

Competing for Global Leadership: *A Framework for a Massachusetts International Strategy*

Global Massachusetts **2024** *Winning the Competition for Talent and Innovation*

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Massachusetts has played an historic role internationally for the United States, opening up trading links for the colonies in the 1600s and with China in the 1700s. Salem and later Boston were the gateways for global trade.

Massachusetts has the opportunity to lead again but will not achieve its full potential without an intentional, coordinated, and sustained international strategy that is driven by public-private partnerships and transcends changes in leadership in both the public and private sectors.

Despite recent successes, Massachusetts has not fully realized its potential as an international gateway to and from the U.S. and as a destination for business and tourism.

The Boston 2024 Summer Olympics efforts could provide a significant platform for a global strategy. However, we will only realize the full value of that opportunity if we have a successful economic development and regional business and tourism marketing strategy to promote globally.

We need to ask ourselves: How do we achieve the level of global success in other sectors that life sciences currently enjoys, and how do we sustain our leadership in the life sciences? With the higher education business model under significant pressure, how do we assure that our greatest international asset remains a vibrant global player? And most fundamentally, what will it take for us to attract top talent from around the world in the next ten years?

As Mayor Marty Walsh begins his second year in office and Governor Charlie Baker unveils his economic development priorities, Mass Insight and its partners in the globally-engaged community in Massachusetts have developed a framework for an international strategy for the Commonwealth.



Mass Insight

Challenges: *Despite many assets, too much potential is unrealized*

- **Brand awareness. Universities and life sciences plus.** The Commonwealth has done well promoting life sciences internationally, making it a recognized destination for life sciences companies and now home to nine of the ten top global pharma firms. And our top-tier universities are recognized as global leaders internationally.

However, Massachusetts does less well promoting the full range of its innovation economy, including financial services and the tech sectors along with life sciences, and does not keep pace with the tourism marketing that Silicon Valley has used for competitive advantage. At the municipal level, Boston does not have the same clear brand recognition as larger cities like New York or Los Angeles, nor is it an automatic destination for tourists.

- **Untapped university assets. Leverage the international networks.** Massachusetts continues to be a strong destination for international students, with enrollment increasing to more than 50,000 international students, up by 10.2% between 2013 and 2014, with 30% of those students from China and 11% from India, two key Asian markets.

We also send nearly 15,000 domestic students annually to study abroad programs through colleges and universities in the Commonwealth¹.

While we do a good job in recruiting international students, we do not do as well in promoting economic opportunities to them while they are here. Additionally, while Harvard and MIT may be our recognized institutions overseas, we can do more with other institutions to ensure that they are part of the international strategy.

- **The diversity of international networks in Massachusetts can make coordination difficult.** We are fortunate to have such diverse and active international networks. There are nearly 60 countries represented by consuls general or honorary consular members in Eastern Massachusetts, with a handful of others located in New England. In addition, there are countless country-based trade associations, international student groups, global university programs, and international policy groups that make this area a rich location for global engagement.

Challenges abound in both disseminating our economic message and in organizing partnerships with all these groups. Relationships need to be built early and have to be re-started during political transitions. Lack of geographic or sector priorities also results in a lack of focus on networks which are likely to provide the most strategic benefit.

¹ "OPEN DOORS FACT SHEET: Massachusetts," Institute of International Education, accessed November 18, 2014, <http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/Fact-Sheets-by-US-State/2014>.

Global Massachusetts 2024

Winning the Competition for Talent and Innovation

Objectives - A successful international strategy for Massachusetts would focus on six core goals:

Market Boston as a “global gateway” for innovation to New England and the U.S.

Bring together a public-private partnership that unifies Greater Boston marketing in one brand, supported by government, higher education, non-profits, and business.

- Market Global Boston – “Gateway for Innovation”.
- Coordinate branding with the entrepreneurial and innovation communities and agencies.

Expand “in-missions” to complement targeted trade missions

In addition to trade missions, which can play an important role, organize “in-mission” efforts to engage visiting executives and public sector leaders, coordinating networks of our universities and businesses.

- “In-Missions” – Trade missions without travel.
- Trade missions matter: Prioritize long-term relationships.

Align with universities to maximize economic development

Mobilize international students as future global connectors to Massachusetts by engaging students in business opportunities while they are here and better engage college and university networks.

- A Student “Welcome Package” and Receptions to better connect students and their parents.
- Expand existing “Global Alumni” networks.
- College and university speakers, partners, etc. as targets for “in-missions”.
- Tap into faculty country expertise.

Coordinate our international relationships

Build relationships with global partners early and prioritize our connections to achieve specific goals.

- Future Sister City/Sister State agreements must have concrete goals with dedicated actors to achieve goals; priority agreements should be revitalized with these criteria.
- Build relationships with the Consular Corps and other locally-based international actors early to ensure maximum returns.

Promote a federal talent and trade agenda

Use our strong delegation in Congress to pursue reforms that will benefit the Commonwealth in immigration and trade.

- Pursue H1-B Visa Reform
- Through the Congressional delegation and with input from the Governor and mayors, support the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership and Trans-Pacific Partnership to grow jobs here.
- Don’t reinvent the wheel – use federal agency resources that work, like the Department of Commerce and US Small Business Administration.

Set goals and build out a broader set of international success metrics

Set specific and targeted goals tied to metrics beyond exports, FDI, and hotel nights – we can’t win if we do not focus and sustain efforts.

Global Massachusetts 2024

Winning the Competition for Talent and Innovation

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International Strategy Advisors:

Aaron Annable

Acting Consul General,
Consulate General of Canada in Boston

Christa Bleyleben

Managing Partner,
MassGlobalPartners and former
Executive Director,
Mass. Office of International Trade & Investment

Fabien Fieschi

Consul General,
Consulate General of France in Boston

Emily Heisig

Senior Vice President,
Communications & Federal Affairs,
The New England Council

Daniel Hernández Joseph

Consul General,
Consulate General of Mexico in Boston

Tsutomu Himeno

Consul General,
Consulate General of Japan in Boston

Johnny Ip

President,
Hong Kong Association of Massachusetts

Susie Kitchens

Consul General,
British Consulate General Boston

Veronica Martini

Associate Director for Strategy & Development, David
Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies,
Harvard University

Felix Moesner

Consul/CEO,
Consulate of Switzerland/Swissnex Boston

Kristen Rupert

Executive Director,
AIM International Business Council

Roy "Chip" Wiggins

Dean of Business and The McCallum
Graduate School of Business,
Bentley University

Yehuda Yaakov

Consul General,
Consulate General of Israel to New England

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