



Building a Great Plan Together

The Civic Action Plan development process is an opportunity for all campuses to maximize the impact of engagement for students, communities, and our shared world. We encourage all colleges and universities to move forward from your own starting point. We hope all institutions will learn from effective practices of other and that at least some institutions will feel motivated and prepared to break new ground.

Plans should emphasize sustainable change, primarily through building lasting capacity and changing systems, policies, and culture. We invite you to think less about adding new programs and more about changing teaching, research, and all forms of ongoing institutional action so that everything you do is designed to advance the public good.

Great Civic Action Plans will move campuses toward comprehensive engagement for the common good. Rather than focusing on a single area, such as student engagement, CAPs create an opportunity to envision an integrated approach to engaged teaching, scholarship, partnerships, and institutional action. Plans will demonstrate how your institution will broaden and deepen its work in realizing the five commitments from the Action Statement.

As you build your plan, consider including sections that address the elements below. We offer this as a Word document so that you may alter the sections and customize it for your unique institutional needs. Of course, feel free to disregard this template and build a plan to meet your needs.

This document includes a summary template with brief section descriptors. It is accompanied by a section which offers detail and examples for thinking about the template components.

Civic Action Plans should be submitted one year after the president or chancellor signs the 30th Anniversary Action Statement. If you have questions about when the statement was signed or when you are ready to share your plan, please email CAP@compact.org.

Civic Action Plan Template

Vision/Mission (paragraph or two)

Begin with the end in mind—with just a couple of paragraphs, introduce the overarching vision for institutional structural, cultural, and policy change that will enable the college/university to fully achieve its public serving mission and commitments embedded in the Action Statement.

Approach (2-3 pages)

How will you work toward this vision? Your strategic approach should be organically connected to the outcomes and indicators you seek and should link to your existing infrastructure and your plans for improving it. Your strategic approach is the overarching framework for enacting the change you seek. Include a section on the composition and responsibilities of the planning team and why those stakeholders have the ability to bring about the systems, culture, and capacity building change that the plan will include.

Outcomes (table or other abbreviated format)

How will you measure progress? The outcomes section makes the vision and approach concrete. It includes detail about how specific actions will change the institution, students, faculty, staff, and community members and how change can be measured over time. Outcomes should reflect specific attention to sustainable capacity development for engagement and partnership, culture change, and policy and systems adjustment.

Implementation (table or other abbreviated format)

How will the Civic Action Plan be put into motion? How will it stay in motion? This section outlines specific stages of change, who needs to be involved, specific tasks that need to be accomplished, and deadlines for achievement. There is a focus on responsibility and monitoring.

Communication (table or brief narrative; could be incorporated into both outcomes and implementation)

This section should include a narrative discussion or a table of items that detail plans for communicating institutional action, partnership development, stories, etc. (both internally and externally) that emerge during the planning process and impact local and national dialogue about the public value and purposes of higher education. Include detail about how institutional communications/public relations offices are included.

Building the template: questions and suggestions

VISION/MISSION—GO BOLD!

Begin with the end in mind—introduce the overarching vision for institutional structural, cultural, and policy change that will enable the college/university to fully achieve its public serving mission and commitments embedded in the Action Statement:

We empower our students, faculty, staff and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus – nearby and around the world.

We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities – economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

We harness the capacity of our institutions – through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice – to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

Questions to consider

1. *What change do you seek to achieve through your plan?*
2. *How will this change help you advance the commitments in the 30th Anniversary Action Statement?*
3. *How will this change contribute to mission achievement for the institution?*

APPROACH—STRATEGIC ORGANIZING FOR IMPACT

How will you work toward this vision? Your strategic approach should be organically connected to the outcomes and indicators you seek and should link to your existing infrastructure and your plans for improving it. Your strategic approach is the overarching framework for enacting the change you seek.

In order to develop your approach, begin by mapping the assets, resources, and data available to you. This includes the development of the planning team.

INSTITUTIONAL BASELINE—WHAT ARE YOUR ASSETS?

