MIT D-Lab is working to meaningfully improve the lives of people living in poverty. The program’s mission is pursued through interdisciplinary research and courses, technology development, and community initiatives, all of which emphasize experiential learning, real-world projects, community-led development, scalability, and impact assessment.

Courses. D-Lab challenges and inspires talented students to use their math, science, engineering, social science, and business skills to tackle global poverty issues. D-Lab offers more than 20 courses (http://d-lab.mit.edu/courses) that introduce students to D-Lab’s approach to co-design, design for scale, collaborative design, supply chain management, and business venture development as well as sector-specific courses on energy, mobility, water and sanitation, prosthetics, education, schools, architecture, and more. Many courses provide an option for fieldwork.


International Development Innovation Network (IDIN). IDIN (http://d-lab.mit.edu/idin) is building an international network of innovators to design, develop, and disseminate low-cost technologies that alleviate poverty. IDIN holds multiple design summits around the world annually and provides support to its network of over 600 inventors and social entrepreneurs from more than 50 countries. IDIN, an international consortium, is led by D-Lab and supported by the US Global Development Lab.

D-Lab Scale-Ups. Launched in 2011, the Scale-Ups program (http://d-lab.mit.edu/scale-ups/overview) includes a fellowship program for social entrepreneurs, the Practical Impact Alliance, and a research and action program. It also co-hosts the annual MIT Scaling Development Ventures conference.

Creative Capacity Building (CCB). CCB (http://d-lab.mit.edu/creative-capacity-building) is a methodology that encourages and trains people to make technologies that generate income, improve health and safety, or save labor and time. At present, D-Lab offers three main implementations of CCB: Village-level Training, Community Innovation Centers, and the International Development Design Summit.

Workshop. The D-Lab workshop (http://d-lab.mit.edu/workshop), the heart and soul of D-Lab, is a place for D-Lab students, fellows, innovators-in-residence, and others to bring technologies for the developing world to life. The workshop includes a large collection of hand and power tools, steel fabrication and welding tools, an open shop with multiple workbenches, and a dedicated wood shop and long-term projects room.