



**MASSART**  
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE  
OF ART AND DESIGN



**CAMPUS  
DEMOCRACY  
CHALLENGE**

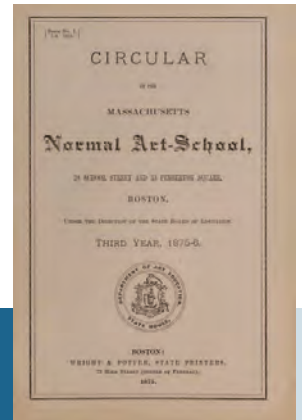
# ACTION PLAN

# INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

As the Commonwealth's art and design school, Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt) is a public, independent institution that prepares artists, designers, and educators from diverse backgrounds to shape communities, economies, and cultures for the common good.

In 1873, the Massachusetts Normal Art School opened its doors in response to the Massachusetts Drawing Act, a progressive 1870 mandate requiring cities in the Commonwealth of over 10,000 residents to include drawing in their public school curricula.

The industrial revolution changed how the world functioned, and mid-19th century Bostonians believed that industry wasn't the only way to build a stronger nation. Art, they felt certain, was also essential to growing a powerful country and a vital economy, and advancing the well-being of citizens.



"At MassArt, we've always believed that art is an igniting force for positive change."

On the eve of our institution's sesquicentennial, we stand firm in our belief in the power of art and design to transform the world. **We are a community of artists, designers, and educators who share a vision of the future that includes all citizens in its gaze and vigorously believe transformative arts are essential to civic life.** Transformative arts reflect and inform the world in a process that is inherently democratic—valuing freedom of creative expression and open exchange of ideas calling for active democratic participation of artists and audiences.

We rely on artists to respond to the most fundamental aspects of the human experience and the greatest social issues facing our communities. They hold a mirror up to our thoughts, emotions, systems, and cultures while pushing us to question what is and imagine what could be. As we work towards a more just, compassionate, and equitable future, we look to the arts to bridge political, cultural, and geographical divides, encourage diverse viewpoints, and celebrate differences.

By wielding the power of art and tapping into our students' creative promise, we look beyond our sesquicentennial **with a shared mission to build institutional culture and infrastructure that supports civic learning and democratic engagement efforts at MassArt.**

---

## INSTITUTIONAL 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

# COMMITMENT

Since 2014, MassArt has continually invested towards building institutional culture and infrastructure to support civic learning and democratic engagement efforts on campus. In 2014, we joined hundreds of other higher education institutions participating in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, developed by the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts University.

In 2020, the MassArtVOTES initiative was forged to prepare and encourage our students to take part in one of the most influential and crucial elections in American history.

Building upon the work of MassArtVOTES, the Artists in Action Coalition was developed to ensure that we are intentionally and strategically investing towards cultivating a culture of civic learning and democratic engagement at MassArt during midterms, presidential, and off-year elections at campus, local, state, and national levels.

Acknowledging that Higher education leaders have a responsibility to prepare students to become responsible and engaged participants in our democracy, and that includes, most importantly, to exercise the right and duty to register and to vote– President Mary Grant has signed the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge President's Commitment to full student voter participation and released a statement encouraging students to vote in the President's Newsletter.

As I write to you, I am also thinking of the many changes ahead – for example, we will have a new Commissioner of Higher Education, [Dr. Noe Ortega](#), and the importance of elections and the power of voting – and soon we will elect a new Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and several constitutional officers. As a reminder, Election Day is next Tuesday, November 8th – with early voting available across the Commonwealth through Friday, November 4th. You can find more information about locations and schedules at: [www.VoteInMA.com](http://www.VoteInMA.com). Here in Massachusetts, not only will we elect a new governor, but there are a few questions on the ballot that you may want to familiarize yourself with – that information can also be found at [www.VoteInMA.com](http://www.VoteInMA.com).

