

# **2011 EAIE CONFERENCE**

**International Alumni As Talent Scouts:  
Does The Promise Hold Up To Reality?**

# DISCLAIMER

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- **The presentation shall be considered incomplete without oral clarification**
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# AGENDA

## Housekeeping

**Alumni Are Willing to Engage: Survey Evidence**

**Concepts and Practice of Alumni as Talent Scouts**

**The University of Pennsylvania Alumni Interviews**

**Perspectives on Opportunities and Risk Factors**

**Discussion**

# HOUSEKEEPING

- Around 45 minutes have been set aside for the presentation and 45 minutes for questions and general discussion
- Session participants are encouraged to share their experiences and perspectives at any time during the session
- This presentation will be available at [www.icg.ac](http://www.icg.ac) and through the EAIE website

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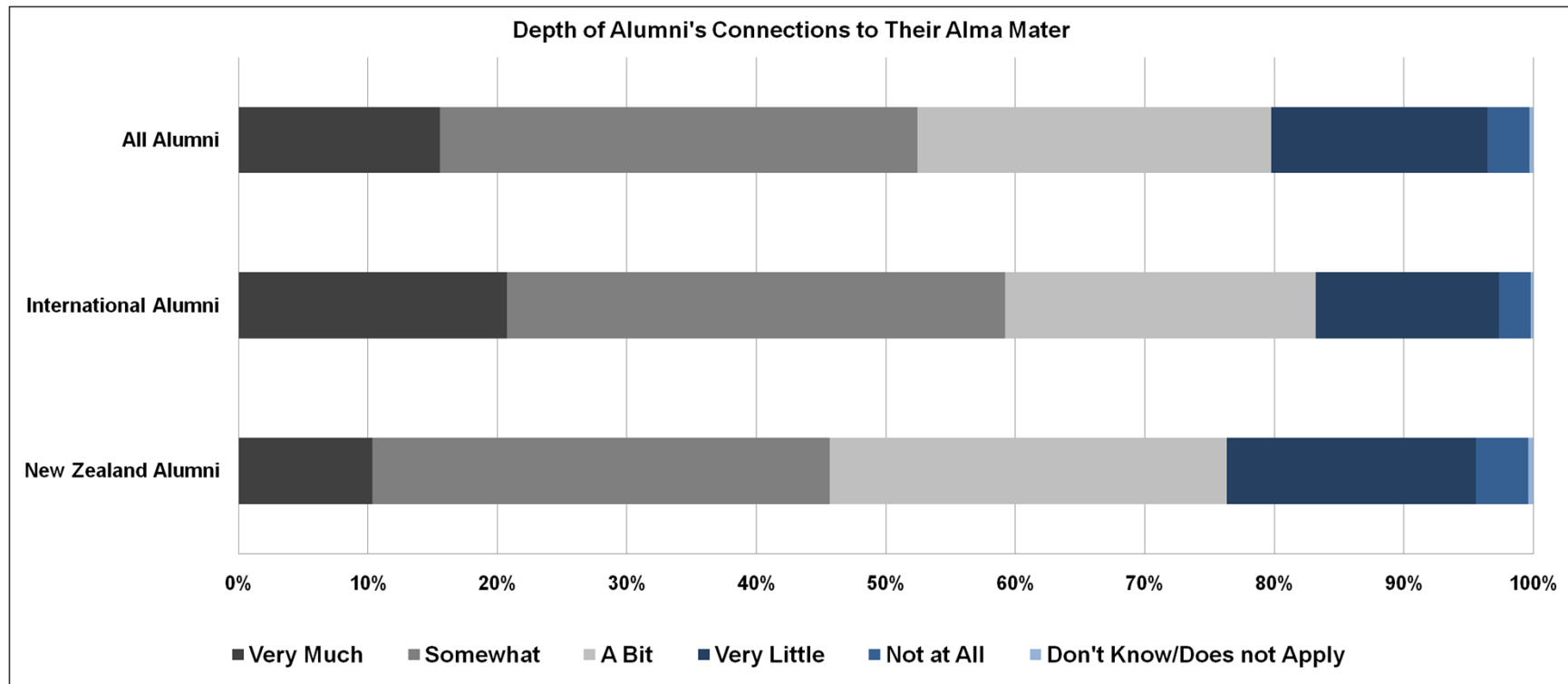
# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Alumni Are Willing To Engage: Survey Evidence (I)**

- **Evidence of alumni willingness to engage with their alma mater emerged in the New Zealand International Alumni Survey (2009)**
- **Sponsored by the New Zealand Ministry of Education**
- **Jointly executed with New Zealand's eight universities**
- **Online survey of alumni around the world (not residing in New Zealand)**
- **Four key areas investigated: Experiences, connection, communication, and engagement**
- **More than 3,400 alumni responses**
- **More than 320,000 data points**

# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni Are Willing To Engage: Survey Evidence (II)



**International alumni felt more connected than domestic alumni**

Source: New Zealand International Alumni Survey, 2009.

