

Associate Member Advisory Board Survey

NASFAA Membership Survey

October 2021

METHODOLOGY

On October 20, 2021, NASFAA distributed a survey to 501 members who were identified in our membership database as either currently holding or having previously held a leadership position in a state or regional association. A reminder was sent on October 26, 2021. The survey closed on October 27, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. ET. There were 172 surveys submitted, resulting in a 34% response rate.

In addition to the overall results, NASFAA's Research Department examined the data by respondents' current NASFAA region and state. Data cuts by state did not result in a sample size of more than 10 per state for any state, so they are not included in this report. Data cuts by the NASFAA region are included after the overall results.

NASFAA's Research Department also provides a summary of open-ended comments. While these open-ended comments offer insights into feedback from state/regional and association leadership, the sample sizes are low in most cases. NASFAA cautions readers against applying this feedback to all members or state/regional association leaders.

NASFAA does not display results for sample sizes less than 10.

OVERALL SURVEY RESULTS

What engagement do you have with NASFAA associate members? (Check all that apply)

Financial Aid Business Solutions (FABS) Webinar	26%
Through NASFAA webinars	53%
Through the NASFAA directories	10%
I do not engage NASFAA associate members	1%
n	172

Do you notice advertisements and/or message banners in Today's News or on NASFAA.org?

Yes	66%
Sometimes, when I'm in the market for that advertisement's specific product or service	22%
No	12%
n	172

Do you find them:

	Yes	No	n
Useful	63%	37%	100
Actionable	37%	63%	95
Relevant	80%	20%	100
Other (Please specify below.)	75%	25%	12

No respondents provided open-ended comments to this question.

Do you typically engage associate members when visiting the exhibit hall at NASFAA National or Leadership & Legislative conference(s)?

Yes	91%
No	8%
I do not visit the exhibit hall	2%
n	172

If you feel comfortable, please share more details on why you do not engage with associate members when visiting the exhibit hall at NASFAA conference(s). <Open-ended comments>

Of the 8% (n=10) who reported they do not typically engage associate members in the exhibit hall, half indicated they prefer to reach out to a vendor directly when they want more information or are interested in a product. Around one-fifth of respondents (20%) indicated they receive too many emails and/or other invitations prior to the conference and do not feel they are able to engage with associate members during the conference.

If you feel comfortable, please share more details on why you do not visit the exhibit hall during the NASFAA National or Leadership Conference. <Open-ended comments>

Of the 2% (n=3) who do not visit the exhibit hall, two-thirds (66%) of respondents who provided open-ended comments indicated they are not in the position to make decisions about which products or services their office contracts with. One respondent indicated they had previously been unable to attend the National Conference due to budget constraints.

How do you view your interactions with NASFAA’s associate members (vendors)?

	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Neutral	Somewhat insignificant	Insignificant	I have no interactions with this type of associate member	n
Lenders	36%	36%	18%	4%	4%	4%	171
Financial aid management software providers	38%	25%	22%	6%	2%	6%	171
Debt management services	26%	23%	27%	6%	5%	13%	171
Enrollment management services	23%	23%	31%	5%	4%	14%	171
Legal and consulting services	12%	22%	23%	9%	6%	27%	171
Scholarship and research services	27%	37%	19%	6%	3%	8%	171
Other types of NASFAA Associate Members	12%	18%	53%	0%	1%	16%	164

What is your institution’s expected participation across all training conferences during the 2021-22 fiscal year, as compared to previous fiscal years (prior to COVID-19)? (Training conferences include NASFAA’s National Conference, NASFAA’s Leadership & Legislative Conference, Regional Conferences, State Conferences, etc.)

Much Higher	5%
Higher	16%
About the same	55%
Lower	19%
Much Lower	5%
n	172

Does your institution limit interactions with NASFAA’s associate members (vendors)?

Yes	9%
No	91%
n	171

If you feel comfortable, please share more details on why or how your institution limits interactions with NASFAA’s associate members in the space below. <Open-ended comments> (n=11)

- *Of the 9% who limit interactions with associate members:*
 - *36% indicated they were not permitted to accept anything from lenders and/or were restricted in their engagement but did not provide any further details on why.*
 - *27% indicated they do not have a preferred lender list and/or do not take meetings with associate members.*
 - *27% indicated they are not the individual that makes decisions regarding products and services at their institution, but one of these respondents indicated they do interact with current vendors their institution uses.*
 - *One respondent did offer more insight into their institution’s policy, indicating that they feel students should not see logos in a staff member’s office when they attend an appointment, so their institution has a policy that does not allow staff to accept any gifts from vendors even if they meet the minimum value.*

Has your institution found success purchasing and implementing products and services from associate members (vendors) after becoming aware of them through NASFAA events, trainings, or advertisements?

