




Strategic Partnership Plan  
2024



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Table of Contents | 2**

**A Letter from the President and Planning Committee Co Chairs | 3**

**Integrated Strategic Plan and Partnership Plan | 4**

**Introduction | 5**

**Executive Summary | 7**

**Overview of the Plan's Framework | 8**

**Planning for a Changed World | 13**

**The Planning Process | 14**

- Strategic Planning Committee Members | 15
- MassArt Community Engagement | 16
- Planning Sessions | 17

**The Strategic Partnership Plan | 18**

**Plan Components | 19**

- Student Success | 19
- Mission and Values | 19
- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion | 19
- Priority Areas | 20
- High-Level Strategies | 21

**Foundational Factors | 28**

- Financial Performance | 29
- Admissions and Enrollment | 33
- Operations, Capital Planning, and Sustainability | 34

**Implementation and Accountability | 35**

**Conclusion | 37**



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CO-CHAIRS

Dear Members of the MassArt Community,

It is with great pleasure that we share with you the MassArt Strategic Partnership Plan. This midpoint refresh of our current 10-year plan honors MassArt's powerful Mission and Values, builds on the essential principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and ensures that MassArt continues to be a dynamic and vital force far into the future.

MassArt is a creative and curious community with great aspirations. Achieving those aspirations will require working together across the institution to embrace new opportunities and address difficult challenges. With this plan we demonstrate our deep commitment to place student success at the center of all that we do, continuously supporting all members of our talented and diverse student body as they craft their pathway through MassArt and make powerful contributions for the common good.

This refreshed plan is the product of exemplary cross-campus engagement and collaboration. We are grateful to members of our Strategic Planning Committee for their discerning and innovative approach to the planning process. They listened with open hearts and minds to the challenges and aspirations voiced by our students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni. Then, building on our accomplishments, they wove the essential work already underway at the College together with bold future-oriented strategies that will expand and deepen our impact.

The committee's diligence, along with the contributions of many others across campus, has laid the groundwork for us to make meaningful progress over the next five years. During that time, on an annual basis, the MassArt community will convene to review the action plans, assess our progress, and continue to engage the campus community in fulfilling our goals.

We are grateful to the Board of Trustees for their leadership during the planning process and their commitment to the aspirations embedded in this plan.

We extend our deepest thanks to the MassArt community for your involvement in the planning process. We value the energy and dedication that each of you bring to MassArt every day and are excited to see where your boundless creativity and spirit of exploration will take us in the years and decades to come.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Grant, PhD, President

Brenda Molife, PhD, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Robert Chambers, Vice President for Strategic Engagement and Chief of Staff



# INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Strategic Partnership Plan brings together Massachusetts College of Art and Design's (MassArt) Strategic Plan and Partnership Plan to cohesively guide all aspects of the work of the College. It establishes a set of strategic aims and in doing so brings greater focus to our work and a harmonized approach to measuring our progress.

As an independent public institution with a special purpose designation from the Commonwealth, MassArt received approval from the Board of Higher Education (BHE), nearly 20 years ago, under Chapter 26 of the Acts of 2003, Sections 49, 50, 633, and 634, to enter into a strategic partnership plan. This legislation provided the Board of Trustees of MassArt the ability to expand our mission, profile, and orientation to a more regional or national focus and to submit to the BHE, for approval, a five-year plan embracing an entrepreneurial model achieving higher levels of excellence. In 2005, the Legislature approved language to make permanent the provision in Section 633 that allowed MassArt's trustees to retain all tuition and fee revenue.[1]

This partnership has been renewed several times over the last 20 years and has continued successfully to the present day. MassArt has operated with the flexibility and autonomy to achieve its educational aspirations, fulfill its mission as the only independent public college of art and design in the country, develop non-state revenues, and strengthen its role as a cultural and educational resource for other public institutions. As part of the agreement, MassArt committed to assessing and sharing progress of the plan's proposed goals and objectives and to adapting and implementing strategies to achieve the identified goals and objectives. The 2024 Strategic Partnership Plan will provide the basis for that assessment, reporting, and adaptation for the coming five year period.



# INTRODUCTION

MassArt's Strategic Partnership Plan is grounded in our history of forward-looking public education and service. Over 150 years ago, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, then the Massachusetts Normal School of Art, was founded in response to ensure that art is an essential facet of growing a powerful country, a vital economy, and improving and advancing the well-being of citizens' ability to thrive alongside industry. Its mission was rooted in a spirit of creativity and innovation as an investment in educators, artists, and designers with the knowledge and skills to move the Commonwealth and the country forward. It was and remains a bold vision.

The establishment of the College was a response to the challenges and opportunities of those times. MassArt's founding put into action the values and priorities of education, business, legislative, community, cultural, and civic leaders that still hold true today. Continued progress will require dedicated teachers who can engage students authentically and use creativity and design-first mindsets. MassArt educators have a critical role to play in moving this vision forward for our collective future.

Today's challenges call for educators with big ideas and the readiness to make them real for the next generation of students. Art and design inspires and excites, comforts, and empowers each of us to engage in creative problem solving and actionable solutions. Art and design draw attention to critical issues, encourage us to have essential conversations, heal trauma, solve problems, reclaim neighborhoods, and so much more. It can help us gain a deeper understanding of one another and infuse a spirit of hope that we will have the courage to see the opportunity within every challenge.



# INTRODUCTION continued

The challenges we face today are a clear call to meet our students where they are and develop nimble ways to address their evolving needs. Achieving true racial justice demands deep societal transformation. The climate crisis requires us to think and act differently about humans' role on the planet. Economic and political divides are prevalent nationally and globally. Technological advancement enables unprecedented progress but generates new barriers to justice, equity, and our ability to create community. Art and design has a unique way that fosters a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive community while paving the way for economic vitality and diversity. Art and design are essential tools for addressing these challenges.

