



Massachusetts Promise Fellowship

2021-2022 Host Site RFP Instructions

Intent to Apply Deadline: January 13th, 2021

Proposal Deadline: January 29th, 2021 at 5pm

Visit www.masspromisefellows.org for information on attending an RFP info session and click here to view [submission portal](#).

Information Sessions will be held on December 7th, December 17th, January 4th & January 13th.

Contributing Partners:

Northeastern University
Massachusetts Service Alliance
AmeriCorps

Part 1- Overview, Eligibility, Benefits, & Requirements

Program Overview

MPF believes all young people have a right to the resources they need to be successful and delivers related interventions in Out of School Time (OST) settings to increase academic engagement- a key factor in dropout prevention. Through research-based interventions and a foundation rooted in the dropout prevention work of America's Promise Alliance, MPF supports schools, city agencies, and community organizations to help youth reach their full potential. The Massachusetts Promise Fellowship places AmeriCorps members at host organizations with an intended outcome of increasing academic engagement through two primary focus areas: academic enrichment and college and career exploration.

Annually, MPF applies for funding from AmeriCorps for Fellow positions. Once received, these positions are awarded to host sites across the Commonwealth following a competitive review process. This year we plan to host 40 AmeriCorps members and anticipate receiving final notification of our federal funding in late May 2021.

Supporters

MPF receives fiscal, in-kind, and technical support from the following partners:

- **The Massachusetts Service Alliance** established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the state commission on community service and volunteerism. Its mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact.
- **AmeriCorps (formally known as CNCS)** established in 1993, AmeriCorps is a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service. As the nation's largest grant maker for service and volunteering, AmeriCorps plays a critical role in strengthening America's nonprofit sector and addressing our nation's challenges through service.
- **Northeastern University** has hosted the Fellowship since March of 2000. The Fellowship is part of the Office of City and Community Engagement. In addition, Northeastern University:
 - Serves as the fiscal agent for the Fellowship
 - Provides in-kind office space and administrative support to the Fellowship
 - Allows the Fellows to enroll in a select number of tuition-free courses at Northeastern University through a partnership with the College of Professional Studies
 - Provides a 25% discount on courses in the College of Professional Studies for host site supervisors and MPF Alumni

Eligibility

To be eligible, your organization must:

- Be a non-profit 501 (c)3 organization, school, or government agency operating in Massachusetts
- Be operational for at least one year with at least one full-time staff member and the capacity to host a Fellow

Partnership Benefits

The Massachusetts Promise Fellowship is committed to the success of each Fellow and their host site. As our contribution to the partnership with the host site, we provide:

- A full-time Fellow (~40 hours/week) for 11 months, August-June (hired in partnership between the program and host site)

- In-service Fellow leadership training and retreats focused on project implementation and evaluation, youth development, and social justice adding +170 hours of professional development and networking opportunities
- Orientation and ongoing training for the host site and Fellow Supervisor
- 25% discount on undergraduate and graduate courses at Northeastern University's College of Professional Studies (CPS) for Fellow Supervisors (September 2021-June 2022)
- Site visits held with site supervisors and Fellows to address host site needs and evaluate Fellow progress
- An opportunity to network and share resources with other youth-serving organizations throughout the Commonwealth
- Administration of Fellow benefits: \$17,750 annual stipend administered bi-weekly, \$6,345 post-service education award, healthcare reimbursement, training opportunities, free coursework at Northeastern University's College of Professional Studies (CPS), 25% discount on CPS courses for up to 7 years following program graduation, loan forbearance, and \$60 monthly travel/virtual allowance by reimbursement

Host Site Partner Requirements

1. Cash Match

- We ask each host site organization to invest in the partnership by providing a **non-federal** cash match. The match covers a portion of the total cost of the Fellowship position at your host site, such as training, travel, benefits, and living allowance. The amount of the cash match is based on the *organization's total operating budget*, including salaries, funds distributed as grants, and any other operating costs. All accepted host site partners are required to submit a \$500 non-refundable deposit towards their cash match with their cooperative agreement by May 7th, 2021.
- Host organizations pay between \$10,800 and \$16,000 of the \$37,500 total cost per Fellow for 11 months of full-time service. The amount your organization pays can be determined by reviewing your most recent organizational audit or referencing your most recent IRS Form 990. Please note if you are a department within a large organization/government agency, we are looking for the budget of the entire organization. Please use the following table to determine the appropriate match:

