Alliance Community Overview
America's Promise Alliance

What is Our Alliance Community?

Our Alliance brings the most inspiring youth-supporting organizations into authentic community with one another and grounds our work together in the spirit of radical support among leaders and organizations. This community allows us to tap into the collective wisdom and experience that exists across many leaders and organizations. We use our collective wisdom and power to (1) strengthen our organizations, (2) launch new collaborations, and (3) form powerful coalitions in pursuit of systemic change.

What Makes This Community Different?

We built this new community based on insights from 180 different organizations, with a focus on understanding (1) what youth-supporting organizations wanted and needed in this moment and (2) the ways in which other collective impact efforts have fallen short of their potential. That learning created a community that is differentiated from similar offerings in several important ways:

1. We include **5 senior leaders** from each member organization, not just CEO's.

2. We include organizations working on a **broader set of intersectional outcome areas**[1].

3. We are an **independent community** that de-centers philanthropy as the primary field-builder and convener in our sector, allowing (1) organizations to bring greater candor to our work together (the things you are actually struggling with the most) and (2) allowing us the independence to provide the supports our members say they want and need.

4. We are a single community that **encompasses organizational improvement and systemic change work**. We start with a focus on your priorities and what you are trying to get done, recognizing organizational improvement is a massive lever for improving outcomes for the millions of young people we collectively serve. Within the same community, we offer you the opportunity to join powerful coalitions in pursuit of systemic change.

5. We are **an action-oriented community** focused on decisions you are making, things you are trying to do with and for your organization, and collective action we are taking together. APA provides high-quality programming to structure all of our work together, making it easy for busy organizations and leaders to contribute and benefit.

6. We are a **continuous community,** a piece of essential infrastructure for our field, a place you can invest in, and a community committed to getting better over time.

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[1] Our community includes organizations working in education & youth development, racial & social justice, workforce development & economic mobility, and mental health & wellbeing.

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Our Community: Member Organizations

To-date, over 40 organizations (200 leaders) have committed to joining our founding community.

Big Brothers Big Sisters
Bottom Line
Boyle Heights Arts Conservatory
Boys & Girls Club of America
Capital Partners for Education
City Year
College Board Foundation
College Possible
Communities in Schools
Do Something
Education Trust
Eye to Eye

Food Corps
Forum for Youth Investment
Friends of the Children
It Gets Better
Jobs for the Future
Let's Get Ready
Literacy Lab
MENTOR
National Academy Foundation
New Classrooms
NPower
Opportunity Network

Our Turn
PENCIL
Philadelphia Youth Network
Reading Partners
RE-Center – Race Equity in Education
Search Institute
Surge Institute
Transcend Education
Turnaround for Children
uAspire
Urban Alliance
UNCF
YouthBuild

Programming Overview

We provide a robust set of program offerings to our community. Each individual opts-into the programming that can best support them and their work. We offer three different types of programming in our Alliance community.

1. Responsive programming: Program offerings that are responsive to the idiosyncratic needs of you as an individual and to the needs of your organization.

2. Programming designed to meet shared needs and opportunities: Knowledge sharing and capacity building around the most shared and important needs that exists across our member organizations.

3. Collective action: Programming that facilitates our collective action in pursuit of specific policy and practice change in our four practice areas.

Leadership Cohorts: Support for Individual Leaders
Strategic Support: Support on a Strategic Question

Knowledge Sharing: Community Collaborations
Capacity Building: Program Tracks

Annual Research: Collective Learning Agenda
Systemic Change Coalitions: Policy & Practice Change

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Programming Detail

Below is an overview of the six program offerings in our community.

