hivebrite

Case study

iac Berlin builds collaborative alumni network to help solve complex global challenges

The Do and Think tank partnered with Hivebrite to create a vibrant, impact-oriented network.

iac Berlin

Key facts

More than 8,000 activated profiles in 5 years.

Increase in member-driven projects from 35% to 90% in 5 years.

Strengthened relationships between members and the organization's mission.

Meet the customer

iac Berlin was created by the foundation, Robert Bosch Stiftung, as a Do and Think Tank to support the development of impact-oriented networks and coordinate the Bosch Alumni Network. It partners with foundations, academia, public institutions, and non-profit organizations; advises on alumni work; develops practical solutions for the design of impact-oriented networks; and initiates new forms of collaboration.

The challenge

The world is changing rapidly while facing complex and interconnected challenges— ranging from inequality and social division to threats to democracy, migration, and climate change.

Robert Bosch Stiftung and iac Berlin fundamentally believe in the power of collaboration to solve such complex challenges. The Bosch Alumni Network was created to unite and connect Robert Bosch Stiftung's former and current fellows, grantees, and staff members and drive collaborations.

The solution

iac Berlin chose Hivebrite to power the Bosch Alumni Network as a decentralized, GDPR-conform network. The Bosch Alumni Network is designed as a global community that tackles societal and environmental challenges to create and inspire equal and sustainable ways of living and working together.

The network connects members with shared interests and different backgrounds to foster cross-sectoral exchanges and international collaborations.

It is structured around specific groups reflecting the foundation's programs and the strong ties between members that experienced programs together, as well as around thematic fields and regions. These groups are driven and coordinated by members, not the Coordination Team.

Next to the groups, the member directory and interactive map are central, go-to areas for members to find like-minded people. Members use the platform to organize events and create project pages detailing their initiatives to source support and drive impact.
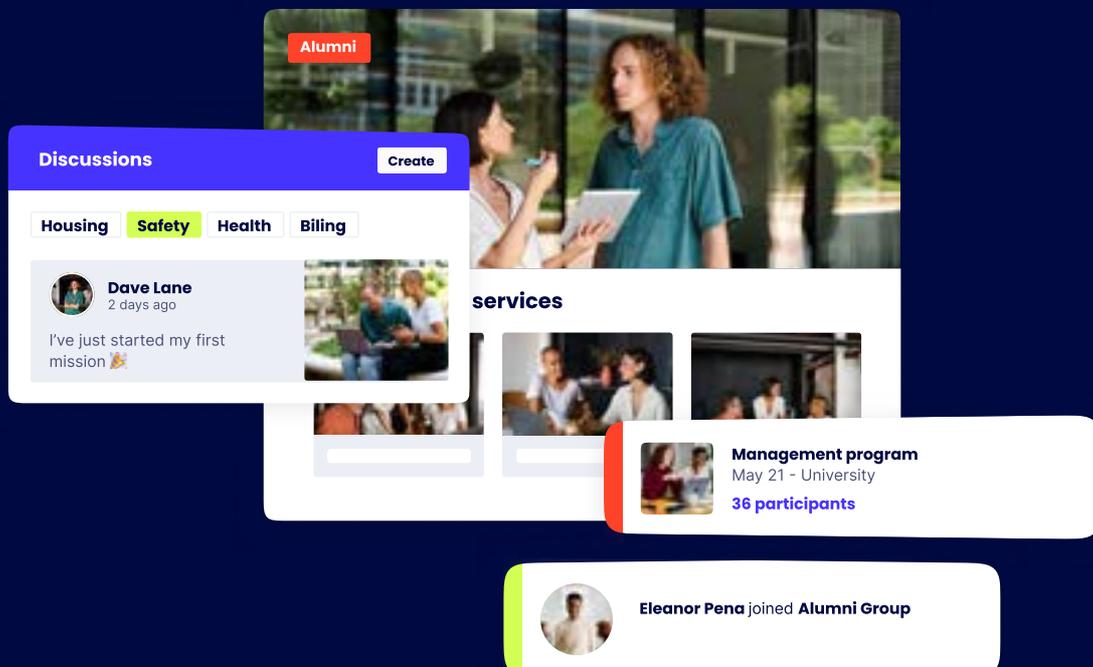
The outcome

Five years after its creation, the network now connects more than 8,000 diverse members from over 140 countries and more than 100 Robert Bosch Stiftung programs.

Together, members create positive social impact on various levels and support each other in working on societal challenges close to their hearts and homes.

Members drive and co-own the network in a way that has supported the development from a classical "hub and spoke" structure to a network of vibrant communities.
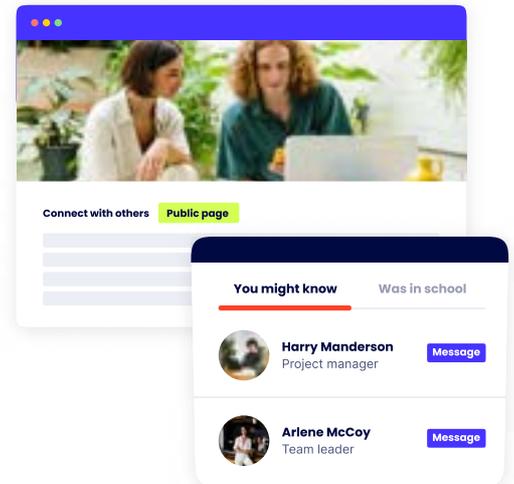
" The iac Berlin started with a set of alumni names and addresses. By connecting the alumni on the Bosch Alumni Network platform and engaging them with the different features, we have co-created a vibrant hub for projects, cooperation, support, and much more.

We don't measure the success of the Bosch Alumni Network by numerical metrics alone but put high emphasis on qualitative data and success stories from the network. For example, we see members increasingly assuming ownership of the network and thus creating an environment of creativity and cooperation. Several initiatives started on the platform have attracted media attention or have been featured on high-profile panel discussions.

The growing ownership of the network correlates with the percentage of member-organized projects on the platform that has risen from 35% in 2017 to over 90% since 2020—and shows no sign of slowing down. "

Tobias Gerber
Head of Communications and Community Management,
iac Berlin