



# USA Country Information

## Boston



### Traveling to and staying in Boston

Boston is the capital of the State of Massachusetts and the largest city in New England, with approximately 5 million people living in the greater metro area. This includes a student population of approximately 250,000 enrolled at more than 60 institutions of higher education. As a leading academic, research, and innovation hub, Boston is home to one of the largest concentrations of international students globally.

Just six hours by air from the Netherlands, Boston is internationally accessible via Logan Airport. Logan sits at the edge of the city and is most easily accessed by ride sharing services. New York City is Boston's nearest metropolitan neighbor, with commuter rail and flights frequently running between the two, as well as Washington, DC and Philadelphia.

While many Americans tend to be car-reliant, Boston does have a mass transit system (MBTA) composed of subway ("the T"), commuter rail, and bus. Boston is not nearly as biking-friendly as the Netherlands, but the region's younger professionals are sustainability-minded, and bike lanes are beginning to proliferate in the metro area. The greater metro area, which includes Cambridge, Somerville, and Brookline, is also compact and highly walkable.

### Characteristics of the area, culture, do's and don'ts

Boston is a small port city with an air of Old-World, maritime charm. The city itself is known for its narrow cobblestone streets,

brick and brownstone homes, small neighborhoods defined by waves of immigration, and seafood.

Bostonians love the water, local sports, outdoor adventure, the full four seasons, the arts, innovation, and sustainability. Foodie culture is on the rise, too. Bostonians passionately love their sports, and it's strongly advised to go to at least one baseball, one basketball, and one hockey game. Be sure to study up on the Red Sox, Celtics, Bruins, and New England Revolution.

Boston is also home to a small, but vibrant arts scene, which somewhat makes up for its more conservative night life. Check out the Museum of Fine Arts, the Institute for Contemporary Art, and further-flung museums like MASS MoCA. Finally, greater Boston has an increasingly strong culture of sustainability and innovation. Boston is a great place for possibility and ideas and people who are enthused about working together to build a sustainable future.

### Doing business in Boston

Boston is a small city, and its many sectors and research areas are highly interconnected. While New England is sometimes known for being reserved, in practice, Boston is an open city. Its intellectual and innovation ecosystems, in particular, are collaboration-driven, less formal than you might expect, and friendly. Of course, different sectors are more formal than others—for example, the financial sector. Ultimately, Boston is relationship and knowledge-sharing driven, and if you have intellectual capital, strong work ethic, networking skills, and enthusiasm to offer, you can successfully make an entrée into the city's business culture.

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### Best practices for doing business in Boston:

- Invest in repeated quality face time. Boston takes time and in-person relationship-building at networking and creative community events, research talks, university mixers, demo days, and conferences.
- Ask for advice. Bostonians are always ready to sit down over a cup of coffee and talk. These conversations can lead to a longer-term, mutually beneficial professional relationship.
- Have an informal elevator pitch ready. What's your story? What are your goals? What makes you interesting? What are you seeking to learn?
- Be ambitious and be confident in what you have to offer. Bostonians want to see that you're critically thinking through your next steps and are well-prepared with thorough research.
- Build relationships. Bostonians want to understand you as a person because it translates into how you do business and what you would be like as a partner. Get ready for small talk!
- Read between the lines. Most Americans (whether they're in Boston or not) can very politely tell you "no" or "maybe" or "later" or "how about this instead?" without you realizing it. So, listen carefully and read between the lines. Don't take all statements literally or at face value.
- Represent yourself. Boston respects people who show up genuinely, comfortably, and confidently representing themselves through attitude and dress.

### The higher education system: universities, research centers, scholarships

Greater Boston is first and foremost known for its intellectual and innovation ecosystems, which are closely intertwined. The region's 60+ institutions of higher education include Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which need no introduction to a global audience. Beyond Harvard and MIT, Massachusetts boasts a network of top-ranked public research universities, niche research institutions, and small liberal arts colleges. Leading research universities include the University of Massachusetts, Northeastern University, Brandeis University, and Boston University. Tufts University is home to one of the top five international relations graduate programs in the world. Boston College, Amherst College, Williams College, Wellesley College, Smith College, and Mount Holyoke lead the US charts for top liberal arts colleges. The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute is one of the top marine research-dedicated institutions

in the world. Boston's world-class hospitals are also often leading teaching hospitals, as exemplified by the connection between Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital.

The cost of education is generally greater in the US than in Europe, so when exploring programs at any of greater Boston's institutions of higher education, reach out to resource centers for international students for more information on scholarship opportunities.

### Life Sciences

Boston is one of the world's leading hubs for biotech, pharmaceuticals, and medical technologies. Greater Boston area enjoys the presence of 19 out of 20 largest pharmaceutical companies and all 10 largest medical devices companies worldwide. Moreover, the biotech sector received over \$4.8 billion in venture capital in 2018. And probably the most important statistic, Massachusetts-headquartered companies have developed therapies that treat patient populations of up to 2 billion patients around the world. The medical device industry employs 25,000 people and its exports total \$6.13 billion, of which most go to the Netherlands (12.7%).

One of the greatest strengths of the Boston ecosystem is connectivity, as exemplified by the Life Sciences Corridor, a cluster of 730 life sciences companies distributed. Important actors in connecting research, talent, corporates and funding are startup launchpads and accelerator programs such as Lab Central, Tufts Launchpad | Biolabs, Philips Healthworks, Mass Challenge Healthtech, Alexandria Launch labs. The Mass Life Sciences Center plays an essential coordinating and support role as a quasi, offering internship programs, (seed) funding, tax incentives, and programming to grow diversity. Biotech and Medical devices have traditionally been the biggest focus, but in 2016, government and private sector leaders launched partnership to improve the competitiveness of Massachusetts' digital health ecosystem, and the state is now home to more than 300 digital health companies.



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### Attracting people temporarily or permanently to the Netherlands

Attracting talent—especially younger talent—from Boston's intellectual ecosystem requires two factors: intellectually-stimulating work with growth opportunities and sustainable lifestyle. Young professionals will look for jobs in which they will be challenged and get to work on interesting projects, have latitude for independent decision-making and responsibility, and clear professional development and growth opportunities. In particular, the Netherlands can offer talent the opportunity to work independently and with greater responsibility at an earlier stage than the typical American career trajectory (though this will vary by sector and employer). If resources, an environment supportive of mentorship and experimentation, and positive and dynamic team culture are also present, this will be attractive to a recent graduate looking to kick start their career.

Sustainable lifestyle is also an important consideration for professionals, at any career stage. While America's cities are its greatest intellectual and professional hubs, even small and mid-size cities are rapidly becoming too expensive to sustainably support even higher-paid professionals. Also considering that many young Americans complete their studies with significant debt in the form of student loans, competitive salary is important. In addition to the high cost of living, there is aging transportation infrastructure to contend with. And while cities are slowly making the transition to greener living, the change is not as swift and as well-supported as Boston's younger and more sustainably-minded talent would like to see. If seeking to attract professionals to the Netherlands permanently, it is also key to tout the social welfare benefits offered by the state. The United States lags behind Europe in this area. Healthcare, retirement, support for working families, and job security are all important short and long-term considerations.

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### > More information

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