



Statement of the Executive Committee of the MIT Corporation on the Findings in the Epstein-MIT Report

The revelations that MIT had a donor relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted sex offender, have deeply shaken the MIT community and have caused many to question the Institute's commitment to its values. The revelations have been particularly painful to those in the community who, themselves, are victims of sexual assault and abuse. At the same time, the news of Epstein's involvement with MIT has triggered broader conversations about MIT's culture, campus climate and power inequities, in particular around the treatment of women and staff.

With this in mind, the Executive Committee has undertaken its responsibilities in overseeing this investigation with the utmost seriousness and dedication. The Committee members felt the need to discover not just what happened but how it happened.

The fact-finding has taken four months – longer than what was initially expected. As detailed in the report, the process expanded as new facts were found. The report being made public today makes for uncomfortable reading, especially for all of us who love MIT and are dedicated to its mission.

The Committee is troubled that MIT had a relationship with Epstein and that it was more extensive and lasted longer than has been publicly reported. The solicitation of donations led to multiple campus visits by Epstein that involved various faculty members and, in at least one visit, some students. All of this was fundamentally incompatible with MIT's values and flew in the face of the community's ongoing efforts to combat sexual assault and abuse, and to address broader issues related to gender and power.

The Committee is disappointed by the errors in judgment in accepting donations from Epstein and in keeping them secret. While it is true that MIT did not have in place a policy for vetting controversial donors or accepting money from them, the report makes clear there were multiple opportunities to stop the Epstein donations and halt efforts by Joi Ito and Seth Lloyd to cultivate him as a donor. It is regrettable that no one with the knowledge, opportunity and the authority to do so stepped up to end the Epstein funding.

It is important to note that those in the administration involved in these decisions were not motivated by any self-interest or financial reward. Instead, they believed they were supporting MIT by helping faculty secure research funding. But they were aware of the risks to MIT in associating with someone like Epstein and still approved his donations.

We are particularly distressed to know that there were women and men in the Media Lab and in the central administration who warned faculty and senior team members about the risks to MIT in taking Epstein's donations, but those warnings were not heeded. On several occasions, individuals urged that the donations be reconsidered – if not rejected altogether – and until late 2017, they were ignored. Their foresight and concern for MIT are admirable, and they should be commended.



The collective failure of those who solicited and approved Epstein's donations, and those who facilitated his visits to campus, has resulted in significant harm to MIT and the broader community.

As Joi Ito has already resigned from MIT, we will only highlight the central role he played in bringing Epstein into the MIT community.

The findings of fact concerning the conduct of Professor Seth Lloyd and his interactions with Epstein are particularly serious. We ask President Reif to initiate a review of Professor's Lloyd actions and to take whatever disciplinary measures his department determines are warranted and appropriate.

The report findings show that President Reif was not involved in the decision to accept these funds and that he had little knowledge of and insufficient information about Epstein's background and crimes to understand the need to intervene in the process. The Executive Committee continues to have full confidence in his leadership of MIT.

Based on the findings, the Executive Committee makes the following recommendations:

- Today, as this report is made public, MIT is still without a clear and comprehensive gift policy or a process to properly vet donors. Fortunately, two faculty-led committees, chaired by Professor Tavneet Suri and Professor Peter Fisher, have begun work on these important issues. Once they deliver their recommendations in the spring, we ask President Reif and his administration to work closely with the committees to establish and implement such policies as soon as possible. In the meantime, Resource Development staff should be especially vigilant in identifying any donor situations that might be problematic and should escalate the handling of them to the senior administration for review.
- Once clear policies have been agreed upon, it is essential that they be communicated to and understood by everyone who plays a role in raising funds for MIT, including the central administration, faculty, staff and students. It will also be vital to share these policies with alumni and donors.
- The report chronicles efforts by some in the senior administration to sidestep the Advance Database (which houses donation-related information) by reclassifying Epstein's donations to MIT as "anonymous." This effort made it impossible for all but a select few to see the number or amount of Epstein donations. Therefore, we call upon the development staff at all levels to take steps to protect and ensure the integrity and factual accuracy of the donor database.
- The fact that Epstein – a convicted felon and a registered Level 3 sex offender – was allowed to visit the MIT campus at least nine times between 2013 and 2017 without, at a minimum, anyone alerting campus police or putting in place measures to protect the MIT community is completely unacceptable. The visits were deeply disturbing to members of



the Media Lab staff. We call upon President Reif to review the findings pertaining to Epstein's visits and to work with the provost, chancellor, general counsel, faculty officers and campus police to determine if guidelines or policies can be put in place to prevent a similar situation from occurring in the future. All faculty and staff have a shared responsibility for the safety and well-being of the MIT community, and should be mindful of this responsibility when deciding who is invited to visit the campus.

- We need to ensure that concerns related to the safety of our students, the integrity of the work of our faculty and students, and the Institute's overall reputation are always heard and taken seriously. We ask President Reif to enhance mechanisms through which *all* members of the MIT community can feel empowered to raise concerns and be confident they will be reviewed, investigated and acted upon.

The fact-finding has clarified how and why Epstein was able to be engaged with MIT. Now, it is the collective responsibility of the Corporation, the senior leaders, the faculty, the staff, the students and the alumni to use the findings to make meaningful changes to minimize the possibility of such a situation happening again.

It is also important that the entire MIT community do the more difficult work of changing dimensions of the culture and attitudes that contributed to making the Epstein situation possible, and that have – more broadly – caused some women and some staff to feel ignored, marginalized and disenfranchised at MIT. President Reif, senior faculty and administration leaders have made a good start on this work, but it will require a long-term and sustained effort by the entire MIT community. The members of the Executive Committee and the Corporation will do whatever they can to encourage and support this effort.

It is the sincere hope of the Executive Committee that the findings of fact and the recommendations that flow from them will help MIT move forward constructively from this difficult and painful episode.

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