In that vein, I am signing the [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge President's Commitment](#), where I commit to supporting voting by our campus community to aim for full student voter participation. Thank you to Luchiano Montero, Program Coordinator for Student Engagement, and Joe Grande, Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life, for helping lead on this front.

# ARTISTS IN ACTION

Artists in Action is a non-partisan, campus-wide coalition that strives to cultivate a culture of **civic learning** and **democratic engagement** at MassArt.

**Civic learning** means acquisition of the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values needed for informed and effective participation in upholding and advancing democratic values on campus and in our communities at local, provincial, and national levels.

**Democratic Engagement** is the state of being **actively-engaged** in upholding and advancing democratic values on campus and in our communities at local, provincial, and national levels.

**Examples of Democratic Engagement:** Voting, advocating for diverse perspectives/representation in leadership and electorate, removing barriers to participation in the democratic process, debating issues, and supporting causes through **activism** and **volunteerism**.

Branching out of Artists in Action, **MassArtVOTES**—comprised of working group members from the Artists in Action Coalition, specifically strives to coordinate efforts to increase voter education, registration, and participation efforts on campus and in our communities at local, provincial, and national levels.

---

## VALUES

Our values drive our priorities, and our priorities determine our short-term and long-term goals in building institutional culture and infrastructure that supports civic learning and democratic engagement efforts at MassArt.

EDUCATION



ACTIVISM



JUSTICE



EMPOWERMENT



COLLABORATION



TRANSFORMATION





# LEADERSHIP

The **Artists in Action Coalition** serves as the overarching working group responsible and accountable for our institution's efforts to cultivate a culture of civic learning and democratic engagement. Branching out of the Artists in Action Coalition, **MassArtVOTES** is the second working group responsible for coordinating efforts to increase voter education, registration, and participation at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

Chaired by the Program Coordinator for Student Engagement, Luchiano Montero, the two working groups include cross-campus stakeholders of diverse perspectives and disciplines to increase the likelihood of success, long-term sustainability, and the institutionalization of civic learning and democratic engagement efforts on campus. The Artists in Action team will meet monthly to identify, connect, and develop programming to build institutional culture and infrastructure that supports civic learning and democratic engagement efforts at MassArt.

The Program Coordinator for Student Engagement at MassArt, Luchiano Montero, will be coordinating leadership succession.

## WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

**Luchiano Montero,**  
Chair of Artists in Action, Program Coordinator for Student Engagement

**Joe Grande,**  
Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life

**Elena White,**  
Associate Director, Center for Art and Community Partnerships, Director of PartnershipWORKS

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

**Erin McCormick,**  
Residence Hall Director

**Jane Marsching,**  
Professor, Studio Foundation, Sustainability Fellow + Director, COF Minor in Sustainability

**Kathryn Riel,**  
Acquisitions and Serials Librarian

**Rachel Resnik,**  
Library Chair

**Nick Thompson,**  
Student '23, Board of Trustees Student Representative

**John Intoppa,**  
Student '23, Student Government President

**Conor Toland,**  
Student '23, Resident Assistant

**Heily Rivas,**  
Student '24, Student Government Secretary

# **PARTNERSHIPS/ASSETS**

## **(LOCAL)**

### **COLLEGES OF THE FENWAY (COF)**

"Colleges of the Fenway is a collaborative effort of five neighboring Boston-based colleges in the Fenway area. This collaboration was created to add value to student academic and social life while seeking innovative methods of investing in new services and containing the costs of higher education. Collectively, the colleges represent more than 12,000 undergraduate students, comprising 16.2% of the total Boston population of undergraduates attending four-year colleges, more than 700 full-time faculty, and 2,300-course offerings."

"The hallmark of the five college consortium, cross-registration enables COF students, faculty, and staff to take courses at other COF institutions and participate at events/programs hosted by all COF institutions."

