



# STATE SERVICE PLAN

*We expand volunteerism  
and service to make  
Massachusetts  
a better place to live.*



MASSACHUSETTS  
SERVICE ALLIANCE

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## Massachusetts Service Alliance

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA), a nonprofit founded in 1991, builds the organizational capacity of hundreds of Massachusetts nonprofits, schools, and agencies annually through funding, training, and resources centered on volunteerism and service. We serve as the Commonwealth's commission on service and volunteerism and put the bulk of our efforts into three primary program areas: AmeriCorps, Commonwealth Corps, and Volunteerism Initiatives. In addition, we provide training and support to build the capacity of organizations to ensure that they have the knowledge and capability to extend their impact with volunteers and corps members.

### **Purpose of the plan**

MSA must meet established requirements for state commissions that says we must develop a comprehensive plan that establishes goals for national and community service in our state over a three-year period. Although this is a requirement, MSA took on this process as an opportunity to do more than check a box – we saw this as an opportunity to use this as a smaller-scale strategic planning effort that provided opportunities for MSA's staff, board and external partners to provide input to help develop and shape a set of shared goals and priorities to guide our work.

### **Plan Development Process**

This plan was developed over the course of nearly a year. It was originally envisioned as a 6-month process; however, it was decided to temporarily pause the work in the spring and early summer months in response to significant disruption to our operating environment stemming from changes happening to and within the AmeriCorps Agency. As a result, this plan is being finalized in the fall of 2025.



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To develop this State Service Plan, MSA engaged outside consulting support to provide added capacity to support the leadership team in guiding this process. Our process included:

- Ecosystem analysis to identify strengths and opportunities as well as “big questions” to tackle as part of this process.
  - This included opportunities for staff and board engagement, as well as key external partners, and was conducted through a combination of surveys and smaller focus groups.
- Refining organizational values
- Development of internal tools to guide strategy development
- Formulation of three-year priorities, goals, and strategies

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## State Service Plan Implementation

This State Service Plan outlines areas of focus for the next three years and leaves room for adjustments and flexibility. Full implementation of the plan relies on stable federal and state support and an engaged staff, Board, and partners among other factors. Staff will review the plan with the MSA Board at least once per year and will refine this plan to adjust strategies or address new priorities if necessary.

## State Service Plan Priorities, Goals & Strategies

### Main Priorities

1. Diversify MSA’s Funding Base
2. Develop a Framework for Accessing and Using Data to Inform Work
3. Design and Conduct a Statewide Needs Assessment
4. Expand Partnerships Statewide

### **PRIORITY 1. Diversify MSA’s Funding Base**

Goal: By June 2028, MSA will generate 10% of our annual operating budget from new funding sources, primarily through earned income and private contributions.



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MSA seeks to expand its funding base to provide increased stability for the organization and our impact. While we have been able to rely on public funding for many years, MSA will explore and secure other sources of funding to increase the sustainability of our efforts. To do this, MSA will engage in the following strategies:

- Develop a Fee-for-Service model to increase revenue by providing trainings, materials, and products to interested parties.
- Develop a Fee-for-Service model to increase revenue by obtaining rental income through use of MSA's office space and office resources.
- Participate in – either by hosting or sponsoring – events throughout Massachusetts to raise public profile.
- Cultivate private contributions (such as corporations or foundations).

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## **PRIORITY 2. Develop a Framework for Accessing and Using Data to Inform Work**

Goal: By June 2028, MSA will have completed an assessment of our data collection efforts, identified gaps, developed/refined ways of collecting needed data, and have created a framework to ensure that this information is regularly considered as part of organizational planning and decision-making.

MSA wants to engage in a comprehensive assessment of the data currently collected, identify gaps that exist between what is requested and needed to make more data-informed decisions, and then revise these efforts moving forward to ensure that we are collecting not only outcome data, but also data that will be regularly reviewed to guide decision-making about our work. To do this, MSA will engage in the following strategies:

- Conduct a data audit (i.e., what we currently collect and what is available).
- Map what additional data we need to be successful and why.
- Identify methodology for and perform a pilot collection of additional data (including a platform and logistics).
- Scale data collection efforts.



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## **PRIORITY 3. Design and Conduct a Statewide Needs Assessment**

**Goal:** By June 2028, MSA will have developed a process to regularly assess needs in the Commonwealth and a shared framework for MSA that uses that information to guide decision making about our work.

MSA is committed to meeting communities and organizations where their needs are greatest. Resources are not infinite and MSA must often weigh competing needs as it determines where to put its resources. To ensure that our efforts are relevant and responsive to Massachusetts communities, MSA will engage in the following strategies:

- Identify what constitutes “need” in Massachusetts and a framework for prioritizing needs.
- Develop a plan for using needs data to inform future decision making.

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## **PRIORITY 4. Expand Partnerships Statewide**

**Goal:** By June 2028, MSA will have strengthened its impact by identifying priority areas for collaboration and partnership development that align with and enhance our efforts.

Partnerships are at the core of MSA’s work and we want to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new relationships with organizations and networks that are aligned with our priorities and are mutually beneficial, allowing MSA to further our efforts and deepen our collective impact. To do this, MSA will engage in the following strategies:

- Perform asset mapping activities to identify current partners and gaps (including cataloging volunteer connectors and nonprofit organizations of all sizes and geographies).
- Identify areas for strategic partnership development.
- Develop intentional partnerships based on results of asset mapping and identified needs.