

# MASSART

## MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN



CAMPUS  
DEMOCRACY  
CHALLENGE

Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
2020 Democratic Engagement Action Plan  
Developed by: Elena Belle White of the MassArtVOTES team

### **Executive Summary:**

This plan outlines the scope and specifics of the election engagement work that MassArt staff, faculty, and students plan to undertake to increase voter turnout in the 2020 election and build infrastructure for mobilizing the MassArt vote going forward.

### **Institutional Context:**

Massachusetts College of Art and Design is a public, independent institution that prepares artists, designers, and educators from diverse backgrounds to shape communities, economies, and cultures for the common good.

### **Our VALUES:**

We pursue a just, compassionate, and equitable learning environment

We cultivate rigorous creative practices by observing, questioning, making and remaking

We honor courage, honesty, mutual respect, and self-expression

We believe in the power of art and design to transform our world

The MassArtVOTES initiative was forged in the summer of 2020. The team is made up of staff, faculty, and students and the goals are to:

- 1) Increase and enliven civic engagement among MassArt community - students, staff, faculty - with a particular focus on students
- 2) Increase voter participation through non-partisan Inspiration, Education, Registration + Turnout efforts

3) Build infrastructure for mobilizing the MassArt vote in non-presidential years and for local elections

### **Leadership:**

The MassArtVOTES team is comprised of:

**Brenda Bailey**, Assistant Director, Office of Justice, Equity and Transformation

**John Intoppa**, student/SGA leader/Board of Trustees Rep.

**Sophie Jampel**, Assistant Director of College and Visiting Events, Student Development

**Dana Moser**, Professor, Chair Studio for Interrelated Media (SIM) Dept

**S. Rae Peoples**, Residence Director, Housing and Res Life

**Rachel Resnik**, Technical Services Librarian, MassArt Library

**Kathryn Riel**, Acquisitions Librarian, MassArt Library

**Nick Thompson**, Student (Sophomore Double Major SIM + Photo)

**Elena Belle White**, CHAIR - Associate Director, Center for Art and Community Partnerships

### **Commitment:**

MassArt has signed the Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation. Our campus has utilized the following methods to communicate with students about the election: email, social media, posters, flat screens, RA training, curricular assignments.

### **Campus demographic and voting data:**

MassArt has 2,188 students. Of those students, 70% female, 30% BIPOC

Past voting rates:

2012: 45%

2014: 13%

2018: 44%

### **Goals:**

The MassArtVOTES democratic engagement goals are to:

1. Increase and enliven civic engagement among MassArt community - students, staff, faculty - with a particular focus on students

2. Increase voter participation through non-partisan Inspiration, Education, Registration + Turnout efforts
3. Build infrastructure for mobilizing the MassArt vote in non-presidential years and for local elections

### **Strategy:**

The MassArt VOTES team is planning a number of initiatives for the fall of 2020.

**Social Media:** The #MassArtVOTES social media campaign posts information, inspiration, and calls to action around voting. All content goes onto the Instagram and Facebook of the Center for Art and Community Partnerships (@cacp\_massart). In addition, this content is distributed to a large list of MassArt staff and faculty who post on affiliated MassArt accounts.

**Voting Questions Survey:** MassArt VOTES recognizes the need for students - many of whom are first time voters - to ask individualized questions about their unique voting situation. To support students thoroughly we've created a simple survey - we respond to each student individually coaching them through their options and offering resources. The link to the survey is distributed via the MassArt VOTES website, social media, emails and by word of mouth.

**Virtual Voter-Info Event:** On Sept. 24, 2020 we will hold a virtual event called Move and Mobilize a virtual night of music, socializing and voter mobilization. The event will be streamed live via Twitch, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. MassArt alumna DJ DayGlow will DJ the event and we will be joined by a special guest from MassVote (a non-partisan voting rights organization) to offer information around all things voting: why voting is so critical, how to register or check your registration, how to request an absentee or mail-in ballot, what to expect at the polls if voting in-person

**Voter Support Tabling Event:** On Oct. 14th and 15th we will hold several hours of outdoor tabling aimed at supporting students and passersby with getting registered to vote and signing up to vote by mail (if it's not too late).

**Call-for-Art:** MassArt is a community of makers and we believe that art and design can (and does) change our world. We developed a call-for-art to inspire the vote. This call-for-art allows us to feature the artwork of MassArt students on social media and use visual language as a powerful tool to get out the vote.

**"I Vote Because..." Initiative:** The "I Vote Because..." initiative is a social media campaign that explores why we vote. Anyone in the MassArt community is welcome to download the "I Vote Because..." poster, print, fill-out, make a selfie, and post using the #MassArtVOTES hashtag.

**Research Guide:** The MassArt Library compiled a research guide on topics related to voting and distributed to all faculty and students.

**Emails to all-students:** We will send 3-4 MassArtVOTES newsletters to the MassArt student body throughout the fall with inspiration, information, and calls to action around voting.

**Poll Worker Opportunities:** There is information on the MassArtVOTES website ([massart.edu/massart-votes](http://massart.edu/massart-votes)) about how to be a poll worker and help make sure we have a safe, fair, efficient election for all voters.

### **Evaluation:**

We will evaluate our action plan in the following ways:

- MassArt has authorized The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data collection
- Numbers of students who participate in MassArtVOTES initiatives (attend the events, submit to the call-for-art, post a "I Vote Because..." etc.)
- A question will be included in a student pulse check survey in the fall of 2020

**Reporting:**

MassArt will report our campus action plan and NSLVE reports in the following ways:

Our action plan and NSLVE reports will be posted on our campus website and shared with the campus community.