

International Scholars Office

The [International Scholars Office](#) (ISchO) facilitates the 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 the international scholar population. Weekly orientation sessions are held for incoming scholars and family members. Orientation specifically for new international tenure-track faculty members is held biannually. Workshops and question-and-answer sessions are held throughout the year for personnel administrators who work to process visas with the ISchO for the many departments, labs, centers, and programs hosting international scholars. Additional programming 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, prevent burdensome government regulations, and clarify and improve related regulations and procedures.

MIT's International Scholar Population, Academic Year 2011

During the year July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, ISchO served 2,060 international scholars affiliated with MIT and their accompanying family members (the term “international” is defined as non-US citizen, non-US permanent resident). This reflects an increase of approximately 9.5% over last year (1,882). According to the most recent Institute of International Education Open Doors report (2009–2010), MIT ranked 12th nationally with regard to the numbers of international scholars at US institutions. Postdoctoral associates and postdoctoral fellows accounted for 55% of MIT's international scholars.

Foreign national scholars came to MIT from 91 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. The top 10 countries of origin of the entire international scholar population in the US are roughly the same. Scholars from these top 10 countries constituted 67% of MIT's international scholar population.

ISchO worked closely with administrators in the 75 departments, laboratories, centers and programs that hosted international scholars during AY2011. ISchO assisted by preparing the appropriate visa documents and petitions for incoming and continuing scholars and their families. The areas hosting the largest number of scholars were, in descending order: Department of Chemistry; Department of Chemical Engineering; Research Laboratory of Electronics; Department of Mechanical Engineering; Department of Materials Science and Engineering; Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory; Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research; Sloan School of Management; Department of Materials Science and Engineering; Department of Biology; and Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences. Seventy-five point five percent of international scholars were men and 22.5% were women.

The majority of MIT's international scholars were sponsored on MIT's J-1 exchange visitor program. There were 1,051 scholars under MIT's J-1 program sponsorship during AY2011. An additional 84 scholars were here through other J sponsors (Fulbright, AIPT,

and other academic institutions). There were 311 scholars on campus in H-1B status sponsored by MIT. Forty-four scholars were in TN status and eight were on O-1 visas were sponsored by MIT. The rest of the scholar population 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 60% of MIT's total postdoc population. Over 50% of people on "visiting" appointments at MIT were international.

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