### **DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, EMMANUEL COLLEGE**

"The governmental and political systems of the world are informed by much more than just present day politics. Our students are challenged to understand, research and critically assess the intricate relationships between people, cultures, history, domestic governmental and political systems, and the international arena. The Political Science Department offers students the opportunity to integrate theory and classroom learning with practice, through such experiences as international travel, summer institutes, internships, classroom simulations and participation in Model UN."

### **EMMANUELVOTES, EMMANUEL COLLEGE**

"A non-partisan organization that strives to increase voter registration and participation amongst all students, faculty, and staff at Emmanuel College."

### **POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LIAISONS, SIMMONS UNIVERSITY**

"An academic liaison devoted to increasing the social and educational experience of politically minded students at Simmons"

### **MASSACHUSETTS VOTER TABLE**

"The Massachusetts Voter Table advances civic access, engagement, and representation to increase resources and power for people of color and working-class people toward achieving a multiracial democracy. The Massachusetts Voter Table is committed to a long-term organizing strategy that advances our vision of a more democratic and equitable society."

### **INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION, TUFTS UNIVERSITY**

"The Institute for Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE) was founded to address a pressing need in higher education. U.S. colleges and universities have long worked to fulfill their civic missions, but they have yet to meet the expectation that learning about and participation in democracy pervades every student's learning experience. Established to address these challenges, IDHE serves as a leading venue for nonpartisan, applied research, resources, and advocacy on college student political learning and engagement in democracy. Our mission is to inform and shift college and university priorities, practices, and culture to strengthen democracy and advance social and political equity. We focus explicitly on "all things political" on college and university campuses."

# PARTNERSHIPS/ASSETS

## (NATIONAL)

### ALL IN CAMPUS DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE

"The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge empowers colleges and universities to achieve excellence in nonpartisan student democratic engagement. The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge envisions a more engaged and inclusive democracy. Through institutional engagement, direct student engagement, and fostering a national higher education network, ALL IN strives for an electorate that mirrors our country's makeup and in which college students are democratically engaged on an ongoing basis, during and between elections, and not just at the polls. We believe that a strong, vibrant, and more representative American democracy will result from the greater inclusion of informed college student voters."

### AMERICAN DEMOCRACY PROJECT

"ADP's goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences to be informed and engaged, ready to tackle current and future issues to ensure a thriving and equitable democracy. The American Democracy Project (ADP) is a network of nearly 300 state colleges and universities focused on public higher education's role in preparing the next generation to be informed and engaged in an equitable civil society."

### ANDREW GOODMAN FOUNDATION

"The Andrew Goodman Foundation was created in 1966 by Robert and Carolyn Goodman to carry on the spirit and the purpose of their son Andrew's life. Today, our work harnesses the legacy of courageous civic action to grow new leaders of change: young adults bitten by the spirit of activism (like Andy). Our campus coalitions spread a culture of participatory democracy, promoting the right to vote while incubating a new civic-minded generation."

### ASK EVERY STUDENT

"Ask Every Student is a national joint initiative that facilitates collaboration between campus leaders and nonprofit partners to help campuses ask every student to participate in the democratic process and achieve full student voter registration."

### CAMPUS COMPACT

"Campus Compact is a national nonprofit organization. We are the largest and oldest higher education association dedicated to higher education civic and community engagement. Our members make up a force of thousands of presidents, faculty, researchers, students, and civic and community engagement experts at colleges and universities. Campus Compact takes a comprehensive approach to supporting member institutions—helping them build the knowledge, skills, and capacity needed to enable a just, equitable, and sustainable future."

### CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT

"Campus Vote Project works with universities, community colleges, faculty, students and election officials to reduce barriers to student voting. Our goal is to help campuses institutionalize reforms that empower students with the information they need to register and vote."

### CIVIC HOLIDAYS

"Civic Holidays (e.g., **Constitution Day**, Vote Early Day, Election Hero Day) are nonpartisan days of action that strengthen and celebrate our country's democracy! They bring together a wide range of organizations and communities in pursuit of an America where everyone participates and votes."