MassArt's Mission and Values take on heightened relevance because of the important role we play in diversifying the creative pipeline, and widening the doors of imagination and innovation. In alignment with the State's priorities and the Equity Agenda, the refreshed plan focuses on student success, access, and affordability. This plan brings attention and resources to address the barriers and obstacles that hinder their success. As the nation's only independent public college of art and design founded to educate educators, we are deeply committed to bringing our talent and ideals in creating a better world. We build on the legacy of over 20,000 alumni, faculty, and staff who have made groundbreaking contributions to a wide array of fields. The plan actualizes our ambition to ensure that every student prospers at MassArt and is part of shaping our future as a Commonwealth, nation, and world.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, MassArt embarked on a strategic planning process that engaged our entire community. The result was a powerful statement of our Mission and Values, a well-articulated 10-year horizon, and a set of priority areas, strategies and tactics intended as a roadmap for the College as it moved forward. The ten-year plan was reviewed thoroughly by various governing bodies and was approved by the MassArt Board of Trustees in November 2018 and the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education in June 2019.

This year, 2024, marks the midpoint of MassArt's ten-year strategic plan, an appropriate time to reflect on progress achieved and to refresh it for greater effectiveness and in response to important changes that have taken place. This also proved to be the optimal time to consider the changing landscape in which we now operate, including the impact of the global pandemic on our students, our society, and on higher education. Moreover, creating and affirming this plan provided a chance to consider a wide array of new possibilities and opportunities that have arisen in the past several years. Additionally, this juncture presented an opportunity to bring together MassArt's Strategic Plan and Partnership Plan to create a unified and powerful approach to planning and ongoing assessment of progress at the College. The resulting Strategic Partnership Plan speaks to this compelling moment in the life of MassArt and sets a powerful trajectory for the institution over the next five years and beyond.

To develop the **Strategic Partnership Plan**, President Mary K. Grant engaged a Strategic Planning Committee of faculty, staff, and students and initiated a planning process that included robust discussions and rigorous work. The resulting plan honors our strong Mission and Values and builds on the principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). It leverages the achievements made over the past many years and positions us to expand and deepen MassArt's impact, beginning with the success of our students and extending out to our communities and our world.



# OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN'S FRAMEWORK

The framework for the Strategic Partnership Plan centers student success as our overarching goal. Prominently placed in the plan are the College's strong statements of Mission and Values as our core commitments. Next are the five priority areas that were originally established in the ten-year plan and continue to be pertinent. This is followed by our five ambitious and synergistic high-level strategies, each with two and five year goals that are discussed later in this document. Finally, the plan includes three foundational factors that are essential to the overall operations and sustainability of the College.

## Overarching Goal

Student Success

## Our Mission

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.





# OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN'S FRAMEWORK

## Our Principles

Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

## Priority Areas

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Environment for a Creative Campus  
Quality Workplace and Effective Organization  
Transformative Learning and Teaching  
Reputation and Resources

## High-Level Strategies

Advance Learning, Teaching, Creativity, and Exploration  
Actualize Centering Student Success  
Align and Strengthen Our Systems for Effectiveness and a Culture of Belonging  
Strengthen Access and Affordability  
Elevate MassArt's Influence and Impact in Arts, Culture, and Society

## Foundational Factors

Performance  
Admissions and Enrollment  
Operations, Capital Planning, and Sustainability



# PLANNING FOR A CHANGED WORLD

When the current ten-year strategic plan was launched in the Fall of 2019, no one could have predicted the amount of change that would occur in the course of a few short years. In early 2020, the global pandemic hit and with it an unprecedented amount of disruption in every aspect of our lives. The COVID-19 crisis challenged our social constructs; our families and communities; our healthcare and public health systems; including the way we learn; and how we create, experience, and share arts and culture. It also had an impact on the way our institutions of higher education are perceived and operate.

While MassArt felt the impact of the pandemic, the College remained strong. Fortunate to have a solid Mission and powerful set of Values around which the whole community rallied, supported by our Board of Trustees. The College moved forward with creativity and perseverance, quickly pivoting to online and hybrid learning. We emerged from the height of the pandemic with strengthened resolve regarding the power of our mission and the impact of an art and design education in engaging and rebuilding community, addressing complex problems, the potential of our students, and the imperative to adapt our organization to meet new challenges.

**Justice, Equity, and Transformation:** The national racial reckoning and social movement that developed in the pandemic's wake, as well as the disparities and inequities laid bare by the crisis, brought to the fore issues such as systemic racism, health inequity, and food insecurity. Institutions of higher education were challenged to study, with a new lens, their own systems and practices. And while highly challenging, it offered opportunities for important discussions and created openings for us to look deeper into our practices to find ways to increase justice, equity, and inclusion.

MassArt has worked hard to advance justice, equity, and transformation prior to the pandemic, such as establishing the Office of Justice, Equity, and Transformation, increasing the diversity of our faculty and staff, and expanding accessibility and affordability to attract a diverse student body. We are committed to continuing and deepening that work as we implement the refreshed plan over the next five years, and beyond.



# PLANNING FOR A CHANGED WORLD

to isolate and study remotely. The challenges of that experience, whether they took place during their time at MassArt or while they were still in high school, continue to affect our students today. Many students returned to campus with the need for more support, particularly in mental health and well-being. The foundational programs that have been in place for several years are now more essential than ever and will benefit from further development. Additionally, the disruption caused many students to experience a loss of exposure to core aspects of MassArt culture, including the value of working in a studio environment, surrounded by other artists and designers.

Moreover, during this time of turmoil caused by the pandemic, MassArt was also undergoing transitions in key leadership positions. With those transitions came uncertainty among faculty and staff about the overall direction of the institution, their roles, and expectations. Like so many other institutions, MassArt is still recovering from those years. The College is currently experiencing its most consistent and future focused leadership in years. President Grant, a seasoned higher education leader with deep knowledge and experience in public higher education including within the Commonwealth. The President arrived in 2021, and has built a strong leadership team with a shared sense of purpose essential to advancing the work of the College and the priorities of the refreshed plan.

An important aspect of the planning process has been the convening of faculty, staff, and students to talk about how they see MassArt's challenges and the opportunities we should embrace as we move forward. Those discussions have helped to rebuild our collective spirit and informed the leadership and Strategic Planning Committee as they deliberated on the content of the refreshed plan.