Total Operating Budget	Host Site Match Per Fellow
\$300,000 or less	\$10,800
\$300,001-\$500,000	\$12,500
\$500,001-\$1,000,000	\$14,200
\$1,000,001+	\$16,000

If the cost-match requirement is a major barrier to your organization's potential to host a Fellow, please contact MPF Director, Lauren Currie at l.currie@northeastern.edu to discuss potential options.

***Scholarship Opportunity for Northeastern University Partners**

This year, Northeastern University will be awarding scholarships of up to \$3,000 to organizations affiliated with the University (internal program, housed at the University, etc.) or located in the Boston neighborhoods of Mission Hill, Roxbury, South End, The Fenway, or Burlington, Dedham, or Nahant. This scholarship is sponsored by the University's City & Community Affairs Division. See page 10 instructions on how to apply for the scholarship.

2. Organizational Commitment

- Organizational infrastructure with all resources necessary for a Fellow to run a successful youth program as soon as they begin their service year.
- A clear vision of the project you plan to implement, communicating how the Fellow will be effectively utilized to decrease school dropout and increase academic engagement
- Supportive leadership from staff and host site to ensure that the Fellow is considered, treated, and respected as an integral part of the organization.

- Selecting a site staff member to lead the hiring and recruitment process by posting the Fellow position, serving as a point of contact for Fellow applicants, and selecting a finalist in accordance with MPF deadlines.

3. Fellow Support

- One designated host site supervisor who will provide weekly supervision, daily support, and attend three mandatory meetings
- Adequate workspace for the Fellow, including access to a desk, phone, computer, office supplies, and required databases and online systems
- Reimbursement for travel costs incurred as part of Fellow's service for the host site (Note that other Fellowship related travel is paid for by MPF)
- Commitment to Fellow attendance at all mandatory MPF meetings and retreats away from host site service
- Investment in the professional development of the Fellow through ongoing coaching, mentoring, feedback, and support

4. MPF Reporting

- Host Site
 - Approval of Fellow timesheets within a strict 48-hour timeframe
 - Completion of an end-of-year survey assessing program satisfaction and Fellow impact
 - Completion of mid-year and end-of-year performance assessments of the Fellow (to be completed by the Fellow and Supervisor)
- Fellow with Host Site Support
 - Tracking the academic engagement of a minimum of 15 youth throughout the school year through completion of pre- and post-surveys
 - Conduct a focus group with a small group of randomly selected youth to complement the data collected from pre- and post-surveys
 - Monthly youth attendance tracking at the program and completion of monthly accomplishment reports

Part 2- Fellow Project Design

Project Requirements

- Meet the criteria of one of MPF's focus areas and utilize strategies **to increase youth academic engagement** (see below)
 - Be primarily focused on providing direct service to young people
 - Take place in an Out-of-School time setting
 - Meet a defined community need that can be addressed by one of MPF's project focus areas
 - Have a strong element of project ownership for the Fellow/s. This means Fellows are program or project leaders rather than participants or assistants.
 - Provide the Fellow with the opportunity to meet with young people a minimum of 5 hours/week throughout the academic year **for a total of 150 hours of programming**
 - Serve the **same group** of 15+ young people in grades 6-12 for an entire academic year
 - Include a comprehensive strategy for recruiting and retaining youth participants
 - Comply with AmeriCorps policies and prohibited activities

Priority will be given to projects that are fully able to meet requirements.