### CIVIC LEARNING AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT, NASPA

"Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) work centers around developing students into engaged and active community members. Through education around democratic participation, centering the value of dialogue across difference, and nurturing social responsibility, SA pros focused on CLDE work are dedicated to providing students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to make a difference in their communities."

# PARTNERSHIPS/ASSETS

## (NATIONAL)

### CIVIC NATION

"Civic Nation's mission is to empower individuals, companies, institutions, and organizations to create a more inclusive, equitable America. We are a home for change-makers who inspire, educate, and activate people around the issues that will define this generation — strengthening democracy; fostering civic engagement, social justice and voter participation; addressing public health crises; fighting for gender equity; and more."

### FOR FREEDOMS

"For Freedoms is an artist collective that centers art and creativity as a catalyst for transformative connection and collective liberation. By wielding the power of art, we aim to deepen and expand our capacity to interrogate what is and imagine what could be."

### MOTIVOTE

"Motivote's mission is to empower businesses, nonprofits and colleges to run high-impact voter engagement programs that help people navigate the voting process. Our proprietary framework is proven to increase turnout with the same behavioral strategies that help us go to the gym, save money, and learn new skills. With purpose-built tools powered by behavioral science, we help motivate teams, classmates, community, colleagues & employees to make voting a habit."

### NATIONAL VOTER EDUCATION WEEK

"National Voter Education Week (NVEW) is an open-source, nonpartisan voter education campaign held the first week of October that equips voters with the tools, information, and confidence they need to cast their ballots. NVEW is a resource hub for leaders of any community and context who want to give their networks the information they need to cast their ballot with confidence. During this week of interactive education, voters learn to find their polling location, understand their ballot, make a plan to vote in person or by mail, and more."

### NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

"National Voter Registration Day is a nonpartisan civic holiday celebrating our democracy. First observed in 2012, it has quickly gained momentum ever since. Nearly 4.7 million voters have registered to vote on the holiday to date. Celebrated every September, National Voter Registration Day involves volunteers and organizations from all over the country hitting the streets in a single day of coordinated field, technology and media efforts. National Voter Registration Day seeks to create broad awareness of voter registration opportunities to reach tens of thousands of voters who may not register otherwise."

### POWER THE POLLS

"Power the Polls was launched in June 2020 by a coalition of businesses and nonprofits seeking to recruit a new wave of poll workers ahead of the 2020 election. America was in the midst of a nationwide poll worker shortage, and the consequences had already been felt in primary elections with reduced polling locations, long lines, and voters waiting to cast their ballot for several hours. In the era of uncertainty caused by the coronavirus, fewer poll workers were signing up for the job."

### STUDENTS LEARN TO VOTE COALITION

"The Students Learn Students Vote (SLSV) Coalition is made up of campus, nonprofit, community, student, and philanthropic leaders who help student voters get more involved in our democracy. We act as their central nervous system, leading collaborations across organizations while coordinating national programs and campaigns, and distributing resources that go directly to organizers on the ground."

### VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS

"The goal of the Voter Friendly Campus program is to help institutions develop democratic engagement action plans that coordinate administrators, faculty, and student organizations in civic and electoral engagement."