**Evolving needs of an ever-changing student body:** Over the past two decades, we have seen changes in how our students learn. We have observed how they have increased their already advanced engagement with technology, and more recently, how they continue to manage and sustain their wellness even as they grapple with the uncertainty of the pandemic and its aftermath. As an art and design college with a curriculum that is grounded in experiential learning, we have adapted our teaching and learning to meet students' ever-changing needs. We embrace an innovation mindset as a continual and necessary process to help students focus on their artistic creativity that supports their aspirational goals.



# PLANNING FOR A CHANGED WORLD

Changing demographics regionally and nationally mean that institutions of higher education are shifting to serve more adult learners with an entrepreneurial interest. Through this strategic plan refresh, MassArt reflects the important opportunity and necessity to adapt to meet the needs of students of all ages and life experiences from flexible scheduling, to various learning modalities, and creating degree and certificate pathways centered on being a student-ready college.

**Broadening our Scope and the Potential of Technology:** As with most educational institutions, technology became an essential tool to reach our students and carry out the core work of the College during the pandemic. Lessons from that experience have allowed us to explore many new possibilities, including remote and hybrid modalities, and the integration of videos and other media into our in-person teaching. More importantly it has allowed us to ask several strategic questions, such as: How can we, as a community of creatives and innovators make greater use of emerging technologies in our teaching and work?; How might we serve a larger number of non-traditional students given our new found flexibility?; How should we go about preparing our students for a world in which Artificial Intelligence is expanding and evolving daily?; How might technology make it possible for us to open new pathways for our Alumni to play a greater role in our community?; and How can the College deepen its presence and partnerships with local schools, arts and community-based organizations to create a stronger and more connected community?

**Interdisciplinarity and Student's Shifting Expectations:** Over the past five years we have seen a shift: more students are seeking interdisciplinary experiences and cross-discipline exposure. Academic departments are grappling with questions around how to uphold their strong commitment to "depth of craft" while also responding to the increased demand for open access resources, and expanding boundaries in the field.

Increasingly, college students are looking for guidance as they explore career opportunities and the wide range of options for putting their degrees and talents to work. Many are considering the return on investment and employment potential when choosing their courses of study. MassArt is well-positioned to recognize and support these needs and to develop new courses, minors, certificates, and degree programs.



# PLANNING FOR A CHANGED WORLD

**Affordability and the Business Model:** As the nation's only independent state-supported public college of art and design, MassArt offers an affordable, rigorous, world-class art and design education. As a public institution, access and affordability are core to our identity and mission and a source of pride and distinction.

It has become increasingly clear that public higher education must look to sources of funding outside of tuition including partnering with the State to reduce the cost of attending for students. MassArt is no exception. While institutions of higher education are facing increasing costs, schools of art and design carry particularly high costs because of the specializations and equipment needed to offer excellence across a range of disciplines; moreover, we are located in one of America's most expensive cities. We will focus on building our endowment, increasing external funding from grants, and partnering with the State to reduce costs to benefit our students.

**MassArt's Role in the Commonwealth:** As an educational and cultural institution focused on access and equity, MassArt makes important contributions to the vibrance and vitality of the Commonwealth and its diverse communities. Our students and faculty use art and design to focus attention on critical issues, create opportunities to inspire and empower each of us to engage in creative problem solving and action.

MassArt plays a critical role in the Commonwealth's educational and cultural sectors, which are key components of our thriving economy. We also contribute to the innovation economy, providing a steady stream of creative professionals who power the tech startups, corporate giants, and cultural and civic organizations that drive our region's economy. The design thinking that today's employers need and demand is core to our approach: MassArt students are steeped in a pedagogy where critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and an entrepreneurial mindset are essential parts of the learning experience.



# THE PLANNING PROCESS

In June of 2023, President Grant initiated the planning process by convening a Strategic Planning Committee composed of faculty, staff, and students. The group used the summer months to discuss what was accomplished during the first five years of the 10-year plan and noted how the environment had changed during that time. They also developed an approach for engaging the MassArt campus community in the process of creating the refreshed strategic plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee was asked to recommend an appropriately participatory process, to ensure that the refreshed plan:

- Built on MassArt's strengths;
- Leveraged and extended work already in progress,
- Responded to changes in MassArt's environment since the original 10-year plan was developed;
- Integrated the Partnership Plan and aligned with the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education's Racial Equity Plan; and
- Reflected the needs and aspirations of the MassArt community.

Over the course of the planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed related reports and other relevant documents and discussed the outcomes of numerous input sessions by faculty, staff, trustees, foundation board, and students. They carried out their own deliberation process, testing the results with the broader community of faculty, staff, and trustees, and ultimately recommended the plan that is laid out on the following pages.

# The Planning Process: Strategic Planning Committee Members

- Julie Barrett, Associate Dean of Justice, Equity, and Transformation/Executive Director of Project Management
- Lucinda Bliss, Associate Provost/Dean of Graduate and Professional and Continuing Education
- Robert Chambers, Vice President for Strategic Engagement and Chief of Staff
- Julia Crane-Dempsey, Director of Annual Giving
- Schuyler Dawson, Administrative and Special Projects Coordinator
- Andrew Dore, Assistant Dean and Director of Housing and Residence Life
- Barrington Edwards, Associate Professor, Illustration
- Mary K. Grant, President
- Deborah Hirsch, Special Assistant to the Provost
- Emily Karafelis, Second Year Graduate Student, Design Innovation
- Ceci Méndez-Ortiz, Executive Director, Center for Art and Community Partnerships
- Brenda Molife, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Junelyn Peeples, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research and Strategic Effectiveness
- Jonathan Rand, Assistant Dean and Registrar
- Maryellen Schroeder, Director of Career Development
- Lily Schueger, Third-Year Undergraduate Student, Ceramics
- Gina Spaziani, Associate Vice President of Finance/Chief Business Officer
- Nita Sturiale, Professor and Department Chair, SIM
- Jennifer Varekamp, Professor and Department Chair, Fashion Design

To enable the plan's ambitious aims, President Grant engaged her senior leadership to develop goals for key operational areas of the College. Working with their teams, they developed two- and five-year goals for each area, aligning their work with the other elements of the plan.