Yes	53%
No	33%
Not yet, but currently considering some products and services	15%
n	169

Are NASFAA's associate members (vendors) important to your institution?

Yes	74%
No	26%
n	168

Are NASFAA's associate members (vendors) important to your state/regional association?

Yes	98%
No	2%
n	169

How do you believe the relationship between your respective state/regional association and its associate members (vendors) could be enhanced? <Open-ended comments>

Of the 41% (n=71) of respondents who left an open-ended comment:

- *36% of respondents expressed their relationships with state/regional associations and associate members (vendors) were positive and did not have suggestions for enhancement, or expressed they felt associate members were vital but were unsure of solutions to enhance the relationship.*
- *23% of respondents expressed they felt creating more avenues for associate members (vendors) to present and/or share information about their products outside of an exhibit hall would be beneficial. Among these, many cited their state/regional association was presently engaging associate members (vendors) to serve as moderators or co-presenters, or to lead sessions of their own, during conferences. Others noted they were inviting associate members (vendors) to present at the beginning or end of a general session as another way to enhance relationships and expose associate members (vendors) to more attendees. A few respondents expressed the desire for sessions structured as a "Current Users Group" format or webinars for current users to learn about best practices. Several respondents in this category felt this type of community building would help financial aid administrators get to know the vendors outside of the exhibit hall setting and lead to valuable community building.*

- *13% of respondents shared ways their state/regional association is currently enhancing relationships with its associate members (vendors) by including them on task forces, creating a board position they may hold (some noted it was a voting position, some noted it was not a voting position, some did not specify), and making every effort to have associate members (vendors) be participating members of their association.*
- *8% of respondents shared a desire to have more information provided on associate members (vendors). Some expressed asking NASFAA to compile this in a central location/database with all associate members and their products, so they could review it on their own. It was felt this would provide an opportunity for learning about products in a pressure-free environment. Others suggested having associate member (vendor) spotlights during webinars to allow them to highlight a particular product.*
- *The remaining 19% of respondents offered miscellaneous comments, expressed they were unable to talk to associate members (vendors), they were having difficulties securing associate members (vendors) to attend their state/regional conference due to the conference size, or they wanted associate members to spotlight more on how their products will help students directly.*

RESULTS BY NASFAA REGION

What engagement do you have with NASFAA associate members? (Check all that apply)

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Through training conferences (Training conferences include NASFAA's National Conference, NASFAA's Leadership & Legislative Conference, Regional Conferences, State Conferences, etc.)	98%	100%	100%	96%	100%	100%
Financial Aid Business Solutions (FABS) Webinar	29%	24%	31%	20%	22%	20%
Through NASFAA webinars	46%	62%	58%	56%	50%	40%
Through the NASFAA directories	12%	9%	8%	8%	22%	0%
I do not engage NASFAA associate members	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
n	41	34	36	25	18	20

Do you notice advertisements and/or message banners in Today's News or on NASFAA.org?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	59%	79%	67%	64%	56%	70%
Sometimes, when I'm in the market for that advertisement's specific product or service	22%	15%	22%	24%	39%	15%
No	20%	6%	11%	12%	6%	15%
n	41	34	36	25	18	20

Do you find them:

Useful

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA	n
Yes	24%	25%	19%	10%	10%	13%	63
No	15%	21%	18%	23%	10%	13%	39

Actionable

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA	n
Yes	29%	17%	17%	14%	11%	11%	35
No	18%	24%	19%	16%	8%	15%	62

Relevant

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA	n
Yes	22%	23%	19%	15%	7%	14%	81
No	14%	24%	14%	19%	14%	14%	21

Other (Please specify below.)

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA	n
Yes	11%	44%	44%	0%	0%	0%	9
No	0%	33%	0%	33%	33%	0%	3

Do you typically engage associate members when visiting the exhibit hall at NASFAA National or Leadership & Legislative conference(s)?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	90%	94%	94%	88%	89%	85%
No	5%	6%	6%	8%	11%	15%
I do not visit the exhibit hall	5%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
n	41	34	36	25	18	20

How do you view your interactions with NASFAA’s associate members (vendors)?