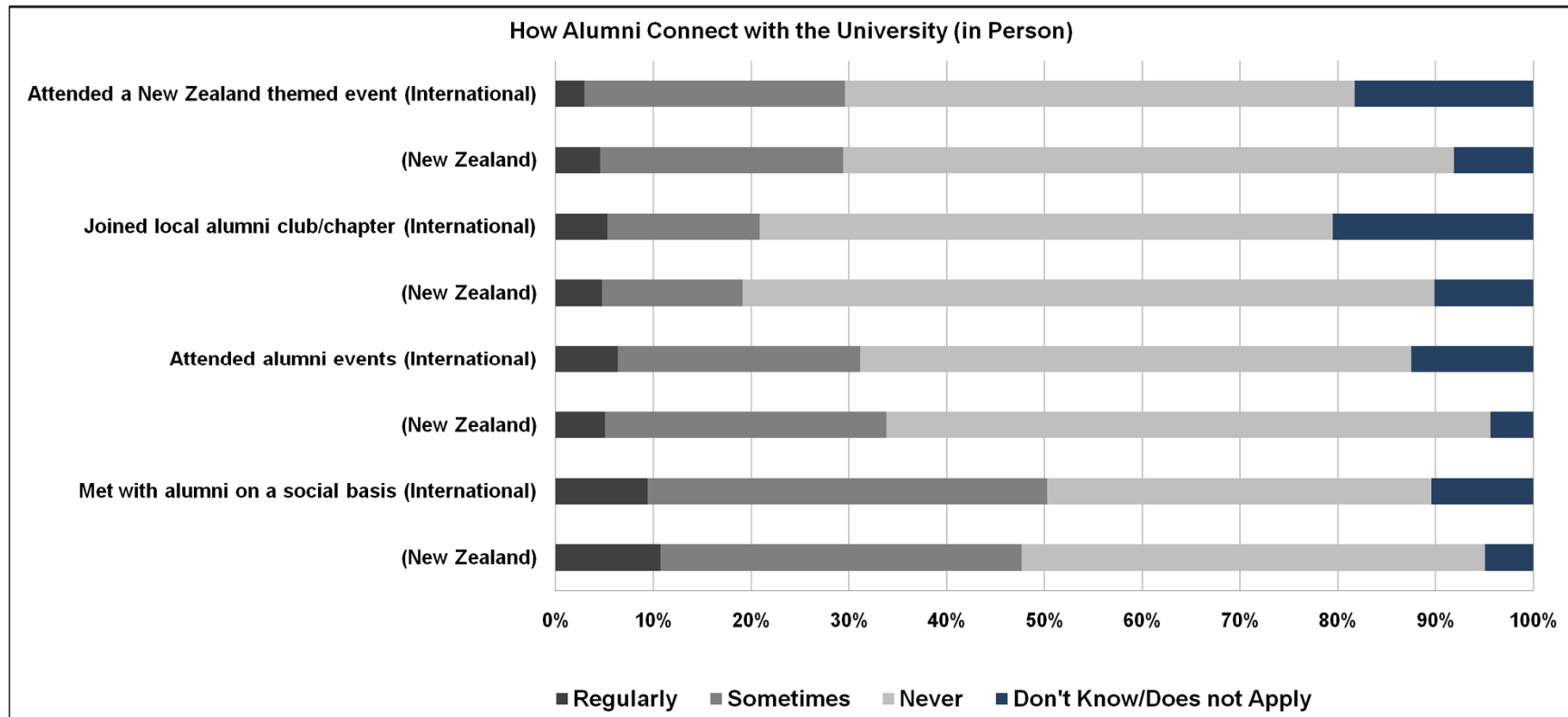
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# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni Are Willing To Engage: Survey Evidence (III)



**Social events were preferred; little differences between alumni**

Source: New Zealand International Alumni Survey, 2009.