MPF Project Focus Areas

Although your project may address one or both Focus Areas, please select the one where the Fellow will spend most of their time and describe all activities in the proposal. **All proposals must strongly demonstrate how projects will decrease youth school dropout rates and increase academic success. MPF defines academic engagement by youth self-reported program experience and their improved cognitive and emotional attitudes towards school.**

Focus Areas: Academic Enrichment or College & Career Exploration

All Fellows are expected to serve as a mentor to the same group of 15+ youth for a full academic year in addition to leading a project in one of the focus areas below.

- **Academic Enrichment:** *Supplemental learning opportunities that advance student subject mastery and provide students with access to a well-rounded education, enrichment activities, and supportive attainment of academic and professional goals*
 - ❖ Fellows will develop and lead academic enrichment activities in the Out-of-School Time setting, meeting **at least three of the five outlined Academic Enrichment Objectives:**
 - Provide tailored homework and academic support (individualized coaching sessions and/or group tutoring)
 - Lead a combination of academic enrichment and/or recreational activities throughout the school year
 - Particularly in areas related to subject mastery in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) and English Language Learning (ELL) education
 - Promote and lead workshops on student collaboration, teambuilding, goal setting, academic study skills, and leadership development
 - Reinforce education as a pathway to future success
 - Engage with families, community members, and teachers to ensure activities meet community and academic needs
- **College & Career Exploration:** *Access and exposure to college pathways, career opportunities, and the resources necessary to build skills for student achievement after high school graduation*
 - ❖ Fellows will deliver college and career programming in the Out-of-School Time setting, meeting **at least three of the five outlined College & Career Exploration Objectives:**
 - Lead youth through the college process including but not limited to: the college application process, essay support, college tours, financial aid, decision making, scholarships, introduction to college success
 - Share alternatives to college and support youth applications to alternative programs
 - Engage in one-on-one and/or group college and career advising
 - Provide exposure to various career pathways through panels, field trips, activities, informational interviews, etc.
 - Implement skill-based trainings to support youth in the workforce including resume workshops, job searching, interviewing, networking, and goal setting

Prohibited Activities

Fellows/Fellow projects **cannot:**

- **Displace a current employee or serve in a regular staff position**

- o Be involved with political advocacy, religious instruction, voter registration, fundraising for host site match/operating expenses, writing federal grants, union organizing, or clerical activities. (Fellows can perform limited administrative and fundraising duties that directly support their project)
- o Sign off on a grant
- o Serve as an assistant (Fellows must have ownership over an entire program or part of a project)
- o Supervise other AmeriCorps members

Part 3-Program Timeline & Selection Process

Timeline

January 13th, 2021-Intent to apply due (not required, but strongly recommended-[Linked Here.](#)

January 29th, 2021 at 5pm- Applications due

March 5th, 2021 - Fellowship host sites are selected and notified

March 2021 – June 2021 - MPF will work with host sites to recruit and hire a Fellow by June 15th

May 7th, 2021- Cooperative Agreement Due

August 16th, 2021 – Fellows slated to begin service at host site organizations

Host Site Selection Process

All proposals are reviewed by a panel of community reviewers that recommend host site organizations for funding. Final decisions are made by the program staff and advisory board. Key elements include:

- o Project alignment with MPF's focus areas (meeting at least 3 out of the 5 focus area objectives) and requirements of utilizing Out-of-School Time programs to support youth academic engagement
- o Ability to recruit and retain a minimum of 15 consistent youth who will receive 150 hours of programming from August-June
- o Organizational capacity to develop and manage the project and Fellow
- o Commitment to supporting the development of a new professional
- o Realistic project objectives with measurable outcomes
- o Demonstrated community and organizational need for the project
- o Proper support, supervision, and training for the Fellow during the year of service
- o Strong element of project ownership
- o Demonstrated compliance with MPF requirements and strong description of Fellow impact (for returning sites)
- o Recognition of partnership accomplishments and areas of growth (for returning sites)
- o Each section of the narrative is weighted using the following breakdown:
 - o Organization Background (15%)
 - o Project Design (50%)
 - o Fellow Support (35%)

Part 4-Application Instructions

This year renew proposals and new proposals will have separate instructions. Please see below to determine which proposal type you qualify as:

New Site Applicants include organizations, agencies, and schools whom:

- o Have never hosted a Mass Promise Fellow
 - o Have hosted a Mass Promise Fellow **before** the 2020-2021 cohort year

- Were granted a Fellow in 2020-2021 but the Fellow did not complete the year of service

Returning Site Applicants include organizations, agencies, and schools whom:

- Are currently hosting a Fellow in the 2020-2021 cohort year

Follow these instructions for proposal submission:

Step 1: Determine if you are a new or returning proposal applicant.

