

Developing a resilient learning community beyond graduation

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The Usher Institute

Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences

University of Edinburgh

Seven postgraduate Masters programmes
557 engaged and diverse students
94% are online students



Usher Master's Alumni Network (UMA): Learning and connecting beyond graduation



UMA activities

- Management group with students, alumni and staff
- Events and workshops aimed at transferable 'real world' skills, enhancing the student experience and transition from engaged student to alumni
- Opportunities for peer discussion and emphasis on co-creation with student-led events



Provides a global, dynamic, diverse peer network to enhance the student experience

- Between online students within different years of a three year programme
- Between current students and alumni who would otherwise not meet alumni
- Between students and alumni across Usher programmes
- Between staff and alumni, breaking down hierarchies



Offers learning beyond graduation

Events and workshops aimed at transferable skills

- Applying for a PhD
- Publishing a paper
- Collaboration and networking
- Imposter phenomenon




Developing professional skills beyond graduation

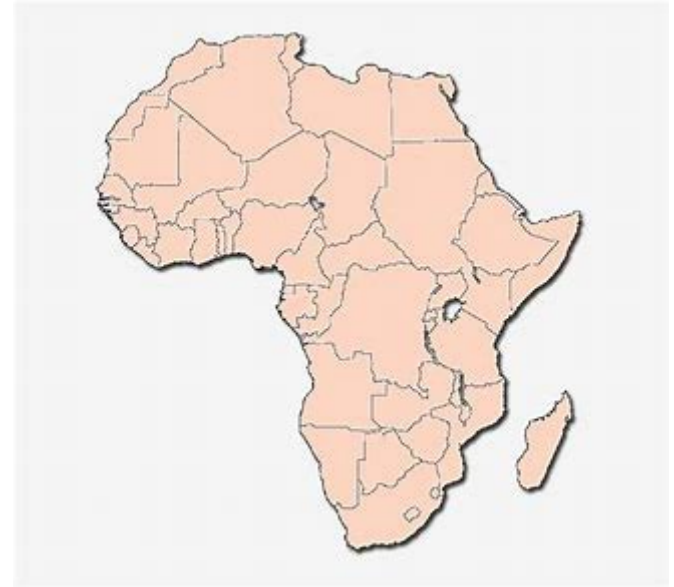
- A lifelong network where students continue to feel connected to, and part of, Edinburgh
- Continued professional skills development
- Several alumni members return to teach with us



Challenges encountered so far

- Flattening of student/staff hierarchy
 - Reliance on staff
 - Equity of workload
 - Time investment
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A first regional hub UMA Africa



- Mentorship for online students by alumni, highlighting career opportunities
- Guiding new online students from Africa to smooth the transition into Edinburgh expectations

Thank you for listening

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