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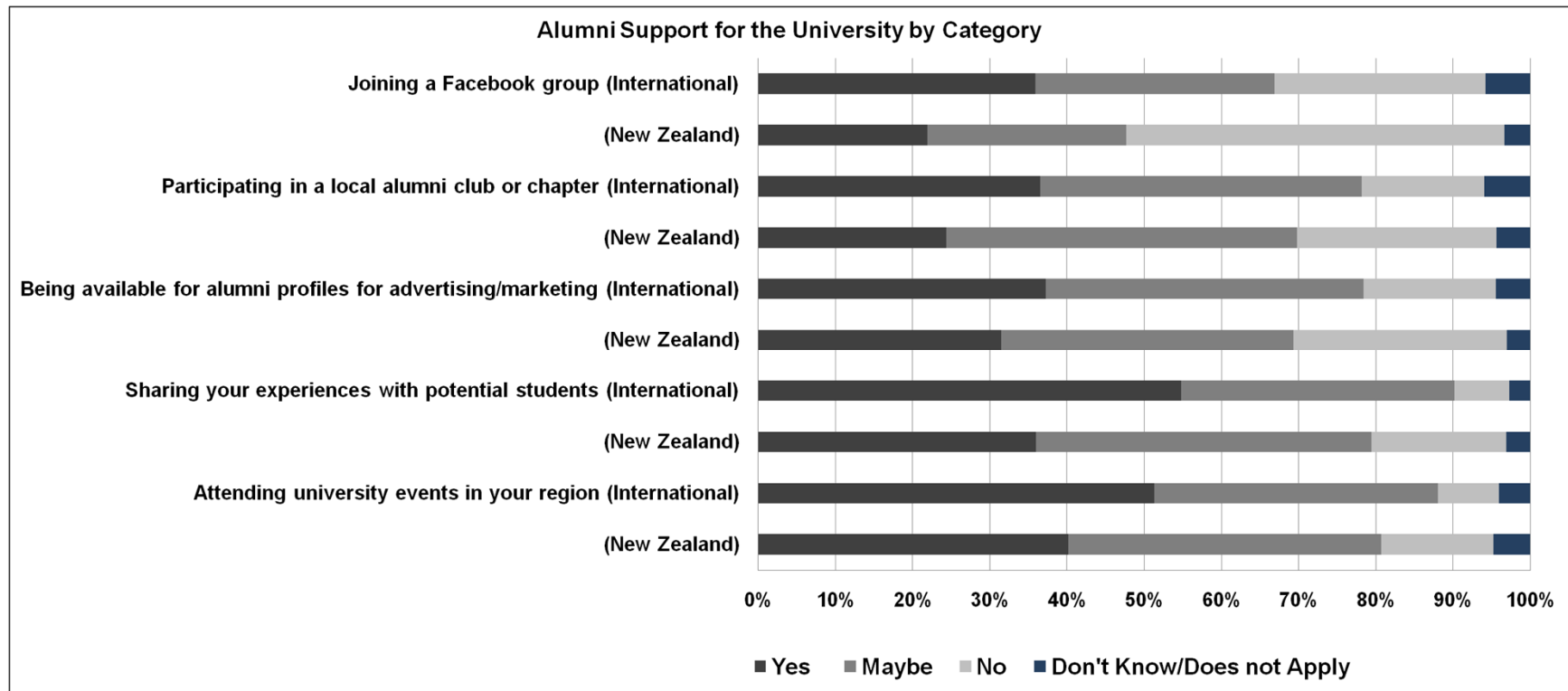
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# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni Are Willing To Engage: The Evidence (IV)



**International alumni engage notably more than domestic alumni**

Source: New Zealand International Alumni Survey, 2009.

