

International Scholars Office

The [International Scholars Office](#) (ISchO) facilitates visas for international researchers and faculty who come to MIT for teaching, research, meetings, and programs. ISchO advises on immigration matters, issues visa documents, and provides guidance, workshops, and print and web-based information on a wide range of issues relevant to international scholars. Weekly orientation sessions are held for incoming scholars and family members. Orientation sessions specifically for new international tenure-track faculty members are held biannually. Workshops and question-and-answer sessions are held throughout the year for personnel administrators who work to prepare visa applications with the ISchO for the many international scholars at MIT's departments, laboratories, centers, and programs. Additional programs for scholars and events open to the campus community are held throughout the year. ISchO also engages in advocacy efforts to protect international educational exchange, forestall additional immigration-related federal regulations, and clarify and improve related regulations and procedures.

MIT's International Scholar Population, Academic Year 2012

During the academic year July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012, ISchO served 2,175 international scholars affiliated with MIT and their accompanying family members. (An international scholar is one who is not a US citizen or US permanent resident.) This reflects an increase of approximately 5.3 percent over the previous year (2,060). According to the Institute of International Education's report, *Open Doors 2011: Report on International Educational Exchange*, MIT ranked 11th nationally with regard to the numbers of international scholars at US institutions, up from 12th last year. International postdoctoral associates and postdoctoral fellows made up 55.3 percent of MIT's international scholars.

Foreign national scholars came to MIT from 90 countries, with the highest numbers coming from the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, India, Germany, Canada, Japan, Italy, Spain, France, and Israel. This is roughly the same as the top 10 countries of origin of the entire international scholar population in the US. Scholars from these top 10 countries constituted 68 percent of MIT's international scholar population.

ISchO worked closely with administrators in the 71 departments, laboratories, centers, and programs that hosted international scholars during AY2012. ISchO assisted by preparing the appropriate visa petitions and supporting documents for incoming and continuing scholars and their families. The areas hosting the largest number of scholars were, in descending order, the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Chemical Engineering, Research Laboratory of Electronics, Department of Chemistry, Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, Sloan School of Management, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Department of Biology, Department of Biological Engineering, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, and the Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences. Seventy-seven percent of international scholars were men and 23 percent were women.

The majority of MIT's international scholars were sponsored on MIT's J-1 exchange visitor program. There were 1,122 scholars under MIT's J-1 visa program sponsorship during AY2012. An additional 84 scholars were here through other J-1 visa sponsors (the Fulbright Program, Cultural Vistas, and other academic institutions). There were 288 scholars on campus in H-1B status sponsored by MIT. Fifty-three scholars were in TN status and eight were on O-1 visas sponsored by MIT. The rest of MIT's international scholars had other sponsors or were in other nonimmigrant categories. ISchO also submitted permanent residence petitions to US Citizenship and Immigration Services on behalf of tenure-track faculty members and upper-level researchers.

International postdoctoral fellows and postdoctoral associates accounted for 62 percent of MIT's total postdoc population. More than 43 percent of people on "visiting" appointments at MIT were international scholars.

Penny Rosser
Director