1. Describe the existing engagement infrastructure on your campus. How do you already support community engagement?
2. What current plans or planning efforts should the Civic Action Plan connect with?
3. How is your college or university serving as an anchor institution in the community?
4. How are the five Action Statement commitments currently being addressed on your campus?
5. What existing data do you have that may allow you to create benchmarks in relation to the five commitments?

COMMUNITY BASELINE—WHAT ARE YOUR ASSETS?

1. Describe the existing engagement infrastructure in the community. What are the key assets in the community?
2. What current collective impact efforts exist that the Civic Action Plan should connect with?
3. Who are the key private, nonprofit, and government organizations that are already partners or that could be?
4. What is the focus of community development efforts? Are there specific commitments that collaborative efforts are targeting?
5. What existing data do you have or can you access that could create benchmarks in relation to the five commitments/community-identified priorities?

PLANNING TEAM—DRIVERS OF CHANGE, CONNECTORS

1. *Who will be on your team?*
2. *What positions this group to see the big picture at the institution and in the community?*
3. *What gives your team the necessary perspective, persistence, and power to make lasting change?*
4. *What are the expectations of team members and of the team as a whole?*
5. *How will the team ensure that voices beyond those included on the team are heard?*

6. *Is the team inclusive of the variety of stakeholders involved in an aligned approach, including the following:*

- *Key community leaders (government, private, nonprofit)*
- *Senior administrator (preferably CAO)*
- *Strong representation from academic leadership (deans, department chairs)*
- *Engagement leadership (i.e. center directors)*
- *Engaged faculty*
- *Students*
- *Key community-affecting functional areas such as admissions, financial aid, human resources, purchasing, real estate, etc*
- *Institutional research*

Next, think about how these resources can best be leveraged. Is it through a platform partnership as a vehicle for pulling the pieces together? Is it through joining or initiating a collective impact effort in the community in collaboration with multiple partners? Is it through a signature model unique to the institution? Something else? Below are examples of different approaches. Consider a wide variety of opportunities to connect, align, and leverage community and institutional assets.

Platform partnership: A central partnership between your organization and one or more external entities to achieve a set of shared goals. This might be, for example, a partnership with a particular neighborhood or a K-12 school system that allows for engagement by many faculty, students, and units on campus.

Leadership in a collective impact network: Perhaps your community seeks to achieve a goal that requires broad collaboration, such as increasing degree attainment across a city or neighborhood. Your institution might take the lead on such an effort, coordinating the work of others and aligning your own engagement efforts in pursuit of that outcome.

Signature model: This is an approach in which the institution's identity is tied to an overarching engagement commitment. The opportunities for engagement might be varied, but they are structured, for example, to give every student an engagement experience of one kind or another.

Questions to consider

1. *Will you adopt one of the strategic approaches outlined above? Or will you develop an approach of your own?*

2. *Why do you think it will work?*
3. *How will this approach relate to your existing engagement infrastructure? Who will do what? Do you need to change relationships or structures to achieve the outcomes you seek?*
4. *How does your strategic approach connect to the other strategic priorities of your institution?*

OUTCOMES

How will you measure progress? The outcomes section makes the vision and approach concrete. It includes detail about how specific actions will change the institution, students, faculty, staff, and community members and the ways in which change can be measured over time. Outcomes should reflect specific attention to sustainable capacity development for engagement and partnership, culture change, and policy and systems adjustment.

TYPES OF CHANGE FOR FOCUS

Sustainable capacity development

- How will you increase the capacity of faculty, students, and staff to engage effectively with communities beyond the campus?
- How will you build your institutions capacity to support partnerships?

Culture

- How will you create a culture in which all units expect to advance public goods through their work?
- How will you spur a campus-wide conversation about the public purposes of the whole institution?
 - Example: How will you create an environment in which your purchasing and HR departments consider whether their efforts can reinforce relationships build through teaching and research partnerships?

Policy and systems

- How will you advance progress in policy areas such as:
 - Tenure, promotion, and faculty rewards;
 - staff evaluation and rewards;
 - curricular change;

- admissions and financial aid; employment, purchasing and real estate decisions; and
- community voice and participation?