(1) Leadership Cohorts: All leaders in the Alliance community have the option of joining a 2-year leadership cohort. These leadership cohorts are your "relational center" of your Alliance experience and the place you go to get support for the hardest things you are trying to figure out in your job. Details include:

- 2 years in length; monthly meetings
- 8-10 leaders per cohort
- Composed of leaders with the same functional role at organizations of similar stage and size
- Well-designed cohort model that structures deep sharing, problem-solving, and content-driven exploration

(2) Strategic Support: Each organization has the option of receiving strategic support annually. This support focuses on one of the most important things that you are trying to figure out, an issue that could be powerfully informed by learning from the experiences of other organizations. APA then identifies the other members of the community that have the most relevant experience in that area, and brings you all together for a well-designed, 3-hour strategy session. APA:

- Helps you identify your strategic issue and sharpen your strategic question
- Recruits other organizations to serve as "experts" for your strategy session
- Organizes and facilitates a 3-hour strategy session
- Helps codify the learnings and next steps

Each organization has the option of receiving this strategic support each year. You also may be asked to serve as an expert for another organization's strategy session.

(3) Community Collaborations: Many of the issues you are managing within your organization also exist across many organizations in our community. Community Collaborations offer an efficient way to learn how multiple organizations are thinking about, responding to, and solving for a specific decision or dynamic. Community Collaborations:

- Are one-time, 60–90-minute sessions
- Offer a level of candor and honesty that rarely exists in other convening spaces
- Focus on specific practices and learnings you can bring back to your organization
- Help build relationships among leaders and organizations in our Alliance managing similar issues

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Community Collaboration Topics
Supporting front-line & AmeriCorps staff during tumultuous times **|** Effective advocacy practices in a chaotic landscape **|** Challenges & achievements in advancing DEI work within our organizations **|** I don't have the Board of Directors I need for where we are going

(4) Program Tracks: Each Program Track focuses on a specific capacity building initiative you will bring back and implement in your organization. We believe that we design better solutions in partnership with field-leading experts and intimate cohorts with our peers. Supported by the top experts in the field, Program Tracks allow you to learn best practices from field-leading experts, design in intimate cohorts with other leaders from the community, receive feedback on your design work from your peers, and ultimately complete a finished product to bring back to your organization for implementation. Program Tracks include:

- 3-5 sessions over 3-8 months
- An intimate cohort of 10-15 leaders working together on the same objective

Program Track Examples
Building a strategic evidence plan **|** Building a mental health screening and referral protocol into your program model **|** Leadership development for first time Executive Team leaders **|** Evolving your revenue model **|** Transforming your fundraising practices **|** What comes after the strategic plan: best practices for implementing and managing to your plan

(5) State of the Field Research: Each year, our community collectively defines a learning agenda and APA conducts national, student-centric research against that agenda. This State of the Field Research is our community's annual lever for driving attention, learning, reflection, action, and investment in our four practice areas. State of the Field Research includes:

- Inquiry focused in our four practice areas
- Alliance community collectively designs a learning agenda
- APA conducts national research against that learning agenda
- Alliance community works together to define the analysis, best practices, and dissemination plan
- APA communicates the findings and implications to a large and diverse national audience

(6) Systemic Change Coalitions: Each systemic change coalition is built around a single policy or practice we are trying to change, chosen from our four practice areas. We source ideas for the policies or practices most well-positioned for systemic change from our Alliance community. Once selected, we build

powerful coalitions around each selected systemic change initiative. We will work on 2-4 issues at any given time. Within each collation, APA provides:

- Theory of Action facilitation
- Original Research
- National Storytelling Campaigns
- Policy Support
- Support for Local Activations

Collective Action: Our Practice Areas

The focus of our collaboration as a community will be on four interconnected areas that will play an outsized role in shaping outcomes for young people and for our country. In each of these areas, we focus on addressing the immediate needs of young people and evolving specific the policies and practices that can change trajectories for future generations.

(1) Education: Our work begins with supporting holistic student recovery in response to the disruption of the last two years and reimagining schools to better serve all students.

(2) Workforce: We focus on navigating a challenging post-secondary landscape and reimagining the relationship between post-secondary education and early employment.

(3) Democracy: Empowering a new generation of young leaders, we will work to foster an inclusive democracy and to strengthen our common civic bond.

(4) Racial Justice & Equity: In pursuit of racial justice and equity, we have a powerful opportunity to transform our organizations and to use the collective power of this community to advocate for broader changes to the way our field operates.