The Simons Center for the Social Brain (http://web.mit.edu/scsb) at MIT was established in 2012 with the mission of investigating the neural mechanisms underlying social cognition and behavior, and to translate this knowledge into better diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

Neural correlates of social cognition and behavior exist in diverse species, and the underlying mechanisms will be studied in both humans and relevant model organisms and systems. We expect that experimental approaches will take advantage of strengths at MIT in genetics and genomics, molecular and cell biology, analyses of neural circuits and systems, cognitive psychology, mathematics and engineering.

The center’s goals are to develop MIT-wide programs on genetics and gene discovery, mechanisms and models, cognitive neuroscience, and translation and therapeutics. MIT researchers can contribute uniquely to understanding autism and related brain disorders through the development of novel tools and technologies and advancing new computational and theoretical approaches.

The center supports these programs and themes through supporting collaborative, targeted projects undertaken by multiple laboratories to explore in depth specific aspects or types of autism; seed funds for new investigators proposing novel collaborative research; a postdoctoral fellows program; and equipment grants. We also work closely with researchers and clinicians at neighboring hospitals and universities.

For further information, contact the program administrator, Eleana Ricci, Room 46-6216, 617-253-9340.