# The Planning Process: MassArt Community Engagement

One hallmark of the strategic planning process was a series of input and review sessions. The Office of the President and the Strategic Planning Committee convened these discussions at key junctures in the process to ensure that the MassArt community could inform each stage of the plan's development.

Early discussions focused on broad-based information gathering, while later ones were designed for input on the emerging plan. Once the preliminary plan was developed, the sessions focused on the various roles that each group would play in bringing the plan to life. The image below is of MassArt faculty and staff at the Strategic Planning Input Session, October 2023.



# The Planning Process: Planning Sessions

- Extended Cabinet retreat and discussions
- Board of Trustees discussions
- Department Chairs discussions
- Foundation Board discussions
- Faculty discussions
- Faculty and staff town hall style, input sessions
- Online survey for faculty and staff
- Student discussions

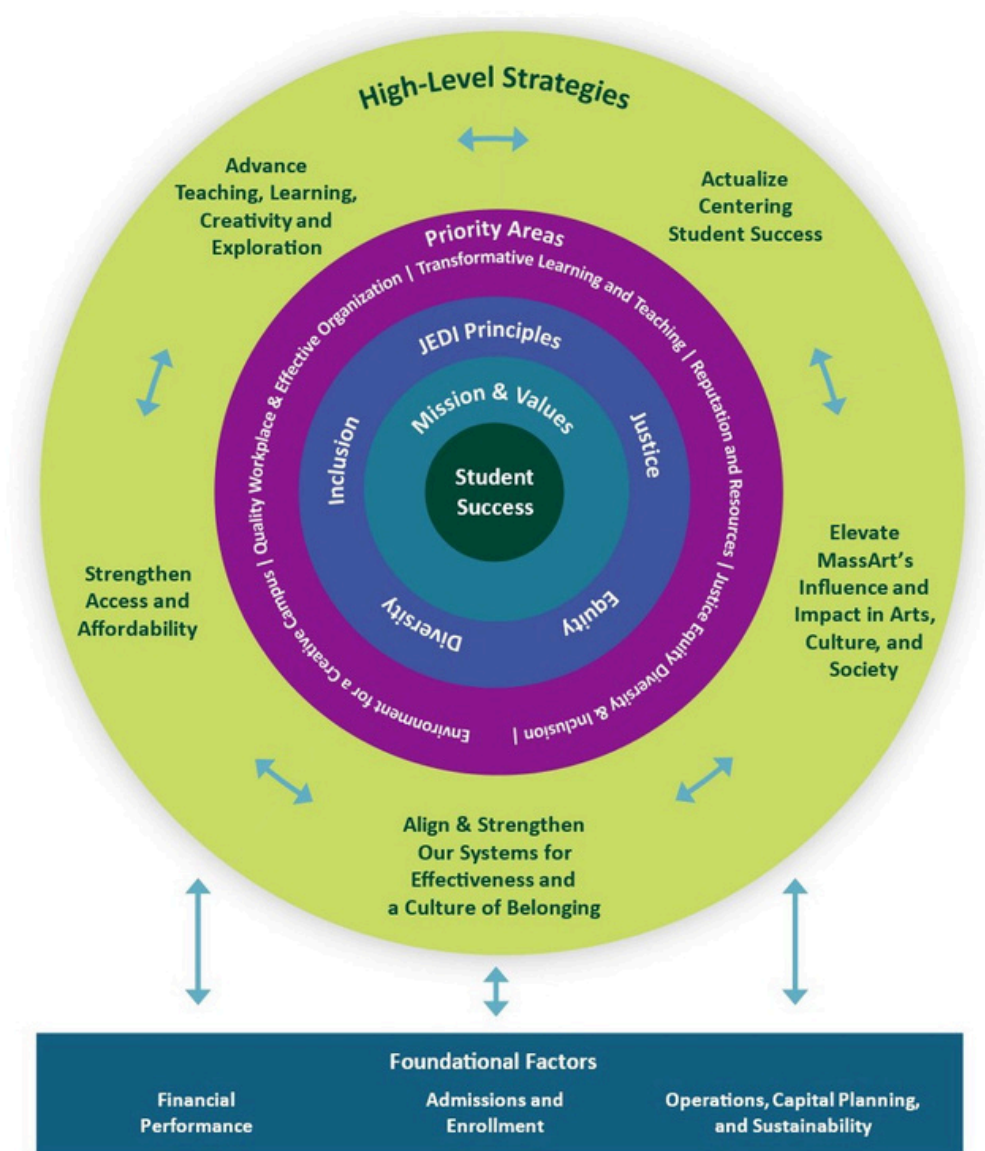


# THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PLAN

Visually depicted as a set of nested circles, each of the plan’s components are understood to be equally essential and their elements interrelated and interdependent.

The inner rings — Student Success; Mission and Values; Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and the five priority areas — inform and drive the plan’s high-level strategies.

The Foundational Factors are key to carrying out all aspects of the plan.





# PLAN COMPONENTS

## Student Success

Student success is our overarching goal and makes explicit our shared commitment to put the success of our students at the center of our decisions and actions.

## Mission and Values

Our Mission articulates the purpose of the institution and along with the Values describes what matters most to the College community, These two components act as a compass to guide decision-making

## Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

This framework includes, in two places, the principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI). They can be found in the priority areas to emphasize the need for focused effort over the coming years, and in the inner ring of the circle, to ensure that the principles are imbued in all facets of the plan.

### **JUSTICE**

We are committed to creating conditions that provide support, redress barriers, and ensure the creative practice of all students, particularly those who have been historically marginalized and underrepresented in higher education, and the field of art and design.

### **EQUITY**

We are committed to ensuring access to MassArt's educational offerings, resources, and opportunities for all students.

### **DIVERSITY**

We are committed to creating an environment where a diversity of identity, thought, and beliefs are welcomed and encouraged.