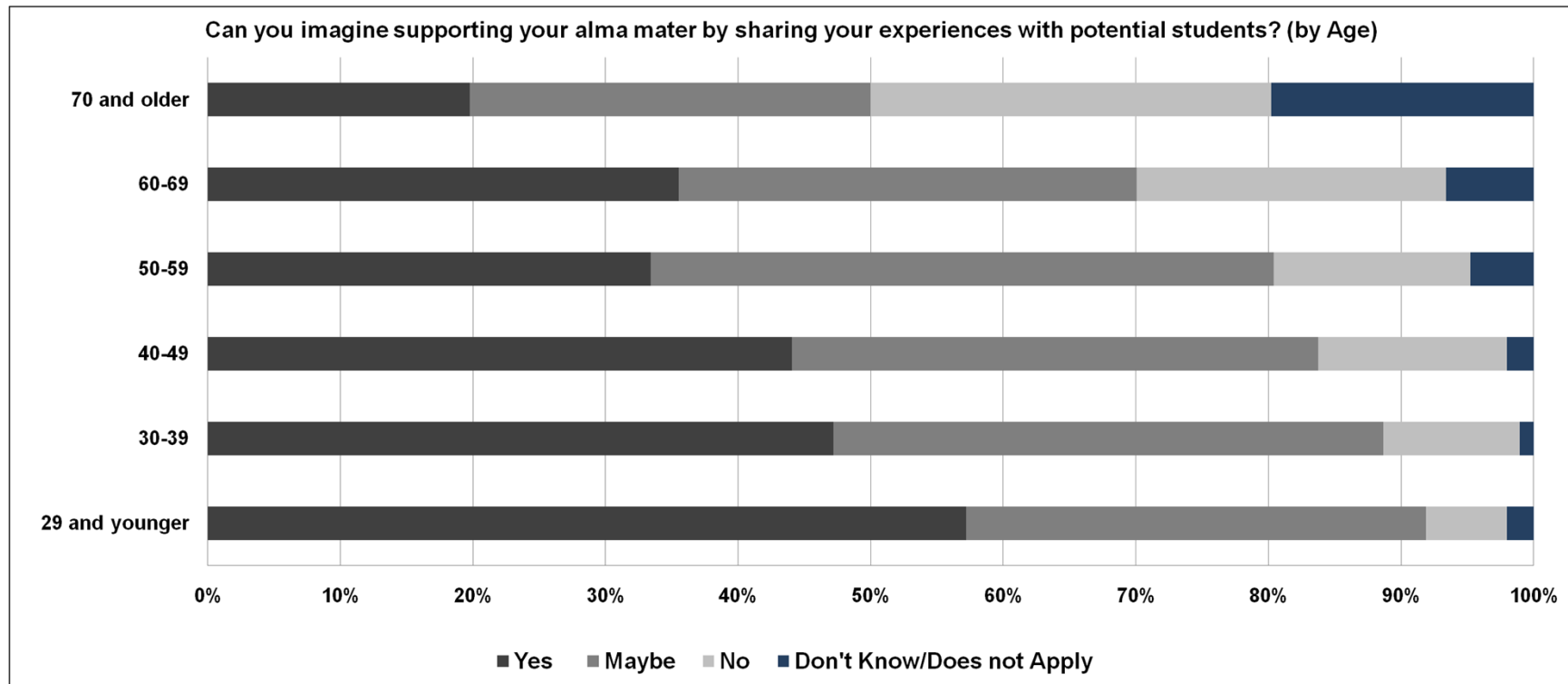
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# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni Are Willing To Engage: The Evidence (V)



**Especially younger alumni are willing to assist with recruiting efforts**

Source: New Zealand International Alumni Survey, 2009.

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# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Summary From The NZ Alumni Survey**

- **International alumni are different from domestic alumni – and often more interested / engaged / willing to support their alma mater**
- **Alumni age matters a lot (well-known life cycle issue). Younger alumni differ from older alumni along multiple dimensions**
- **Alumni behavior and expectation by faculty/department background differs somewhat, but less than other factors**
- **International alumni have clearly indicated that they are willing to support their alma mater in many different ways**
  - **Marketing**
  - **Recruiting**
  - **Events**
  - **Networking (online / offline)**

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# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Alumni As Talent Scouts: A Reality**

- **The concept of “alumni as talent scouts” is best understood if placed in the context of brand affiliation (or brand equity)**
- **At any moment, alumni state their affiliation to their alma mater and project its brand outward**
- **By virtue of being affiliated with an institution, alumni serve as talent scouts to a varying degree of intensity and awareness**
  - **In some cases, the connection is direct and voluntary, such as when alumni participate to reunions, recruitment and outreach events or conduct admissions interviews**
  - **In other cases, alumni project their affiliation by virtue of interacting within their social networks**

