Individuals whose matching gift company made a gift or for whom a Gift Aid gift was received in the reporting year against a gift made by the individual in a preceding year, unless the individual made or received separate credit contributions in the reporting year
- Deceased individuals from whose estates legacy cash has been received
- The individual sponsors of a collecting donor individual undertaking a sponsored activity such as a marathon if that is the individual’s only philanthropic support during the year

## Volunteer Engagement

**“Formally defined and rewarding volunteer roles that are endorsed by and valued by the institution.”**  
**(Definition from the *Alumni Engagement Metrics* white paper, August 2018)**

This should be a unique count of individuals in each alumni category who participated in one or more volunteer activities. Count each person only once, even if an individual participated in more than one volunteer activity.

Specifically included in this count would be individuals who participated in any of the following activities as examples:

- governing or advisory board members
- volunteer fundraisers, such as class agents/gift officers, major gift solicitation volunteers, online ambassadors
- officer (e.g., chair, deputy chair, treasurer, secretary) in a group that is endorsed by the institution
- activity/event host or organizer
- student recruitment activities
- career mentors
- public advocates
- classroom speakers
- interviewed for an alumni profile, regardless of whether that profile ultimately was published
- social media (blog, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) ‘take-over’ volunteers
- Other volunteer roles that meet the white paper definition: Formally defined and rewarding volunteer roles that are endorsed and valued by the institution and support its mission and strategic goals.

If you have volunteer programs, but have not been capturing the start and end date of when someone is a volunteer in a specific program, make your best estimate of the count for the current year for the purpose of this Mode. We suggest you begin tracking start and end dates.

You may have staff who also are alumni volunteers and that, sometimes, it is unclear as to whether a specific role they are playing is in the staff or volunteer capacity; we leave it to you to best determine how and when to count these individuals as fulfilling volunteer roles.

## Experiential Engagement

**“Meaningful experiences that inspire alumni, are valued by the institution, promote its mission, celebrate its achievements and strengthen its reputation.” (Definition from the *Alumni Engagement Metrics white paper, August 2018*)**

This should be a unique count of individuals in each alumni category who participated in at least one of the following examples of experiential activities. Currently, we are not interested in the number of events being conducted, only the number of alumni who are engaged in such events.

- Fee-Based or Free Events, such as homecoming, reunion, campus-based events, regional/club/chapter/affinity-group events, lecture series (whether in-person or virtual), career services programming (whether in-person or virtual), alumni travel programs, athletics-related events, donor recognition/stewardship events, campaign-related events (such as kickoffs or celebrations)
- Virtual Communities of the type that might be considered alumni benefits. These would include career communities, affinity group communities, book clubs, or similar. Do not include any LinkedIn or Facebook groups with non-specific/generic content
- Season Ticket Holders, such as for athletics or cultural programming. Do not count individuals who had partial-season tickets or single-event tickets
- Dues-Paying Alumni Association Memberships, for which an individual must pay dues to a centrally managed alumni association in order to be a member. Do not count if all alumni are automatically considered members without making a dues payment. If you answered Yes to the Inputs question about having a dues-paying Alumni Association, you should count members in this Mode. Life members should be included. If there is a joint and/or family membership, count each of the included individuals who are alumni. If the membership transaction is only considered a philanthropic contribution to the institution, count the individual in philanthropic engagement, not here
- Meaningful, Substantive Contact includes those alumni who have participated in meaningful or substantive calls or in-person meetings for which a contact report has been captured and recorded. Count all purposes of contact, including cultivation, solicitation, or stewardship

Homecoming and reunion events generally are comprised of many separate events. For any individual who participates in one or more of these separate events, only count them once.

Individuals who are counted as volunteers and who also participate in event roles specifically associated with those volunteer activities, should be counted in both the Volunteer mode and the Experiential mode. An example of this might be a career mentoring volunteer who also participated in an event related to career services programming.

Individuals who participated in more than one event or hold season tickets for more than one sport or cultural program should only be counted once. That is, if an individual has participated in two Fee-based Events or two Club/Chapter/Affinity Group Events, they are counted once.

While your institution may have many other Experiential programs, such as library lending privileges, that an individual took advantage of, only count those individuals involved in the programs articulated in this document. Over time, we expect this category to become inclusive and complex.

## Communication Engagement

**“Interactive, meaningful and informative communication that supports the institution’s mission, strategic goals and reputation.” (Definition from the *Alumni Engagement Metrics* white paper, August 2018)**

This should be a unique count of individuals in each alumni category who have had some type of engagement via one of the following types of communication. This is likely the most difficult category for most institutions to report about. We fully recognize that your institution may not be tracking all these types of activities. We are still interested in your institution’s information. Provide the counts you do have for alumni engaged in this Mode based upon these examples.

- Submitted class notes (regardless of whether they are submitted via postal mail or digitally)
- Submitted a form with, or some other provision of, data updates, such as address or employment information
- Responded to an alumni survey, such as for Net Promotor Score, or one that is attitudinal, or demographic
- Submitted an event evaluation form
- Wrote one or more letters to the editor of alumni magazines, newsletters, and the like
- Email responses, direct messages, social media direct messages, or phone contact that are meaningful
- Responded to a call for nominations, awards, and the like
- Made likes or comments on owned digital content (e.g., content originally posted by the institution)
- Made likes or comments on original digital content (e.g., content originally posted by someone outside the institution)
- Posted to digital groups/forums (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube channels, closed communities), regardless of whether such content is positive or negative
- Re-Tweeted “owned” content (e.g., content originally posted by the institution)
- Tweeted or re-Tweeted original tweets in which the institution is mentioned or referenced, regardless of whether such content is positive or negative
- Posted original other social media content and/or reposted original other social media content in which the institution is mentioned or referenced, regardless of whether such content is positive or negative

The Alumni Engagement Metrics survey does not consider the following as examples of ‘interactive, meaningful and informative communication that supports the institution’s mission, strategic goals and reputation.’ As such, do not count these as types of communication engagement.

- Simply subscribing to an email list or opting-in for certain content
- Simply being on a list of those who were sent an email
- Simply opening an email
- Simply clicking through an email link
- Simply belonging to a digital group/forum (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, closed communities)
- Simply having a printed publication mailed to an alumnus/a

- Simply registering for an event (e.g., filling out a paper or online form)

While your institution may have many other communication touchpoints, the Alumni Engagement Metrics survey currently only qualifies those individuals involved in the programs articulated here. Over time, we expect this category to become inclusive and complex.

Engagement Mode Data Collection Grid

		Engagement Categories															
		Counts of Unique in the Indicated Engagement Categories															
Column:		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Alumni Category		Philanthropic (P)	Volunteer (V)	Experiential (E)	Communication (C)	P and V	P and E	P and C	V and E	V and C	E and C	P and V and E	P and V and C	P and E and C	V and E and C	P and V and E and C	P or V or E or C
1	Associate/Diploma Degreed																
2	Undergraduate Degreed																
3	Postgraduate Degreed																
4	Multiple Degreed																
5	Certificate or Award																
6	Non-Graduates																
7	Other																