### **INCLUSION**

We are committed to creating environments where every student experiences a sense of belonging, feels seen and heard, and contributes as a valued member of the community.



# PLAN COMPONENTS

## Priority Areas

The Priority Areas, developed for the original 10-year plan, are as important today as they were five years ago. The priority areas provide broad directions towards which the high-level strategies are aimed.

### **JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

MassArt will be a college that fosters equitable and authentic participation by sharpening the skills, tools, and will to practice justice at the forefront of our decision making, support systems and educational and interrelational practices.

### **ENVIRONMENT FOR A CREATIVE CAMPUS**

MassArt will have effective, responsive, sustainable systems and infrastructure that provide a learning, working, and living environment where creativity flourishes.

### **QUALITY WORKPLACE AND EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION**

MassArt will operate with clear communication, transparency, collaboration, and effective systems in an equitable and vibrant culture to implement strategic priorities and carry out our mission.

### **TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING**

MassArt will have curricula and teaching practices that retain what we do best and enable us to continuously do better, to become a student-ready college, provide lifelong learning opportunities, and invest in research and innovation to serve our students and other artists, designers, and educators.

### **REPUTATION AND RESOURCES**

MassArt will be a good steward with more robust and enduring resources to support the College's programs and the demand for MassArt's leadership in art, design, making, and art education.



# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

The five high-level strategies are overarching and intentionally ambitious, as well as interconnected and interdependent. They provide an organizing structure to bring together the work of every area of the College.

### **ADVANCE LEARNING, TEACHING, CREATIVITY, AND EXPLORATION**

We embrace our unique leadership role as the only independent public art and design school in the country. As we continue to innovate, we will develop new curricula and pedagogy that prepare students to use the power of art and design to transform our world. We will further embed the principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum and co-curriculum, and eliminate barriers to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary learning and teaching. We will accomplish this with our tenacious and diverse faculty who prepare graduates to take their creative power to address the challenges and possibilities of the workplace and society.

#### **Within two-years, MassArt will have:**

- Launched a Center for Learning and Teaching that supports JEDI initiatives with a focus on developing the capacity of faculty and staff to use data to guide student learning and success, and expanding teaching practices to be inclusive of students' diverse learning styles
- Developed additional courses and programs that take advantage of Low Residency learning to increase flexibility and equity in course offerings and modalities, times, and locations that are responsive to students' ability to balance work and study including their need for academic and socioemotional support
- Increased the number of students who transfer from community college through new articulation agreements with community colleges that lay out a clear pathway for on-time degree completion (this goal is also included in the Admissions and Enrollment Foundational Factor strategy)

# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

### Within five-years, MassArt will have:

- Expanded curricular offerings, including:
  - Early college as a pathway to Bachelor's degree and a 4<sup>OUT OF STOCK</sup>1 pathway from the Bachelor's degree to MFA
  - New majors and certificate programs that are tied to workforce development
  - Made significant progress in building a permanent full-time tenure-track faculty that reflects the diversity of the student body (this goal is also included in the Align and Strengthen Systems for Effectiveness and a Culture of Belonging strategy)
- Established a strong sustainability program (with a special focus on sustainability resources) amplified by a Master's program and complementary undergraduate degree program

### ACTUALIZE CENTERING STUDENT SUCCESS

We are committed to serving every student: pre-college, undergraduate, graduate, certificate and non-degree learners, and all the intersectional identities they bring to our community. We will do this through a student-ready framework focused on fostering a culture of inclusive belonging and creating opportunities to better understand who our students are.

This will be achieved through strong, comprehensive systems of advising, opportunities for engagement, and skill development. MassArt will fully support this enhanced framework for student success that includes advising participation from faculty, professional staff, and peer mentors to provide wrap-around services. Faculty and staff will have access to robust information, training, and development to support this high level strategy.



# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

### **Within two-years, MassArt will have:**

- Launched a digital advising system that is based on a comprehensive review of student advising services and supports
- Partnered with the National Center for First Generation Success
- Established industry and employer advisory boards to expand student internship and hands-on professional opportunities
- Established an organizational structure to support interdisciplinary courses such as Financial Literacy Innovation & Entrepreneurship that are currently offered and in high demand
- Incorporated a human-centered JEDI approach to academic policies and procedures that support access and engagement in student services and inclusive use of physical space for all students, and affinity groups
- Established multi-year goals that improve success rates across identified cohorts, based on identified gaps in retention and graduation rates

### **Within five-years, MassArt will have:**

- Established a Student Success Center that offers in-person and online student support and engagement services, and focuses on being a student-ready college
- Developed credit-bearing, co-curricular courses designed to support students' college transition and experiential learning that connect student learning inside and outside the classroom and/or studio
- Designed and implemented a cycle of program evaluation that tracks impact outcomes of student participants (e.g., retention and graduation rates) in order to inform ways to strengthen and improve programs, services, and enhance spaces that support our students
- Improved support of neurodiverse learners through resources for students, assistive technologies, and training for faculty and staff

# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

### **ALIGN AND STRENGTHEN OUR SYSTEMS FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND A CULTURE OF BELONGING**

Prioritize human-centered JEDI practices and procedures, which are clear and respectfully developed and communicated to recruit, retain, and support a high quality and highly engaged workforce. MassArt intentionally supports ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American) faculty and our young professionals, and acknowledges all faculty and staff who are ending their MassArt careers.

MassArt fosters inclusive spaces to learn, listen, contribute and create, and build a culture of belonging that inherently centers the safety of all members of our community. The College promotes institution-wide and learner-centered community-building for resident, off campus, and commuter students. Additionally, MassArt will continue to develop and support a faculty and staff workforce whose efforts and involvement enable the institution to advance student success for our diverse student population.

