



## **Massachusetts Promise Fellowship**

### **2019 - 2020 Host Site RFP Instructions**

Intent to Apply Deadline: January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Proposal Deadline: February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 5pm

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

Sessions will be held on December 19<sup>th</sup>, January 8<sup>th</sup>, and January 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Contributing Partners:**

Northeastern University

Massachusetts Service Alliance

The Corporation for National and Community Service



**Northeastern University**



## Part 1- Overview, Eligibility, Benefits, & Requirements

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### Program Overview

The AmeriCorps Massachusetts Promise Fellowship (MPF) at Northeastern University grew from the America's Promise Alliance, a collaborative network based on "5 Promises" that form the conditions youth need to succeed: Caring Adults, Safe Spaces, A Healthy Start, An Effective Education, and Opportunities to Serve. America's Promise is a thought leader in dropout prevention, closing the opportunity gap, and supporting young people beyond high school. They have disseminated research on the 5 Promises as effective interventions to support young people in graduating from high school and moving on to college and careers. MPF believes all young people in Massachusetts have a right to these Promises and delivers related interventions in Out of School Time (OST) settings to increase youth academic engagement – a key factor in dropout prevention – as defined by an improvement in youth-reported attitudes towards school and future aspirations. Through the Promises and research-based academic engagement interventions, MPF supports schools, city agencies, and community-based organizations in the effort to help youth reach their full potential. Fellows lead academic enrichment and college and career exploration projects for at these host sites a year of service.

Each year, the program applies for funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service for AmeriCorps 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 2019.

MPF is hosted by Northeastern University's Center of Community Service and supported by the Massachusetts Service Alliance and the Corporation for National & Community Service.

### 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.
- **The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)** established in 1993, CNCS is a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its core programs -- Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund. As the nation's largest grant maker for service and volunteering, CNCS 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 Center of Community Service and falls under the guidance of City & Community Affairs. 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 hrs/week) for eleven months, August-June (hired in partnership between the program and host site)

- In-service leadership training focused on project implementation and evaluation, youth development, and regular retreats and monthly meetings for the Fellow, including over 170 hours of professional development as well as networking opportunities
- Access to the AmeriCorps national service network and associated training and conferences
- Orientation and 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 (August 2019-June 2020)
- Opportunities for youth affiliated with host sites to attend workshops and volunteer events hosted by MPF
- Site visits to address host site needs and evaluate Fellow progress and project goals
- An opportunity to network and share resources with other youth-serving organizations throughout the Commonwealth
- Administration of Fellow benefits: \$15,500 annual stipend administered bi-weekly, \$6,095 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 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 (training, travel, benefits, and living allowance) at your host site. 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 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
- Host organizations pay between \$10,800 and \$16,000 for a full-time Fellow that will serve a minimum of 1,700 hours over their 11-month term of service (whereas our total cost/Fellow is \$37,000). 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:

<b>Total operating budget</b>	<b>Host Site Match/Fellow</b>
\$300,000 or less	\$10,800
\$300,001-\$500,000	\$12,500
\$500,001-\$1,000,000	\$14,200
\$1,000,001+	\$16,000

**2. Organizational Commitment**

- A clear vision of the project you plan to implement and 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 and treated as an integral part of the organization
- Leading the hiring and recruitment process by posting the Fellow position, serving as the first point of contact for Fellow applicants, and selecting a Fellow finalist/s in accordance with MPF deadlines
- Completion of a criminal background check of your Fellow in both Massachusetts and their state of residence at the time of their application and submitting a letter verifying the completed process to the Fellowship before the program start date

**3. Fellow Support**

- One designated host site supervisor who will provide weekly supervision and daily support to the Fellow, as well as attend two mandatory meetings (supervisor orientation and mid-year meeting).
- Adequate work space for the Fellow – including desk, phone, fax, access to computer and office supplies
- Reimbursement for travel costs incurred as part of Fellow’s service for the host site (other Fellowship-related travel is paid for by the Fellowship)
- Commitment to Fellow attendance at all mandatory MPF meetings and retreats
- Investment in the professional development of Fellow through ongoing coaching, mentoring, and support