Lenders

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	28%	38%	42%	28%	44%	35%
Somewhat valuable	53%	32%	39%	28%	33%	25%
Neutral	13%	21%	14%	28%	17%	15%
Somewhat insignificant	5%	0%	3%	4%	0%	10%
Insignificant	3%	3%	0%	8%	6%	5%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	0%	6%	3%	4%	0%	10%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Financial aid management software providers

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	28%	32%	58%	28%	44%	35%
Somewhat valuable	35%	26%	11%	32%	11%	30%
Neutral	25%	26%	17%	8%	33%	30%
Somewhat insignificant	5%	9%	3%	20%	0%	0%
Insignificant	3%	0%	0%	8%	6%	0%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	5%	6%	11%	4%	6%	5%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Debt management services

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	15%	24%	33%	28%	50%	10%
Somewhat valuable	30%	24%	11%	20%	28%	25%
Neutral	30%	26%	31%	28%	11%	30%
Somewhat insignificant	8%	12%	3%	8%	6%	5%
Insignificant	5%	6%	8%	0%	6%	0%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	13%	9%	14%	16%	0%	30%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Enrollment management services

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	20%	21%	25%	16%	39%	20%
Somewhat valuable	20%	32%	22%	16%	22%	25%
Neutral	43%	29%	28%	44%	22%	15%
Somewhat insignificant	10%	3%	6%	4%	0%	5%
Insignificant	3%	0%	3%	4%	11%	5%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	5%	15%	17%	16%	6%	30%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Legal and consulting services

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	10%	12%	14%	16%	22%	0%
Somewhat valuable	13%	21%	19%	32%	28%	25%
Neutral	28%	21%	33%	8%	22%	20%
Somewhat insignificant	10%	6%	11%	8%	17%	10%
Insignificant	5%	9%	3%	12%	6%	5%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	35%	32%	19%	24%	6%	40%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Scholarship and research services

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	18%	26%	19%	36%	44%	30%
Somewhat valuable	43%	38%	39%	44%	17%	35%
Neutral	23%	15%	19%	16%	17%	25%
Somewhat insignificant	8%	6%	8%	0%	11%	5%
Insignificant	3%	6%	0%	0%	11%	0%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	8%	9%	14%	4%	0%	5%
n	40	34	36	25	18	20

Other types of NASFAA Associate Members

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Valuable	5%	18%	6%	13%	29%	6%
Somewhat valuable	21%	12%	14%	21%	24%	22%
Neutral	55%	48%	64%	54%	29%	56%
Somewhat insignificant	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%
Insignificant	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%
I have no interactions with this type of associate member	18%	21%	17%	13%	6%	17%
n	38	33	36	24	17	18

What is your institution's expected participation across all training conferences during the 2021 - 22 fiscal year, as compared to previous fiscal years (prior to COVID-19)? (Training conferences include NASFAA's National Conference, NASFAA's Leadership & Legislative Conference, Regional Conferences, State Conferences, etc.)

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Much Higher	2%	6%	3%	8%	0%	10%
Higher	22%	24%	17%	12%	6%	5%
About the same	51%	48%	58%	60%	59%	60%
Lower	20%	15%	19%	16%	29%	20%
Much Lower	5%	6%	3%	4%	6%	5%
n	41	33	36	25	17	20

Does your institution limit interactions with NASFAA's associate members (vendors)?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	5%	15%	17%	0%	0%	10%
No	95%	85%	83%	100%	100%	90%
n	40	33	36	25	17	20

Has your institution found success purchasing and implementing products and services from associate members (vendors) after becoming aware of them through NASFAA events, trainings, or advertisements?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	39%	63%	53%	63%	53%	53%
No	37%	25%	42%	25%	24%	37%
Not yet, but currently considering some products and services	24%	13%	6%	13%	24%	11%
n	41	32	36	24	17	19

Are NASFAA's associate members (vendors) important to your institution?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	65%	82%	83%	68%	82%	55%
No	35%	18%	17%	32%	18%	45%
n	40	33	36	25	17	20

Are NASFAA's associate members (vendors) important to your state/regional association?

	MASFAA	SASFAA	EASFAA	RMASFAA	SWASFAA	WASFAA
Yes	98%	97%	100%	100%	88%	100%
No	2%	3%	0%	0%	12%	0%
n	41	33	36	25	17	20