#### **Within two-years, MassArt will have:**

- Invested in and built a human resources team to serve as a strategic partner to advance priorities and goals which support best practices in cultivating MassArt as a top-rated workplace
- Developed an easily accessible inventory of resources and practices to align systems for cross-campus collaboration that enhance MassArt's operations both in and out of the classroom
- Formalized support of our ALAANA faculty and staff as well as student affinity-identified groups
- Deployed dedicated resources to support the health and wellbeing of the student community, and will have introduced and supported trauma-informed approaches to teaching and learning to meet the needs of neurodiverse learners
- Enhanced a culture of belonging that centers the physical and psychological safety of all people at MassArt





# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

### **Within five-years, MassArt will have:**

- Be recognized by art and design institutions for our equitable and inclusive practices, which promote a culture of belonging
- Strengthened community-building by renewing long held traditions and rituals, developing new ones, and intentionally fostering a culture of mutual respect and belonging
- Made significant progress in building a permanent full-time tenure-track faculty that reflects the diversity of the student body (this goal is also included in the Advance Learning, Teaching, Creativity, and Exploration strategy)

### **STRENGTHEN ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY**

As the nation's only public college of art and design, we are committed to increasing access and affordability through new and enhanced pathways for traditional, non-traditional, and workforce-aligned learning, with special attention to addressing racial, ethnic, gender, and socio-economic disparities. MassArt will increase pathways for underserved populations, ensure equitable access to supplies and resources, and offer more flexible teaching modalities and course offerings.

### **Within two-years, MassArt will have:**

- Revised and enhanced our transfer policies to reduce barriers for applicants within and outside of Massachusetts' public higher education system (this goal is also included in the Admissions and Enrollment Foundational Factor strategy)
- Refined our readmission policies and practices to center access and promote degree completion (this goal is also included in the Admissions and Enrollment Foundational Factor strategy)
- Increased institutional resources dedicated to support equitable access to supplies and course materials
- Modified, where appropriate, our financial aid policy to ensure equitable alignment with new Federal Student Aid application data that considers the holistic economic impact of a student's family contribution



# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

### **Within five-years, MassArt will have:**

- Increased scholarships through fundraising for the students with the highest level of need to support successful retention and degree completion (this goal is also included in the Financial Performance Foundational Factor strategy)
- Created an Early College and dual enrollment initiative for high school students with emphasis on supporting traditionally underrepresented students in the Commonwealth and bridging their first college year transition (this goal is also included in the Admissions and Enrollment Foundational Factor strategy)
- Increased educational opportunities for Low Residency students, and enhanced online and hybrid course offerings including access to support services that meet students' needs beyond the 9 to 5 work day
- Furthered our ability to support students who seek on-campus, campus-sponsored, and off-campus housing accessible to the campus, through our partnership with the Colleges of the Fenway

### **ELEVATE MASSART'S INFLUENCE AND IMPACT IN ARTS, CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

We affirm MassArt's status as a local and national leader in arts, culture, and innovation, and a premier convener of high quality and timely programming. We will elevate the College's leadership and role as convener on key issues as we deepen our partnerships with community-based organizations. We will provide our students, graduates, and the broader community with access to activities that promote civic engagement and inspire creativity and discovery.

### **Within two-years, MassArt will have:**

- Promoted civic engagement through the arts in our curricular and co-curricular activities by linking student work to community building and global challenges, such as climate change and humanitarian crises
- Reapplied for Carnegie Community Engagement Classification
- Established an advisory council on arts, innovation, and making
- Strengthened the visibility of MassArt Art Museum (MAAM) as a regional leader and destination for public contemporary art and community programming
- Promoted the expertise of MassArt faculty and facilitated their engagement with the media



# PLAN COMPONENTS

## High-Level Strategies

**Within five-years, MassArt will have:**

- Be recognized as a lead advocate for arts education and art and design as foundational drivers of innovation and economic development
- Grown MassArt's creative ecosystem including expanded engagement with our alumni network
- Built a culture that celebrates and encourages non-linear paths, making the College a sought-out destination for students of all ages



# FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS

The foundational factors represent key operational areas of the College that serve as underpinnings for the strategies outlined in this plan. Our financial performance, our approach to enrollment and admissions, and our plans for operations, capital planning and sustainability will make it possible to realize our high-level strategies and enable us to learn, work, and live in an environment where creativity flourishes.



# Foundational Factors: Financial Performance

While all institutions of higher education must address high costs related to facilities, materials, faculty and staff, support services, etc., schools of art and design have some unique requirements. These include specialized facilities, small hands-on focused classes and studios, a broad array of materials and supplies, dedicated studio space and significant safety measures for students working with various materials and equipment. Situated in a large and highly expensive city, MassArt must also navigate high costs for facilities development, maintenance, housing and staff, among other areas. As the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' public art and design college, MassArt is committed to addressing these challenges while remaining focused on student-centered excellence that is affordable, equitable, inclusive, and accessible.

Over the next five years, MassArt will continue to offer the highest quality programs while also focusing on growing our financial resources and ensuring a solid financial foundation. We will do this while simultaneously investing in new programs, degrees and certificates, and moving forward on our overall sustainability goals. This will take collaboration across the College as we examine enrollment management strategies, programmatic mix, sources of non-state revenue, private philanthropy, and a continued commitment from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to invest in this critically important mission.

The following three principles guided our approach and decision-making processes as we developed the two- and five-year goals. They also support all of our work over the life of this plan.

## AFFORDABILITY

The College will continue to prioritize institutional aid with intentional consideration given to access and equity, keeping fees and tuition affordable as we stabilize and increase enrollment partnerships that leverage relationships with the Colleges of the Fenway and the Professional Arts Consortium. These valuable partnerships have allowed the College to provide additional support to our students through cross registration; academic programming; shared residence halls, dining services, health center, intramurals and clubs; technology infrastructure; and other cost reductions and savings initiatives. MassArt will explore new initiatives that improve shared services and increase staff positions to sustain services while reducing and/or maintaining expenses.



# Foundational Factors: Financial Performance

## SUSTAINABILITY

Explore cost savings to traditional fixed costs, such as energy. MassArt will continue to invest in sustainable resources to reduce energy costs and comply with Massachusetts Executive Order #594 on Decarbonizing and Minimizing Environmental Impacts of State Government.

## NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Progressive, sustained investment will be necessary to support new programs, degrees, and certificates that are tied to workforce development and increase access for non-traditional students. Administration and Finance, Academic Affairs, and Institutional Advancement will collaboratively partner to increase revenue, with the aim of affordability for students.

Within two-years, MassArt will have:

- Prioritized institutional aid with intentional consideration given to access and equity, keeping fees and tuition at a reasonable place as we work to stabilize and incrementally increase enrollment
- Further leveraged our relationships with current partners to explore initiatives that improve shared services, increase our staff positions, and expand some benefits and support for our employees that sustain services while reducing and/or maintaining expenses
- Prioritized capital projects that reduce energy costs, working towards the goal of decarbonization and reducing the use of environmentally harmful materials, replacing them with more sustainable products
- Supported curriculum changes with necessary resources to add new certificate programs that align with our mission and are informed by research to determine need, market, and program models



# Foundational Factors: Financial Performance

Within five-years, MassArt will have:

- Increased scholarships through fundraising for the students with the highest level of need to support successful retention and degree completion
- Partnered with relevant state entities to reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources on campus
- Supported curriculum changes with necessary resources to create workforce development programs, majors, and minors and new MFA models, including Low Residency programs
- Created an endowed fund to support emergency requests to address unforeseen expenses that interfere with students' ability to persist and graduate
- Continued collaboration with Colleges of the Fenway on initiatives that serve our students and community at-large and take advantage of savings, enhance purchasing power, and advance shared housing and shared resources to support international students

## FINANCIAL MODEL ASSUMPTIONS

MassArt's state appropriation offsets a portion of these educational expenses and enables the College to keep the cost of attendance affordable for Massachusetts residents. In-state student charges presently cover 50% of the total cost of education per student. Additional revenue sources including student fees, fundraising, and auxiliary enterprises narrow the remaining gap in resources to support educational and operational delivery of the institution. Therefore, the annual state appropriation is critically important to MassArt's planning and future sustainability.

To achieve the goals outlined in the proforma over the life of the plan, we calibrate enrollment, scholarships, institutional financial aid, tuition and fees, support from the Commonwealth, and other revenue sources. Our decisions are guided by the principle of equity and our aim to meet 100% of the need for underrepresented students.

# Foundational Factors: Financial Performance

The following tables are MassArt's Five-Year Proformas for Fiscal Years 2024 to 2029.

**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN  
FISCAL YEARS (FY) 2024 TO 2029  
(In thousands, except enrollment data)**

Undergraduate Operating Accounts	Budgeted FY 2024	Projected FY 2025	Projected FY 2026	Projected FY 2027	Projected FY 2028	Projected FY 2029
I) Fund Balance Carry forward - prior year	\$ 26,752	\$ 26,831	\$ 26,884	\$ 26,920	\$ 26,986	\$ 27,061
II) Funding & Revenue	\$ 57,229	\$ 60,353	\$ 60,936	\$ 61,575	\$ 62,470	\$ 63,368
III) FY Expenditure	\$ 57,150	\$ 60,300	\$ 60,900	\$ 61,509	\$ 62,395	\$ 63,124
IV) Operating Surplus	\$ 79	\$ 53	\$ 36	\$ 66	\$ 75	\$ 244
V) Fund Balance Carry forward - year end	\$ 26,831	\$ 26,884	\$ 26,920	\$ 26,986	\$ 27,061	\$ 27,305

(In thousands, except enrollment data)

II) Funding & Revenue	Budgeted FY 2024	Projected FY 2025	Projected FY 2026	Projected FY 2027	Projected FY 2028	Projected FY 2028
A) State Funding	\$ 25,862	\$ 27,043	\$ 27,743	\$ 28,483	\$ 29,223	\$ 29,963
ARPA Grants, other Grants, Reserve						
B) State Capital Appropriation n/a						
Repairs and maintenance Appropriation						
C) Student Fees						
1) Tuition	\$ 11,412	\$ 12,025	\$ 12,386	\$ 12,633	\$ 12,760	\$ 12,887
Less Tuition Waivers	\$ (354)	\$ (357)	\$ (361)	\$ (364)	\$ (368)	\$ (372)
2) Other Student Fees	\$ 22,100	\$ 22,542	\$ 22,993	\$ 23,223	\$ 23,455	\$ 23,690
Less Financial Aid	\$ (4,599)	\$ (5,000)	\$ (5,075)	\$ (5,300)	\$ (5,500)	\$ (5,700)
Total Student Fees	\$ 28,560	\$ 29,210	\$ 29,943	\$ 30,192	\$ 30,347	\$ 30,505
D) Other Undergraduate Revenue	\$ 2,807	\$ 4,100	\$ 3,250	\$ 2,900	\$ 2,900	\$ 2,900
<b>Total Funding and Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 57,229</b>	<b>\$ 60,353</b>	<b>\$ 60,936</b>	<b>\$ 61,575</b>	<b>\$ 62,470</b>	<b>\$ 63,368</b>
III) FY Expenditure	\$ 57,150	\$ 60,300	\$ 60,900	\$ 61,509	\$ 62,395	\$ 63,124
Enrollment & Rates	Budgeted FY 2024	Budgeted FY 2025	Budgeted FY 2026	Budgeted FY 2027	Budgeted FY 2028	Budgeted FY 2029
FTE Enrollment by Residency						
In-State	1,191	1,261	1,261	1,261	1,261	1,261
Regional	193	207	214	220	227	232
Out-of-State	255	272	280	288	297	307
	1,639	1,740	1,755	1,769	1,785	1,800
Rate - Full Year						
Mandatory Tuition & Fees						
In-State	\$ 14,960	\$ 15,260	\$ 15,720	\$ 16,195	\$ 16,685	\$ 17,190
Regional	\$ 33,690	\$ 34,365	\$ 35,400	\$ 36,465	\$ 37,560	\$ 38,690
Out-of-State	\$ 42,180	\$ 43,025	\$ 43,025	\$ 43,025	\$ 43,025	\$ 43,025
Avg. Room & Board						
Single	\$ 15,435	\$ 15,898	\$ 16,375	\$ 16,866	\$ 17,372	\$ 17,893
Double	\$ 12,847	\$ 13,232	\$ 13,629	\$ 14,038	\$ 14,459	\$ 14,893
Triple	\$ 11,830	\$ 12,185	\$ 12,550	\$ 12,927	\$ 13,315	\$ 13,714




# Foundational Factors: Admissions and Enrollment

In alignment with the BHE Equity Agenda and MassArt's Mission and Values, we have strengthened our admissions and enrollment strategy by reviewing and enhancing admission criteria and policies, and recruitment and retention strategies that support being a student-ready college.