Sample outcomes measurement

Outcome	Type of change	Commitment	Measure(s)	Indicator(s)
Engaged scholarship is rewarded in our promotion and tenure processes	System/Policy	#5. We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.	Departmental data on promotion and tenure awards; including percentages of those who are involved in engaged teaching and research	Increased number of promotions for scholars focused on public value Increased number of faculty receiving tenure because of the quality and centrality of their engaged teaching and research
Faculty understand how to incorporate engaged teaching and research into their work	Culture	#5. We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.	Number of faculty attending workshops focused on engagement Survey of department chairs	Increased number of community-engaged courses offered Increased number of community-based research projects underway

Questions to consider

1. *How are these outcomes tied specifically to the five commitments in the Action Statement?*
2. *Describe the performance measures and indicators tied to the outcomes. How can progress be measured over time?*
3. *How will these actions change your institution? How will medium-term changes contribute to lasting change for students and communities?*

TIMELINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

How will the Civic Action Plan be put into motion? How will it stay in motion? This section outlines specific stages of change, who needs to be involved, specific tasks that need to be accomplished, and deadlines for achievement. There is a focus on responsibility and monitoring.

Sample table for progress monitoring

Activity	Date	Responsible	Status
Meeting with the mayor's office.	November 2	Name	Scheduled
Presentation for faculty: slide preparation	November 15	Name	In process
Purchasing department meeting with small business bureau	December 1	Name	Scheduled, materials development underway

Questions to consider

1. *What is the overall timeframe for the plan? How long will it take to build capacity, reform systems and policies, and deepen the campus culture of engagement?*
2. *When will key plan steps take place?*
3. *Who is responsible for each element of the plan?*
4. *What reporting mechanism will allow for ongoing plan monitoring?*
5. *Who is responsible for monitoring plan progress?*

COMMUNICATION

As an action-oriented coalition of colleges and universities, we ask that our members work toward field-level change in collaboration. This includes the following systemic efforts emphasized throughout the plan:

- Promotion and tenure policies that reward community engagement
- Sustainability

- Higher education participation in Pre-K-20 partnerships
- Increasing access, success, and completion through community engagement
- Higher education as an engine for breaking down inequality

The combined efforts of hundreds of colleges and universities (representing all institution types and geographies) is a powerful story about the public purpose of higher education and our collective ability to create a more just, democratic, and equitable world. This section should focus on the micro and macro stories that can contribute to shaping the local and national dialogue about the public value and purposes of higher education as part of your plan development and implementation.

Questions to consider

1. *What has emerged from your planning process that can contribute to the dialogue about the public value and purposes of higher education locally? Nationally?*
2. *How will you communicate with others about your work, share lessons, and inspire others? How is this incorporated into the plan in terms of activities, tasks, stakeholder involvement?*
3. *Are there opportunities for the voice of the president and chancellor, individually, or in partnership with others, to author op-ed pieces, lead efforts to draw national attention to systems, policy, and cultural change?*

Campus Compact is here to help

Campus Compact, both through our national office and through state and regional Compacts, stands ready to help our members build great CAPs. Through the upcoming year, we will be building web resources to support your efforts. Check **compact.org** frequently. Reach out to the national office or your state or regional Compact for advice and guidance.

Knowledge Hubs:

In order to support colleges and universities in developing and implementing high-impact Campus Civic Action Plans, we are developing a collection of knowledge hubs. Each hub contains key resources, organizations, and exemplars to provide information, partnership, and inspiration as you shape the future of community engagement at your institution.

Visit **compact.org/knowledge-hubs/** to learn more.

Civic Action Planning Institutes:

Campus Compact's national office and state and regional Compacts are hosting Institutes around the country to provide planning teams with inspiration, information, and time to share resources and ideas for leveraging existing campus infrastructure for engagement and for boldly exploring new areas and opportunities for impact.

Visit **compact.org/civic-action-planning-institutes/** to learn more.

With hundreds of Campus Compact Members simultaneously developing and implementing Civic Action Plans, we have an opportunity to accelerate the pace of positive change on our campuses and in our communities. On each campus, our impact can be significant. Across the country, our impact can be extraordinary. Share your plan with us at CAP@compact.org to help us tell the story of the public value of higher education.

Let's go bold together.