The Campus

In 1916, MIT moved from its Boston location to Cambridge, and the current campus now encompasses 168 acres that extend more than a mile along the Cambridge side of the Charles River Basin. The heart of campus is anchored by a historic group of interconnected buildings, designed by architect W. Welles Bosworth (Class of 1889), which facilitate interaction and communication among MIT’s schools and departments.

In addition to the Bosworth buildings, the MIT campus (http://whereis.mit.edu) now showcases a range of architectural styles, from neoclassical through modernist, brutalist, and deconstructivist. Among the remarkable landmarks on campus are buildings designed by leading architects such as Alvar Aalto, Frank Gehry, Steven Holl, Fumihiko Maki, I.M. Pei ‘40, and Eero Saarinen. Construction is underway on a state-of-the-art music building designed by SANAA, and a substantial restoration of the historic Metropolitan Storage Warehouse, by architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro, is transforming the building into a hub for design and education. Meticulous renewal of the iconic structures on campus and has resulted in no fewer than nine preservation awards from the Cambridge Historical Commission.

Student life (http://studentlife.mit.edu) on campus is anchored by 19 undergraduate and graduate residence halls, each with its own distinctive personality and community. MIT’s newest residences include the E37 Graduate Tower in Kendall Square and the New Vassar Residence Hall for undergraduates. The renewal of another undergraduate residence, Burton-Conner, was completed in 2022, and a renovation of the East Campus undergraduate residence will begin in the summer of 2023. Construction is currently underway on the West Campus Graduate Student Residence, expected to add approximately 675 new beds when it opens in the fall of 2024.

In their academic and research endeavors, students benefit from state-of-the-art facilities ranging from wet labs and clean rooms to collaboration areas and makerspaces. Specialized equipment on campus includes 3D printers, laser cutters, wind tunnels, and drone and robot test labs. In every field, innovation and entrepreneurship are fostered by cross-disciplinary facilities like the MIT Media Lab (https://www.media.mit.edu), the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research (https://ki.mit.edu), and the Lisa T. Su Building (https://mitnano.mit.edu), the Institute’s nanotechnology and advanced imaging center. At its edges, the campus merges with vibrant Cambridge neighborhoods, including Kendall Square, where the close association of industry and research expertise has made this area the most innovative square mile on the planet. MIT’s new campus gateway at Kendall provides an innovation and entrepreneurship hub adjacent to the graduate tower, a large landscaped open space that hosts campus and community events year-round, and new homes for MIT Admissions (https://
mitadmissions.org), the MIT Museum (https://mitmuseum.mit.edu), and the MIT Press Bookstore (http://mitpressbookstore.mit.edu).

Committed to decreasing its carbon footprint (https://climate.mit.edu/climateaction), MIT encourages a multi-modal approach to transportation around campus. The campus is urban and walkable, with more than 40 gardens and greenspace areas and more than 60 publicly sited works of art to enjoy along the way. MIT offers free shuttles around campus, bicycle benefits including a bike-share program and fix-it stations, carpool and rideshare incentives, and public transportation subsidies.

As the campus continues to evolve, MIT actively pursues measures that improve sustainability and conservation. To date, three building projects on campus have achieved LEED-Platinum certification (the Morris and Sophie Chang Building, the Lisa T. Su Building, and New Vassar), and 18 building projects have achieved LEED-Gold certification, including Site 4 (Buildings E37 and E38) in Kendall Square, Hayden Library, Fariborz Maseeh Hall, and Building E62 (home of MIT Sloan). For existing buildings, MIT’s proactive Capital Renewal program (http://capitalprojects.mit.edu) is engaged in continuous renewal and renovation projects that promote energy efficiency while ensuring that the campus will support the community’s broad spectrum of educational, research, and student life activities.

Among the cultural organizations enriching life in the area are the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Pops, the Boston Ballet Company, the Opera Company of Boston, the Boston Center for the Arts, Boston University’s Huntington Theatre Company, the Loeb Drama Center, and the American Repertory Theater.

MIT is one of more than 50 schools located in the Boston area, including Boston College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Harvard University, Lesley University, Northeastern University, Simmons College, Tufts University, Wellesley College, and many specialized professional art and music schools. The concentration of academic, cultural, and intellectual activity in this area is one of the most significant in the country.

An hour or two away from MIT by car are the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire, the ocean beaches of Cape Cod, the lakes and rivers of Maine, the small clusters of fishing towns along the New England coast, and many places of historical interest in Massachusetts alone—Salem, Sturbridge, Lexington, Concord, and Plymouth. With its varied landscapes and four distinct seasons, New England offers unlimited possibilities for recreation—skiing, mountain climbing, hiking, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, and camping.

The Boston and Cambridge Environment

MIT is in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on the north bank of the Charles River, facing the city of Boston. With over 119,000 people located within a 6.43 square mile area, Cambridge is a unique community with a strong mix of cultural, demographic, and social diversity; intellectual vitality; and technological innovation. The city’s diversity is reflected in its international community, with nine percent of residents being foreign born. Well known as the residence of MIT and Harvard, Cambridge is home to many students and professionals. About 31% of its residents are college and graduate students.

The city’s largest employment sectors are higher education, government, biotechnology, and healthcare. Cambridge is home to more than 300 life-science and technology-related companies. The Kendall Square neighborhood is a renowned hub of innovation of entrepreneurship.

Boston’s Museum of Science and Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the New England Conservatory of Music, Symphony Hall, the New England Aquarium, and the Boston Public Library, as well as Fenway Park and TD Garden for professional baseball, basketball, hockey, and concerts are all within a two-mile radius of the MIT campus. Students can also travel easily to Boston’s theater district, where Broadway plays are previewed and local productions are staged.