

Group discussion session report:

Building effective networks

What could alumni do to help the CSC?

- Apply knowledge to improve country and institution, which would lead to greater prestige for the scheme
- Spread knowledge of the scheme and encourage excellent students to apply; act as ambassadors for the scheme
- Exchange ideas with the CSC about how to improve the scheme
- Join alumni networks in-country prior to arrival in the UK, creating a stronger community
- Feedback to CSC on activities of other alumni
- Inform other people of the role of the Commonwealth
- Act as inspiration to others wanting to apply for Scholarships

What impressions did you receive from the alumni you met prior to applying?

- Resource of *Directory*, sharing publications and achievements
- Professional Networks are a means of relating to colleagues in same research areas/careers
- Ensure alumni network is kept up-to-date on details/achievements

What do alumni expect from the CSC?

- To encourage a sense of community on award – link into the new regional networks
- To help form linkages between former and new Scholars – mentoring during award, connections through British Council and nominating agencies
- In-country pre-departure receptions with alumni in attendance; annual alumni events funded by alumni themselves
- After five years, evaluation of own achievements in field, with information passed to other alumni
- Voluntary work – opportunities to get involved, pleas for help and contacts

How did you hear about Commonwealth Scholarships?

- University notices
- Former Scholars
- Nominating agencies and institutions

How can alumni become more effective stakeholders?

- Feed through more information about their countries – skills shortages, where there is need, universities' development – into selection process
- Each country to form an alumni group – annual meeting to generate feedback
- Regional networks – buddying up on arrival in UK to build community
- Building a sense of identity prior to arrival – profile sheet with all students listed
- Marketing identity – British Council to publish list of all new award holders in each country
- Completion certificate for all Scholars