#### 4. MPF Reporting

- Pre- and post- surveys of youth served by the Fellow. Specifically, the Fellow will track the academic engagement of a minimum of 15-20 consistent youth throughout the school year
- Fellows will conduct a focus group with a small group of randomly selected youth to complement the data collected from pre- and post-surveys
- Fellows will track monthly youth attendance at the program and complete a monthly accomplishment report
- Host sites will complete an annual survey assessing program satisfaction and Fellow impact
- Host sites will complete mid-year and end-year performance assessments of the Fellow (to be completed by the Fellow and supervisor)
- Host sites will approve Fellow timesheets within a 48 hour timeframe

## Part 2- Fellow Project Design

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### Project Requirements

All projects must:

- Meet the criteria of one of MPF's focus areas and be focused on utilizing strategies to increase youth academic engagement (see below)
- 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
- Serve the same group of 15-20 young people in grades 6-12 for an entire academic year (September-June)
- Include a strategy for recruiting and retaining youth participants (ex. existing partnerships, resources for recruitment, etc.)
- Provide the Fellow with the opportunity to meet with the young people a minimum of 5 hours/week throughout the academic year (September-June) for a total of at least 150 hours of programming
- Be a new project or build upon an existing project
- Be primarily focused on providing direct service to young people
- Have a strong element of project ownership for the Fellow/s (Fellows are program or project leaders rather than program or project participants/assistants)
- Be Fellow-led or be a Fellow-led part of a larger project *\*Fellows can be involved with one or more projects\**
- Comply with AmeriCorps policies and prohibited activities.

### MPF Project Focus Areas

Although your project may address one or both of the Focus Areas, please select the one where the Fellow will spend the majority 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 has a particular interest in supporting projects that serve youth that identify as People of Color and/or English Language Learners.**

### Focus Areas

All Fellows are expected to serve as a mentor to a group of 15-20 youth for a full academic year in addition to leading a project in one of the focus areas below.

#### Academic Enrichment

- Fellows will develop and lead academic enrichment activities (i.e. program wide homework club, 1:1 or group tutoring, Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) support and/or exploration) for young people in the Out of School Time setting.
  - Activities for the proposed Massachusetts Promise Fellowship position should include, but are not limited to:
    - Develop and facilitate existing program curriculum, particularly in areas related to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) and English Language Learning (ELL) education
    - Engage and manage volunteers to serve as homework coaches to provide more one-on-one support for youth or mentors in their field of work/study
    - Facilitate experiential and project-based learning activities (sports, art, science, etc.) as a vehicle for academic engagement

- Build relationships and create systems of communication with parents and teachers to ensure Out of School Time programs are best meeting the needs of students academically

#### □ **College & Career Exploration**

- Fellows will deliver college and career programming in the Out of School Time setting to ensure youth receive the life skills and training they need to succeed after high school and beyond
  - Activities for the proposed Massachusetts Promise Fellowship position should include, but are not limited to:
    - Provide training and programming focused on the college application process including application advising, essay support and financial aid advice
    - Act as a youth college and career case manager to help youth navigate and access the many resources available to them when applying to college and/or gaining employment
    - Recruit professional volunteers to serve as career speakers to educate young people about job opportunities
    - Meet one-on-one with youth to discuss their career and college plans
    - Implement skill based training to support youth in the workforce including resume workshops, professional dress, interviewing, and networking
    - Build relationships with colleges and universities to schedule tours and information sessions for young people

#### **Prohibited Activities**

Fellows/Fellow projects **cannot**:

- **Displace a current employee or serve in a regular staff position**
- 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 necessary to their project)
- Sign off on a grant
- Serve as an assistant (Fellows must have ownership over an entire program or part of a project)
- Supervise other AmeriCorps members

### **Part 3-Program Timeline & Selection Process**

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#### **Timeline**

**January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019**-Intent to apply\* due (not required, but strongly recommended) \*Available at [www.masspromisefellows.org](http://www.masspromisefellows.org)

**February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 5pm**– Applications due

**March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019**- Fellowship host sites are selected and notified

**March, 2019 – July, 2019** – The Fellowship will work with host sites to recruit and hire a Fellow by July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

**August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019** – Fellows 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:

- Project alignment with MPF's focus areas and requirements of utilizing Out of School Time programs to support youth academic engagement
- Ability to recruit and retain a minimum of 15 youth who will receive at least 150 hours of programming from August-June
- Organizational capacity to develop and manage the project and Fellow
- Commitment to supporting the development of a new professional
- Realistic project objectives with measurable outcomes
- Demonstrated community and organizational need for the project
- Proper support, supervision, and training for the Fellow during the year of service
- Strong element of project ownership
- Project vision
- Clear connection between the host site and the mission of MPF
- Demonstrated compliance with MPF requirements and strong description of Fellow impact (for returning sites)

- Each section of the narrative is weighted using the following breakdown:
  - Organization Background (25%)
  - Project Design (50%)
  - Fellow Support (25%)

## Part 4-Application Instructions

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Follow these instructions for proposal submission:

**Step 1:** Review the 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 2:** Complete the service description template (download [here](#)) and save as a PDF. This document will be uploaded to the submission portal when prompted.