Step 2: Review the relevant questions below and complete your responses in a Word/Google doc. * If you are applying for more than one Fellow to work on different projects, complete a full separate application submission for each Fellow project, as each application will be reviewed separately.

Step 3: Complete the service description template (download [here](#)) and save as a PDF. This document will be uploaded to the submission portal when prompted.

Step 4: Transfer your responses into the [submission portal](#) by **January 29th, 2021 at 5pm**

Narrative Questions

SECTION I- Organization Background & Need (15%)

Organization Background

Provide a clear and concise description of your organization and your organization's interest in hosting a Fellow by answering the following:

- **New Applicants:**
 - How would hosting a Mass Promise Fellow align with the organization's mission and goals? (2,000 characters)
 - Why is the organization a good fit for a Fellow and what program infrastructure exists to ensure a Fellow will be successful? (2,000 characters)
- **Returning Applicants:**
 - How has hosting a Fellow impacted the young people served by the organization? Please include data to support this impact if available. (2,000 characters)
 - What major accomplishments and challenges have you experienced as an organization hosting a Mass Promise Fellow? (1,500 characters)

Organizational & Community Need

Please explain the need that you have identified:

- **New Applicants:**
 - How would this position target an identified need in your organization? (1,500 characters)
 - Describe the youth in grades 6-12 that you hope to reach through this project, including details regarding school performance data, demographics, and any additional information that will clarify why you need a Fellow in your community. (2,000 characters)

- **Returning Applicants:**

- *Do not need to complete this section, unless there are significant changes from the previous year's grant.*

SECTION II- Project Design (50%)

Project Service Description (Required for All Applicants)

Please complete the service description template (download [here](#)), including a short description of the project, focus area, specific responsibilities, and candidate requirements (1 page).

Project Background

It is important for reviewers to have a clear idea of what the Fellow will be doing. Please include the following in your answers:

- **New Applicants:**

- What is the project's focus area (academic enrichment or college and career exploration) and what MPF focus area objectives will the project meet? *(Must select a minimum of three)*
- What are the intended outcomes of the project as they relate to MPF's goal of increasing academic engagement and on time graduation? *(2,000 characters)*
- Describe the service activities the Fellow will perform. Please highlight how the Fellow will implement the selected MPF focus area objectives. *(2,500 characters.)*
- What strategies will be implemented to support the Fellow in recruiting and retaining a minimum of 15 consistent youth? *(1,500 characters)*
- How will the Fellow be supported to achieve approximately 150 hours of programming per youth for the service term? *(1,500 characters)*
- Describe how the Fellow role will differ from a full-time staff position. *(1,000 characters)*
- How will the Fellow project be adapted if COVID-19 restrictions remain in effect for 2021-2022? *(1,500 characters)*

- **Returning Applicants:**

- What is the project's focus area (academic enrichment or college and career exploration) and what MPF focus area objectives will the project meet? *(must select a minimum of three)*
- Restate the Fellow project outcomes as they relate to MPF's goal of increasing academic engagement and on time graduation. Have the stated goals changed or adapted from the previous year? If so, why and how? *(2,000 characters)*
- Describe the service activities the Fellow will perform. Please highlight how the Fellow will implement the selected MPF focus area objectives. *(2,500 characters.)*
- What challenges, if any, did your Fellow face regarding youth retention and/or youth consistency in the program (reaching 150 hours of meaningful interactions with 15+ youth)? What changes do you intend to implement in order to address challenges? *(1,500 characters)*
- Describe how the Fellow role will differ from a full-time staff position. *(1,000 characters)*
- What are some opportunities and challenges that COVID-19 presented for the Fellow project? How are you prepared to adapt in 2021-2022? *(1,500 characters)*