**Alumni are perceived as institutions' ambassadors at any time**

# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **The Concept**

- **A key function performed by alumni is contributing to the admissions process**
- **Alumni can serve in different capacities to “scout” talent among potential applicants through formal and informal channels**
- **Two practices can be identified**
  - **Institutions entrust alumni to sit (admissions) interviews with potential candidates, especially when admission officers are not available (e.g. abroad)**
  - **Alumni can also represent the institution at formal meetings, recruitment events or speak on its behalf before potential applicants**
- **Ideally, the institution would engage alumni in the recruitment and admissions process while providing a trusted source of information back to the admissions office**

**Involving alumni in this capacity should benefit alumni and applicants alike**

# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Background**

- **US colleges and universities began using alumni interviews in the 1920's and 1930's to modulate student inflows and class compositions**
- **The phenomenon of alumni interviews and informal recruitment is common among several top-ranked universities (e.g. not only Harvard, but also Yale, Stanford, Tufts, Duke) and beyond the traditional boundary of the Ivies (e.g. Tufts)**
- **The phenomenon is, as of today, centered on the USA, though it would be easily applicable to other realities abroad and to other sectors (with high engagement potential, e.g. preparatory and boarding schools)**

**US universities and colleges lead in deploying alumni as talent scouts**

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# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **UPenn's Admissions Interviews**

- **The University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) in cooperation with PennAlumni Admissions Resource Center (PAARC) organizes interviews for prospective applicants every year**
- **The interview is not mandatory but UPenn encourages applicants to sit the interview when possible**
- **International alumni across UPenn's alumni chapters run interviews in their country of origin**
- **Through its website, PAARC provides a list of FAQs targeted to both alumni and prospective students**
- **UPenn's call to participate to the interviews is propagated through formal (official website, newsletters, list serves), and informal channels, such as alumni's blogs**

**International alumni run interviews abroad in lieu of admissions officers**

# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni Interviews FAQs at UPenn

The screenshot displays the PennAlumni Admissions Resource Center website. The left sidebar contains navigation links under categories like 'advising & guidance', 'GETTING TO KNOW PENN', 'ALUMNI CONSIDERATION', 'ABOUT PAARC', and 'STAFF + AMBASSADORS'. The main content area is titled 'Frequently Asked Questions' and features a list of questions under the heading '-GENERAL PAARC INFO-'. The questions are numbered 1 through 7, covering topics such as the center's purpose, PAARC's offerings, and the application process. A search bar and social media icons are located at the bottom of the sidebar.

**PennAlumni**  
advising & guidance  
[Application Advice](#)  
[College Search](#)  
[College Preparation](#)  
[Planning Visits](#)  
[Applying to Penn](#)  
[E-Newsletters](#)  
[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**GETTING TO KNOW PENN**  
[The Penn Visit](#)  
[Attending Classes](#)  
[Reference Guide: Penn Web](#)  
[Directions + Accommodations](#)

**ALUMNI CONSIDERATION**  
[Advising Sessions](#)  
[Early vs. Regular Decision](#)  
[Admissions Statistics](#)  
[Information for Transfers](#)  
[What if Penn Says "No"?](#)

**ABOUT PAARC**  
[What is PAARC?](#)  
[Special Events](#)  
[Letter from Alumni Relations](#)  
[Advisory Board](#)  
[Staff + Contact](#)  
[Information](#)  
[Feedback & Survey](#)

**STAFF + AMBASSADORS**  
[Resources](#)  
[SSC Interviewing](#)

go to...  
[PAARC Home](#)  
[Undergraduate Admissions](#)  
[Univ. of Penn](#)  
[Alumni Relations](#)  
[Email PAARC](#)  
SEARCH

**PennAlumni Admissions Resource Center**  
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

### Frequently Asked Questions

[General PAARC Info](#) [Applying to Penn](#) [Campus Visit](#) [Interviews](#)  
[Academics at Penn](#) [Outside the Classroom](#)  
[Opinion Forum](#) [Transfer Applicants](#) [International Applicants](#)

**-GENERAL PAARC INFO-**  
[Click link to expand/collapse answer:]

1. [What is the Penn Alumni Admissions Resource Center?](#)
2. [What can PAARC offer me?](#)
3. [Can I still take advantage of PAARC's resources without coming to campus?](#)
4. [What influence does PAARC have in the application process?](#)
5. [What events does PAARC sponsor?](#)
6. [How can I get on the PAARC mailing list?](#)
7. [Does PAARC assist children of alumni who are applying to a graduate or professional school at Penn?](#)

**Alumni interviews management reaches a high degree of professionalism**

# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Alumni as Recruitment and Admissions Officers, and Mentors



Del Rapport misbrug Næste blog» Opret blog Log ind

### Chen Chow

My personal blog to highlight events/issues etc that I care about, particularly in education, youth and charity domain.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2009

#### UPenn Admission Interview for Malaysia

UPenn is calling for admission interviews for all of you in Malaysia.