We will continue to streamline transfer and non-traditional pathways to enrollment and timely degree completion, and seek talented students from across the Commonwealth with special emphasis on Gateway Cities. MassArt will work to achieve the optimal mix of Massachusetts residents, New England, non-residents, and international students to achieve both diversity and financial goals.

Within five-years, MassArt will have:

- Increased the number of students who transfer from community college through new articulation agreements with community colleges that lay out a clear pathway for on-time degree completion (this goal is also included in the Advance Learning, Teaching, Creativity, and Exploration strategy)
- Revised and enhanced our transfer policies to reduce barriers for applicants within and outside of Massachusetts' public higher education system (this goal is also included in the Strengthen Access and Affordability strategy)
- Refined our readmission policies and practices to center access and promote degree completion (this goal is also included in the Strengthen Access and Affordability strategy)
- Activated a joint student recruitment effort with Artward Bound
- Created an Early College and dual enrollment initiative for high school students with emphasis on supporting traditionally underrepresented students in the Commonwealth and bridging their transition into their first college year (this goal is also included in the Strengthen Access and Affordability strategy)
- Implemented more flexible degree completion pathways
- Achieved an enrollment breakdown of 70% in-state, 30% New England / out-of-state / international



# Foundational Factors: Operations, Capital Planning, and Sustainability

As we innovate and develop new curricula and pedagogy that prepare students to use the power of art and design to transform our world, we need to update and transform our spaces. We will accomplish this by partnering with the state, community, and private partners to support critical facilities investments essential to the fulfillment of the goals of the plan.

Within two-years, Mass Art will have:

- Completed a Campus Master Plan that supports the priorities of the Strategic Partnership Plan
- Completed a Certified Study on the Tower Building providing a basis for the necessary financial support to address the long-standing challenges posed by this building
- Undertaken a Decarbonization Study and supported other sustainability goals through infrastructure improvements such as water bottle fill stations
- Completed new laboratory facility designed to respond to and address the curriculum, design, application and utilization challenges and opportunities of Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, and Virtual Reality

Within five-years, MassArt will have:

- Begun work to carry out the results of the certified Tower Building study
- Reduced non-renewable energy sources across campus through strategic purchases and working closely with the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance on the Leading by Example program to further reduce energy use
- Continued efforts to build and enhance sustainability resources and space, complete with academic programs and research



# IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The success of the Strategic Partnership Plan will require a commitment to ongoing planning and action in all divisions of MassArt; holding ourselves accountable to make continued progress. Cross department and cross-area planning will further enable innovation and the establishment of new internal collaborations.

As part of the ongoing planning, each department will set yearly action plans tied to the high-level strategies and agree on what comprises success and how they plan to measure progress. Once each year, the institution will gather together to consider our progress, celebrate our successes, identify new opportunities, and discuss ways to strengthen our plans for greater impact. The Vice Presidents and/or Division or Department lead will be responsible for annually soliciting action plans.

The plan will guide our decision-making about staffing and financial resources. For example, budget processes will be aligned with core components of our plan and funds designated for strategic initiatives will be used to support the realization of the high-level strategies. Each year, the College will also designate funds to incentivize innovation, creativity, and collaborative efforts across departments and areas of the College.

# IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As laid out in the table below, we will measure progress on the plan at key junctures and provide annual updates to the community. This includes sharing outcomes to MassArt’s Board of Trustees as well as the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education to keep them apprised of the impact of this plan.

Component	Approach	Timeframe
Action plans for each division	Each division will monitor and assess delivery of activities in their annual work plans. Institutional Research and Strategic Effectiveness (IRSE) will support the development of a streamlined and systematized approach to document achievements	Annually
Progress towards the two- and five-year goals	Vice Presidents will work across their divisions with cross-department teams to track the strengthening/establishment of new systems, policies, tools, and initiatives and will assess use of and engagement with those systems, policies, tools, and initiatives to gain insight into emerging outcomes  <i>Examples of questions to monitor progress towards the goals:</i>	Years two and five

Component	Approach	Timeframe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Were the systems/ policies/ tools/ initiatives created and/or strengthened? In what ways?</li> <li>- How were they used by target audiences (e.g. did faculty participate in Center for Learning and Teaching offerings)?</li> <li>- What did we learn that can inform how we work towards the goal?</li> <li>- What signs are we seeing that show <u>we're</u> achieving the outcomes we desire?</li> </ul>	
Impact of the high-level strategies	The College will evaluate the impacts of the high-level strategies, with a focus on identifying the difference that the plan has made on student success including the success of specific student populations	Conclusion of the plan



# CONCLUSION

The Massachusetts College of Art and Design is an independent public college of art and design, the only one in the nation. We are a leader in the design school space. As such, we also have a mandate to be leaders in providing a rigorous, high quality education that is accessible and affordable, so our graduates are prepared to lead and innovate in their chosen profession.

Our Strategic Partnership Plan outlines a framework for the next five years of our journey. It gives us a shared vision of success and a structured way of moving forward. It is flexible, allowing us to adapt, address unexpected challenges, and take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. It also requires that we monitor our progress and continuously recalibrate our approach for optimal impact as the years progress.

The mission of MassArt is powerful and highly relevant, and our values play a vital role in achieving our goals. For over 150 years, MassArt has grown and evolved in response to the needs of a changing world. Today, in partnership with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts we are more committed than ever to our student's success and to exploring the countless ways that a world-class education in art and design can inspire, excite, empower, and make a significant difference in the world.

# **MASSART**

2024 Strategic Partnership Plan