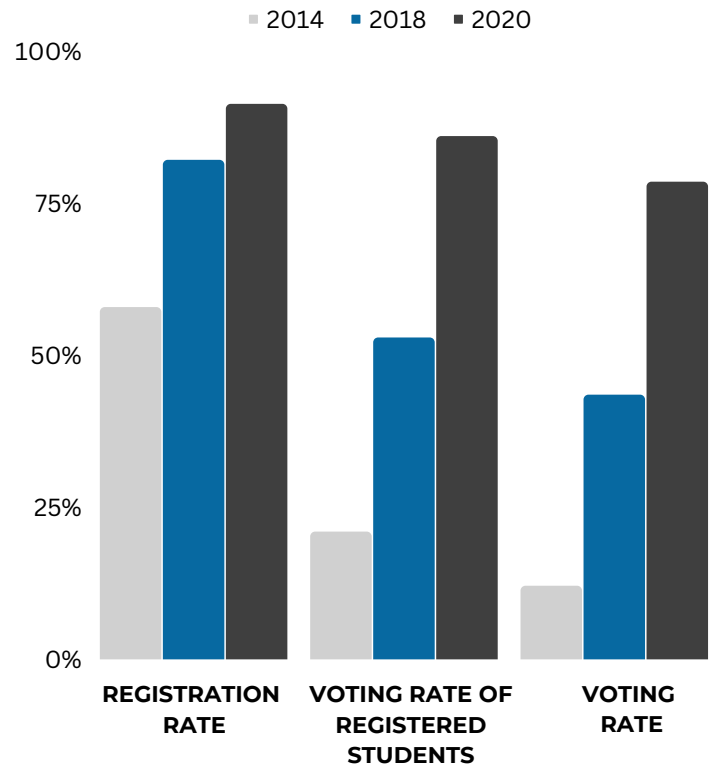


### VOTING, REGISTRATION, AND YIELD RATES

The Massachusetts College of Art and Design has signed on to the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement since 2014.

This has afforded us the opportunity to become better informed on the progress we have been able to make over the years in terms of eligible student voter registration and participation rates. The data has also helped to inform us of what more we can do as we strive towards 100% eligible voter student registration and participation rates.

**From 2014 to 2020, MassArt has increased their eligible student voter registration rate from 58% in 2014 to 91% in 2020. Similarly, MassArt has increased their eligible student voting rate from 12% in 2014 to 78% in 2020.**



In 2014, **1 out every 10** eligible MassArt student voter registered and voted



In 2018, **4 out every 10** eligible MassArt student voter registered and voted



In 2020, **8 out every 10** eligible MassArt student voter registered and voted

The Registration Rate is the percent of our voting-eligible students who registered to vote.

The Voting Rate of Registered Students is the percent of registered students who voted on Election Day.

The Voting Rate is the percentage of eligible students who voted on Election Day. The voting rate is also the product of the registration and yield rates.

# GOALS

## SHORT-TERM GOALS

### Increase student voter participation during the 2022 midterm elections:

- **Achieve 90% registration for eligible student voters at MassArt by the 2022 midterm general elections** (increase from 82.1% in 2018 and 89.1% in 2020)
- **Reach a 90% voting rate of registered students** (increase from 52.9% in 2018 and 86.0% in 2020)
- **Reach a 90% voting rate** (increase from 43.5% in 2018 and 78.5% in 2020)

### Strengthen Voter Education

- Host a voter education week to educate, empower, and engage students on the voter registration process, identifying what's on the ballot, and making a plan to vote through absentee ballot, early voting, or on election day

### Build a presence on social media

- Develop and establish an Artists in Action Instagram, Twitter, and Tik-tok page to meet students where they are

## LONG-TERM GOALS

### For the 2024 Presidential Election:

- **Reach a 95% Eligible Student Voter Registration Rate**
- **Reach a 95% Voting rate of Registered Students**
- **Reach a 95% Voting Rate**

### Additionally:

- Develop a Pledge to Vote
- Advocate for Polling Locations on campus and/or in the COF
- Coordinate and host voter education programming with the Colleges of the Fenway
- Partner with Residence Life to ensure all eligible student voters are registered to vote
- Develop a Civic Fellows Program

# REPORTING

MassArt's ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan will live within the Office of Student Engagement. In keeping with the institution's strategic planning process, the strategies and goals outlined in this document will be assessed semesterly by the Artists in Action Coalition.

This plan will be publicly available on MassArt's website at [artistsinaction.massart.edu](https://artistsinaction.massart.edu), and incorporated, as appropriate or requested, into reports to the MassArt community (students, faculty, staff and external community members). We will also share the NSLVE data/report, updates, and information through the MassArt Artists in Action social media platforms and other MassArt communication outlets both internally and externally.

