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# Strategic Plan 2014 and Beyond

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Executive Summary

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Campus Compact Strategic  
Plan

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**Campus Compact**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2013, the National Campus Compact Board of Directors approved the development of a new Strategic Plan, authorizing a process that would conduct a careful review of the developments and trajectory of the higher education civic engagement field, better understand the needs and interests of its over 1100 member institutions, and determine the common, Network-wide strategic priorities to guide National Campus Compact and its 34 State/Multi-State Compacts in achieving their mission. This Plan was developed by a “Strategic Plan Steering Committee” consisting of representatives from the National Board, State Boards (Member Presidents), State Directors and the President of the National office. The development of the plan was conducted to be as inclusive as possible of the incredibly diverse group of stakeholders that make up the Campus Compact network. With facilitation and research support from Wellspring Consulting, this process spanned nine months and involved over 450 Campus Compact member institutions, field experts and funders. We are proud to share with you the results of this process in this summary, Campus Compact’s *Strategic Plan: 2014 and Beyond*.

The Strategic Plan reaffirms our mission and calls on us to build upon our strong foundation of work to expand and deepen our efforts and impact both locally and nationally. It gives us a roadmap to catalyze collaboration, develop the field and its leaders, and leverage resources to further advance civic engagement in higher education. This process has energized and renewed our commitment to this work. Campus Compact remains dedicated to advancing the public purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility. Campus Compact and its members believe that civic engagement is a powerful strategy to address critical contemporary issues and the opportunities to advance the public purpose of higher education are vast. The work of Campus Compact will continue to speak to higher education institutions’ top priorities. The Plan opens a dialogue about how we accomplish our mission and puts in place a dynamic vehicle that adjusts to shifting elements in the field and activities occurring on the ground. State Compacts must and will pursue the Plan in their own unique way to best meet local needs by placing emphasis on specific priorities as well as adding new priorities of their own.

Campus Compact is the largest national organization dedicated to civic engagement in higher education. We will continue our long tradition of leadership in the field of civic engagement and extensive, diverse network of Presidents, faculty and staff to sustain and support the community engagement efforts of our members. With this plan we call for the substantial deepening of what it truly means to be community engaged, pledging to:

- Push the field of civic engagement forward by convening and leading conversations with our colleagues and other organizations that are shaping the field
- Be a vital source of:
  - Tools and resources for carrying out civic engagement work
  - Best practices in civic engagement
  - Innovative civic engagement programs
  - Evidence for the impact and benefit of civic engagement
  - New ideas for civic engagement scholarship
- Increase funding for the field of civic engagement

We believe that higher education has a unique role as vital change agents and architects of a diverse democracy, committed to educating students for responsible citizenship in ways that both deepen their education and improve the quality of community life. The national vision guided by a local approach under the strong presidential leadership at the national and local level and the innovative and crucial contributions by faculty, staff, and students will lead to a unified network and greater collective impact.

Our society values and benefits from the rich and diverse ways that higher education achieves effective approaches to greater civic engagement. To increase visibility, channel resources and facilitate demonstration of impact, Campus Compact will strive for greater strategic focus in a select number of program areas. Based on feedback from members, interviews with field experts and deliberation within Campus Compact, we will bring added focus to the following priorities for the next five years:

- Establish meaningful, reciprocal community partnerships – support and highlight strong, sustainable, democratic partnerships between higher education and community organizations for positive impact on society
- Improve college access and retention – demonstrate that civic engagement is a vehicle for positively impacting an individual ability to access and achieve post secondary education
- Enhance college readiness in K to 12 education – improve and strengthen young people’s ability to have successful college careers
- Better prepare college students for their careers and for society – educate the next generation of citizens to be active and responsible participants in our democracy

Campus Compact believes that significant progress can be made in these priorities with the thoughtful use of civic engagement as a strategy and rich collaborations with key partners. The staff and Boards of National Campus Compact and the State/Multi-State Compacts include a wealth of talent and experience. In the coming years, we will increase our commitment to “One Compact,” seeking to be a unified network with strong collegiality, mutual trust and shared values.

Ultimately, the work of Campus Compact is resulting in the deepening of the civic purpose of higher education. To achieve this, we envision a more unified and aligned Campus Compact that leads conversations with key agents that are shaping the civic engagement field, that becomes a vital field resource for tools, best practices, idea generation and evidence, and that inspires increased funding for the field.

To realize this vision, we will be guided by three goals and fourteen objectives:

<i>Goals</i>	<i>Objectives</i>
Elevate the impact of the civic engagement field by building partnerships and promoting alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish national formal and informal partnerships with key players in the civic engagement field</li> <li>➤ Promote a research agenda to prove and communicate the effectiveness of civic engagement approaches</li> <li>➤ Be a visible participant in major civic engagement conferences</li> <li>➤ Hold a biennial President’s Summit</li> </ul>
Help solve critical issues facing member institutions and their communities by catalyzing, promoting and amplifying civic engagement innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pursue demonstration projects that test the effectiveness of innovative civic engagement ideas related to the Network-wide programmatic priorities, partnering with funders and others in the field</li> <li>➤ Develop online forums for showcasing best practices on member campuses</li> <li>➤ Hold state / regional convenings annually for members that showcase innovative ideas and best practices, with preference for themes relating to the Network-wide priorities</li> <li>➤ Provide strategies and tools to members that enable monitoring and measuring of activities and outcomes of civic engagement</li> </ul>
Maximize our collective potential as a Network through improved accountability, collaboration and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop a shared understanding of what it means to be a member of Campus Compact</li> <li>➤ Develop standards that are shared by all State Compacts with clear expectations for operations, performance and measurement</li> <li>➤ Increase the engagement of State Compact Boards in the Network overall and in overseeing the work in their state</li> <li>➤ Improve communication flows from the National staff and National Board to State Boards and member presidents</li> <li>➤ Enhance the use of Network committees and Network-wide meetings to ensure cross-Network alignment</li> <li>➤ Develop a formalized fundraising plan for National Campus Compact</li> </ul>

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