



# 2026 Massachusetts Conference on Volunteerism

## Call for Presenters

### ***Across the Commonwealth: Galvanizing Civic Leadership in Every Community***

Thursday, May 21, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Worcester DCU Center

**Submit proposals online by Monday, March 2.** You will find a link to the form and a sample form in the “Instructions for Proposal Submission” section below.

### **About the Conference**

#### **Expected Audience**

We will bring approximately 300 people from across the Commonwealth to this in-person-only event on Thursday, May 21, at the Worcester DCU Center. The audience will consist of community-based Organization and Agency Leaders, Volunteer Engagement Professionals, AmeriCorps & Commonwealth Corps Program Leaders and Members, AmeriCorps Seniors Leaders, Community Convenors, Corporate Social Responsibility professionals, Higher-education Faculty, staff, and students, and civic-minded individuals from across impact areas and experience levels. Volunteer engagement professionals in all phases of their careers and across all sectors, including nonprofits, government and education institutions, community entities, and corporations, will gain insights and resources.

#### **Expected Outcomes**

We expect to engage in-person attendees in:

- Networking with other professionals in similar positions or with similar community impact goals
- Sharing strategies and practical ways to advance organizational missions through volunteerism, service, and civic engagement



- Exploring the expertise and knowledge of attendees, presenters, exhibitors, and MSA to yield new partnerships, collaborations, or mentorships
- Building skills, expanding knowledge, and learning about tools and resources to better engage the community in service and volunteerism
- Discussing issues of importance to the field of community and volunteer engagement

## Common Session Formats

We want to offer a variety of topics and formats throughout the day. Breakout sessions will all be 75 minutes and formats can include:

- **Panel Discussion:** Up to three colleagues total discussing a topic
- **Traditional Presentation or Facilitated Learning Experience:** Facilitator presents and leads interactive activities
- **Salon:** Advanced, facilitated discussion on a topic that includes practical and philosophical ideas
- **Hot Takes Debate:** Panelists (up to three) debate a position on a topic in volunteerism
- **Learning Lab:** Participants work on a volunteer-related event, process, position description, recruitment messaging, etc., that they would like to improve with a guided and/or peer facilitation
- **Community of Practice or Special Interest Group:** Facilitator helps the group explore and make plans to pilot a statewide community of practice or special interest group (a group of people who share a passion or concern for something they do, coming together to learn from each other, share best practices, solve problems, and develop new knowledge and skills through regular interaction).

Successful sessions will:

- Involve a variety of learning styles (print, spoken, visual, interactive)
- Be applicable across a variety of fields and impact areas
- Present practical, scalable, and replicable ideas accessible to organizations with limited budgetary means
- Take advantage of the in-person nature of the conference
- Include a component for participants to practice or reflect on what they are learning in some interactive way (activities, discussions, games, structured reflection, worksheets, etc.)

## Successful Presenters

We encourage presenters of all experience levels to submit breakout session proposals. We will offer presentation coaching and support. Successful presenters will be:

- Passionate and authentically knowledgeable about the material they are sharing
- Aware of the diverse audience to which they are presenting
- Respectful of attendee time and knowledge level
- Comfortable and experienced with presenting in-person to an audience of 50 peers

## Benefits of Presenting

All accepted workshops will be offered up to two (2) complimentary conference registrations for presenters. All additional speakers and co-presenters must register for the conference at a discounted rate. We plan to recognize presenters through social media promotions, equipping presenters with social media templates for a co-branded post, inclusion on the conference website and program, recognition in post-conference recap materials and email communications, and a digital “Conference Presenter” badge for use on LinkedIn



and personal websites. Based on themes from presenters' session evaluations, we will endorse presenters on LinkedIn for the skills highlighted in their evaluations and for their conference presentations.

Presenting at this conference can be applied toward the hours required for professional development for [CVA \(Certification in Volunteer Administration\)](#) or another certification or program. We will include a certificate in your post-conference follow-up communication.

We are also offering up to 1 hour of coaching/consulting to help you prepare for your session. If your session is selected, contact [Kayla@KaylaPaulson.com](mailto:Kayla@KaylaPaulson.com) before April 24th to schedule that time.

## **Commitments Needed from Presenters (if Submission is Approved)**

- Be available to provide a pro-bono live in-person 75-minute session on May 21 in Worcester, MA
- Provide session materials to MSA by May 14 (this includes, but is not limited to, slides, videos, handouts, or other shared resources). Post-session updates need to be provided by May 26 for inclusion in general follow-up communication.
- Presenters are responsible for their own travel expenses and other out-of-pocket expenses such as parking (unless explicitly approved in advance by MSA). Because the conference is designed for peer learning, we do not offer honoraria or speaker fees for workshops.

## **Selection Process**

### **Selection Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee. Proposals will be scored and selected based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the stated event outcomes
- Applicability of content to the expected audience
- Innovation and replicability of content
- Presenter's training experience and expertise
- Clear and realistic goals and outcomes for the session
- Session design with strong potential for audience engagement, learning, and skill-building
- Evidence of measurable impact and effectiveness when appropriate

Presenters will be notified by email on or before March 20 if they have been selected. Acceptance and information will be emailed to the lead presenter, who is responsible for confirming receipt and sharing it with any co-presenters, as applicable. If your session is selected, we will also inform you of the time slot your workshop is in.

MSA may edit titles and session write-ups to fit the brochure format. We will make every effort to confer with the lead presenter before publication.

## **Important Dates**



- Feb. 6: Call for Session Proposal Released
- Feb. 13 @ 10A: Informational Webinar about the Proposal Process
- Mar. 2: Session Proposals Due
- Mar. 13: Presenters Notified for Selection
- April 24: Deadline to Schedule Support Call with Kayla Paulson
- My 14: Session Materials are Due
- May 21: 2026 Massachusetts Conference on Volunteerism
- May 26: Post-Session Updates Deadline

## **Instructions for Proposal Submission**

Proposals must be submitted via the online form at [2026 Massachusetts Conference on Volunteerism - Session Proposals – Fill out form](#). The submission deadline is Feb. 8 by 11:59 p.m. An individual may submit up to three breakout session proposals for review. If you have questions or concerns about the submission form, please contact our Conference Coordinator, Kayla Paulson, CVA, at 319.310.0901 or [Conference@Mass-Service.org](mailto:Conference@Mass-Service.org).

We recommend completing the [Session Proposal Template](#), then pasting the responses into the [online form](#).