Project Timeline & Fellow Schedule

In order to recognize the full scope of the project, please:

- **Required for All Applicants:**

- Describe the Fellow's weekly schedule and a quarterly timeline illustrating how the Fellow will serve for a minimum of 40 hours/week to reach 1700 hours in 11 months. The Fellow should be working with a consistent group of **at least** 15 young people for 5 hours a week by mid-October 2021 and on track to deliver 150 hours of programming to the same group by June 2022. *Applicants may upload a graphic or chart if preferred. (2000 characters)

Project Vision

Describe the sustainability of the Fellow project and include answers to the following questions:

- **New Applicants:**
 - How will the Fellow build capacity for the project/program? How will they leave a lasting impact on youth, so they succeed in high school and beyond? (1,500 characters)
- **Returning Applicants:**
 - How do you plan to expand, improve, and/or sustain the current project? (1,000 characters)

SECTION III- Fellow Support (35%)

Fellow Training & Supervision

- **New Applicants**
 - Who will be the Fellow supervisor? How will the Fellow be supported? (NOTE: we require Fellow supervisors to meet with Fellows weekly and provide support daily. Each site may only have **one** designated supervisor) (1,000 characters)
 - How will the Fellow be supported in keeping up with their MPF responsibilities, such as data tracking or attending meetings? (1,000 characters)
 - How will the Fellow be oriented to the organization? What additional site-specific training and professional development will be provided? (2,000 characters)
 - How will supported be provided if the Fellow has limited to no work experience? (1,000 characters)
 - Please share the name and contact information of whom will manage Fellow recruitment from the host organization.
 - MPF Recruitment requires host organizations to play a major role in advertising, outreach, and engagement in timely interviewing. What is the organizational plan to recruit the Fellow and what are five different strategies you intend to implement? (2,000 characters)
- **Returning Applicants:**
 - How has the Fellow's personal and professional growth been supported this year? What have you learned that will be applied if granted another Fellow in 2021-2022? (2,000 characters).
 - How has the Fellow been supported in staying on track and on time with their MPF responsibilities (ex. data tracking, attending meetings, etc.)? Identify areas for growth or improvement. (1,500 characters)
 - Please share the name and contact information of whom will manage Fellow recruitment from your host organization.
 - MPF Recruitment requires host organizations to play a major role in advertising, outreach, and engagement in timely interviewing. What is the organizational plan to recruit the Fellow and what are five different strategies you intend to implement? If you struggled with recruitment this year, what changes do you intend to make? (2,500 characters)
 - What is the Fellow host site onboarding plan, accounting for if the Fellow has limited to no work experience? What additional site-specific training or professional development will be provided? (2,000 characters).

***Scholarship Opportunity for Northeastern University Partners**

If you are an organization affiliated with Northeastern University (internal program, housed at the University, etc.) or located in the University Boston neighborhoods of Mission Hill, Roxbury, South End, The Fenway, or Burlington, Dedham, or Nahant, you are eligible to apply for a scholarship to be deducted from your host site match payment. To apply, please attach a letter to your application (included at the end of the submission portal) indicating how your proposal will meet the needs of your community, how you are already engaging with the University, and how you plan to increase this engagement. A select number of scholarships of up to \$3,000 will be awarded to partner organizations and criteria will be based on strength of proposal, compelling need, and illustrated opportunity to deepen engagement with the University.

Submission:

Applications should be submitted by January 29th at 5pm via the [submission portal](#). Information sessions will be held in December and January. Please visit www.masspromisefellows.org for details.

The Fellowship is an Equal Opportunity Employer, part of the AmeriCorps national service network, and required by law to comply with the AmeriCorps Provisions under guidance of the Massachusetts Service Alliance. This RFP can also be found at www.masspromisefellows.org and in alternative formats by request.