



Massachusetts Promise Fellowship

2020 - 2021 Host Site RFP Instructions

Intent to Apply Deadline: January 6th, 2020
Proposal Deadline: January 27th, 2020, 12pm

Visit www.masspromisefellows.org for information on attending an RFP info session and
click here to view [submission portal](#).
Sessions will be held on December 5th, December 16th, January 6th & January 15th.

Contributing Partners:

Northeastern University
Massachusetts Service Alliance
The Corporation for National and Community Service

Part 1- Overview, Eligibility, Benefits, & Requirements

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. MPF believes all young people in Massachusetts have a right to these Promises and delivers interventions in Out-of-School Time (OST) settings to increase youth academic engagement, defined as an improvement in youth-reported attitudes towards school and future aspirations. Through the Promises and research-based programming, MPF Fellows support schools, city agencies, and community-based organizations in the effort to help youth reach their full potential each year.

Annually, MPF 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 2020.

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 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 up to over 170 hours of professional development and 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 2020-June 2021)
- 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, \$6,195 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 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 April 27th, 2020.
- Host organizations pay between \$10,800 and \$16,000 of the \$37,000 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

***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

- A clear vision of the project you plan to implement, communicate 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 two mandatory meetings
- Adequate workspace for the Fellow, including access to a desk, phone, fax, computer and office supplies
- 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

All projects must:

- 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.
 - Be Fellow-led or be a Fellow-led part of a larger project *Fellows can be involved with one or more projects*
 - 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**
 - Serve the **same group** of 15+ young people in grades 6-12 for an entire academic year (September-June)
 - Include a comprehensive strategy for recruiting and retaining youth participants
 - 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 English Language Learners.**

Focus Areas

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

- Fellows will develop and lead academic enrichment activities 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
 - Lead a tutor/mentor program including frequent youth academic support check-ins and academic or social skill development workshops
 - Facilitate experiential and project-based learning activities as a vehicle for academic engagement (such as sports, art, science, etc.)
 - 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 advisor 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 attire, 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 that directly support 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

Timeline

January 6th, 2020-Intent to apply due (not required, but strongly recommended-[linked here](#))

January 27th, 2020 at 12pm- Applications due

March 2nd, 2020- Fellowship host sites are selected and notified

March 2020 – June 2020 - MPF will work with host sites to recruit and hire a Fellow by June 15th

April 27th, 2020- Cooperative Agreement Due

August 10th, 2020 – 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 consistent 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)
- Recognition of partnership accomplishments and areas of growth (for returning sites)
- 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 Proposal Applicants include organizations, agencies, and schools whom:

- Have never hosted a Mass Promise Fellow
- Have hosted a Mass Promise Fellow **before** the 2019-2020 cohort year

- Were granted a Fellow in 2019-2020 but that slot was not filled OR the Fellow did not complete the year of service

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

- Are currently hosting a Fellow in the 2019-2020 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 27th, 2020 at 12pm**

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 is your overall organization committed to this project? Please provide evidence of this commitment. *(2,000 characters)*
 - Has your organization hosted a Fellow or other AmeriCorps members in the past? If so, in what capacity and for how many years? Please share more about that experience and the Fellow impact. *(1,000 characters)*
- Returning Applicants:**
 - How has hosting a Fellow impacted the young people served by your organization? Please include data to support this impact if available. *(1,500 characters)*
 - What major accomplishments and challenges did you experience as an organization hosting a Mass Promise Fellow? *(2,000 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? *(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 or community the Fellow will be serving in?

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 are the measurable goals and objectives of the project? Include specifics on how the youth will be impacted by this project as it relates to our goal of increasing academic engagement. (2,500 characters)
- Describe the service activities that the Fellow will perform, how they relate to the project focus area, and the expected goals. Please highlight the elements of project ownership and responsibilities the Fellow will have. (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 you support your Fellow to achieve approximately 150 hours of programming per youth for the service term? (1,500 characters)
- Will this project involve recruiting and managing volunteers? If so, please describe volunteer roles and how you will support your Fellow in this process. (1,500 characters)
- Describe how the Fellow role will differ from a full-time staff position. (1,000 characters)

Returning Applicants:

- Restate your goals and objectives for the Fellow project. Have your stated goals changed or adapted from the previous year? If so, why and how? (2,000 characters)
- Restate the specific service activities the member will engage in. What areas will the Fellow have project ownership? (2,000 characters)
- What challenges, if any, did you 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? (2,000 characters)
- Describe how the Fellow role will differ from a full-time staff position. (1,000 characters)

Project Timeline & Fellow Schedule

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

Required for All Applicants:

- Describe the Fellow's 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. This should include at least 5 hours of direct service with youth. The Fellow should be working with a consistent group of **at least** 15 young people by mid-October 2020 and should be on track to deliver 150 hours of

programming to that same group by June 2021. **Applicants may upload a graphic or chart if preferred. (2,000 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 in order for them to succeed in high school and beyond? *(2,000 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 on a daily basis. Each site may only have **one** designated supervisor) *(1,000 characters)*
 - How do you plan to help your Fellow keep up their MPF responsibilities, such as data tracking or attending meetings? *(1,000 characters)*
 - What is your plan to orient and train the Fellow to your organization? What additional site-specific training will be necessary? *(2,000 characters)*
 - How will you provide additional support if your Fellow has limited to no work experience? *(1,000 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 your organizational plan to recruit your Fellow and what are five different strategies you intend to implement? *(2,500 characters)*
 - What other development opportunities or supports will you provide the Fellow? *(1,500 characters)*
- **Returning Applicants:**
 - How have you supported your Fellow's personal and professional growth this year? What have you learned that you will apply if granted another Fellow in 2020-2021? *(2,000 characters)*.
 - 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)*
 - 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 your organizational plan to recruit your 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? *(3,000 characters)*
 - What is your plan for onboarding a Fellow at your host site, particularly if they have limited to no work experience? What additional site-specific training will be necessary? *(2,500 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 27th at 12pm 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.