I have "masked" all of the names of alumni interviews and their contact details. If you wish to contact them, do let me know, and I'll link you with them.

Their email is as follow.

-----

Dear all,

The Alumni Secondary School Committee is running admissions interviews for freshmen applicants to the University of Pennsylvania and we would like to extend an invitation to interview to everyone who applied. The interview is entirely optional. We would greatly appreciate it if you could forward this email to anyone you know who applied this year from Malaysia and cc me. We have not received the final list from Penn and want to be sure that everyone who applied gets this offer.

The main interviews will be held at the following dates and times:

Dates: Saturday, February 7 and 14  
Time: 2pm or 3.30pm  
Venue: Business Centre, Equatorial Hotel Kuala Lumpur  
Dress code: Smart casual

I would appreciate sign-up responses. Information required:

First Name, Last Name as per Penn application:  
Birthdate:  
Current school:  
Cellphone no:  
Available dates and times (indicate preference):

The format will be similar to last year's:

1. You will be scheduled for a time slot at either 2pm or 3.30pm depending on available slots and your availability. Slots are limited by the number of alumni available to interview and will be filled on a first come, first served basis.
2. We will begin interviewing applicants in each time slot in the order of sign-in at the business centre and we'll try to match applicants to alumni by school so that we can be more helpful.
3. Each interview should take about 20-30 minutes so the longest you should have to wait is an hour.

Another UPenn Alumni has also kindly agreed to take interviews in Penang on the afternoon of Jan 30th (Friday).



My Photo

#### About Me

[Chen Chow](#)  
My personal blog to share on educational/youth/ community initiatives that my blog readers/supporters share with me.  
[View my complete profile](#)

#### Facebook Badge

ChenChow Yeoh



Name:  
ChenChow Yeoh  
Email:  
chenchow@gmail.com  
Status:  
None

Create Your Badge

#### Subscribe To

Posts  
Comments

#### List of Recommended Page

Groupon Malaysia (GroupsMore)

**Alumni can serve not only as recruiters but also mentors**

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# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Opportunities For Sustainable Alumni Engagement**

- **Engaging alumni in outreach, recruitment and admissions activities may lead to a mutually beneficial situation whereby**
  - **Trust is built - Alumni are and feel integrated in the broader institution/college community and valued for their contribution beyond traditional channels (e.g. donations)**
  - **Student quality is assured - Institutions benefit from a further quality assurance mechanism in the recruitment and admissions process**
  - **New perspectives are provided - Prospective applicants gather a further perspective on their institution of choice and may make better informed enrollment decisions**

**Alumni as talent scouts may generate positive spill-over effects**

# INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS

## Risk Factors

- **Alumni dissatisfaction with their student experience may induce negative rather positive “reviews” of the institution**
- **Alumni will share their frustration within their social networks and hamper -to a certain extent- the institution’s ability to recruit in a market segment with a damaged brand profile**
- **Alumni may expect that the candidates they have interviewed/vouched for will eventually (all) be admitted and voice frustration if otherwise**
- *“Is it worth it to interview if I’m not going to have any influence on the students getting in? [...] “If it doesn’t mean much, then they should find a better way to use our time. It just kind of feels ridiculous.” (Alum)*
- *“If alums start becoming disenchanted with the process and it changes their feelings toward the university, it may end up being a bad thing for the university in the long haul, [...]” (Alum)*

**Full integration in the university operations is key success factor**

Source: Bloomberg, “Ivy League Alumni Quit Admissions Interviews as Success Slips”, 30 March 2011.

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# **INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI AS TALENT SCOUTS**

## **Discussion**

- **Does your institution use (international) alumni in any capacity?**
  - **To engage and recruit potential applicants?**
  - **To conduct admissions interview?**
  - **In any other capacity?**
- **Have you alumni demonstrated interest in representing your institution or participating in the admissions process?**
- **Are there any cultural differences in how alumni respond to your institution's request to engage with prospective students/applicants?**



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