**Step 3:** Transfer your responses into the [submission portal](#) by **February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 5pm**

## Narrative Questions

### SECTION I- Organization Background & Need (25%)

#### Organization Background

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

- How is your overall organization committed to this project? Please provide evidence of this commitment. *(1,500 characters)*
- How does your organization align with MPF's value of creating equitable and inclusive spaces for both young people and staff? *(1,000 characters)*
- Has your organization hosted a Fellow or other AmeriCorps members in the past? If so, in what capacity, and for how many years? If your organization has hosted a Fellow before with MPF, please respond to the following *(1,500 characters)*:
  - How has hosting a Fellow had an impact on your organization and the young people served? (Please include data to support this impact if available).
  - How has your organization supported the growth and development of the Fellow(s)?

#### Organizational & Community Need

Please explain the need that you have identified:

- How does this position target an identified need in your organization? *(2,000 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)* **\*MPF has a particular interest in supporting projects that serve youth that identify as People of Color and/or English Language Learners.**
- What is the overall high school graduation rate for the district/community the Fellow will be serving in?

### SECTION II- Project Design (50%)

#### Project Service Description

Please complete the service description template (download [here](#)), including a short description of the project, 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:

- Describe the service activities that the Fellow will perform and how those relate to the project focus area and the expected outcomes. Please highlight the elements of project ownership and how the Fellow will be responsible for the project itself. *(2,500 characters)*

- What are the measurable objectives of the project? Include specifics on how the youth will be impacted by this project/program. (2,500 characters)
- What strategies will be set up to support the Fellow in recruiting and retaining a minimum of 15-20 youth with approximately 150 hours of programming for the service term (ex. relationships with local schools or community centers, access to resources, etc.)? (1,500 characters)
- Will this project involve recruiting and managing volunteers? If so, please describe. (1,500 characters)
- Describe how the Fellow role will differ from a full-time staff position. (1,500 characters)

### **Project Timeline & Fellow Schedule**

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

- Describe the Fellow's schedule, and 11 month timeline, illustrating how the Fellow will serve for a minimum of 40 hours/week (1,700 hours total for 11 months) including at least 5 hours of direct service with youth. Keep in mind that the Fellow should be working with a consistent group of at least 15 young people by mid-October 2019 and should be on track to deliver 150 hours of programming by June 2020. (2,00 characters)

### **Project Vision**

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

- How will the Fellow build capacity for the project/program leaving a lasting impact on youth in order for them to succeed in high school and beyond? (2,000 characters)
- If the Fellow project/program is currently Fellow-led or already exists at your organization (2,500 characters):
  - Discuss lessons learned, including project/program successes and challenges;
  - Define how the project/program will be expanded and/or improved and sustained;
  - Describe the vision for the future of the project/program.

## **SECTION III- Fellow Support (25%)**

### **Fellow Training & Supervision**

- How will the Fellow be supported and who will be the Fellow supervisor? (NOTE: we require Fellow supervisors to meet with Fellows weekly and provide support on a daily basis) (1,500 characters)
- NEW HOST SITE APPLICANTS: How do you plan to support your Fellows with keeping up with their MPF responsibilities (ex. data tracking, attending meetings, etc.)? RETURNING HOST SITE APPLICANTS; How have you supported Fellows with 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)
- What is your plan to orient and train the Fellow to your organization? What additional site-specific training will be necessary? How will you provide additional support if your Fellow has limited work experience? (2,000 characters)
- What is your plan to recruit a Fellow with this skill set by July, 2019? Please highlight at least 5 recruitment efforts your organization will undertake to recruit a Fellow by the requested deadline. (2,000 characters)
- What other development opportunities/support/benefits will you provide the Fellow? (1,500 characters)

### **Submission:**

Applications should be submitted by February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 5pm via the [submission portal](#). Information sessions will be held in December and January. Please visit [www.masspromisefellows.org](http://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](http://www.masspromisefellows.org) and in alternative formats by request.*