

MIT Position Description

Job Title: Administrative Assistant III	Position Title: Senior Program Assistant, Sustainability Initiative
Reports to: Senior Associate Director, Sustainability Initiative	% Effort / Wkly Hrs: %/hours 100%/40 hours
Department: Sloan, Centers and Initiatives, MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative	Grade: 6 - nonexempt

Hiring Pay Range (HR to add): \$32.00 - \$38.50/hour

Position Overview

The Sustainability Initiative's vision is to empower leaders whose impact, professionally and personally, will ensure that humans and nature can thrive for generations to come. We deliver the best education in sustainability through course development, co-curricular activities including speaker series, and our Sustainability Certificate program. Through our research, we bring academic rigor to real-world problems in key impact areas including the advancement of evidence-based climate policy and the role and potential of systemic investing.

Under minimal supervision, the Administrative Assistant III, or "Senior Program Assistant," performs complex and diverse duties in support of the MIT Sloan Sustainability Initiative. This role requires a high degree of independence, sound judgment, and the ability to manage multiple priorities across a dynamic, mission-driven team.

The Senior Program Assistant's responsibilities span five key areas: (1) Sustainability Certificate operations and course support, (2) event management, (3) research project coordination and researcher onboarding, (4) finance & accounting, and (5) general administrative support. The person in this role serves as an operational backbone for the Initiative, ensuring that programs, courses, research projects, and administrative functions run smoothly and effectively.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities (Essential Functions**)~(add % totaling 100%)

Certificate Program Coordination and Course Support (30%)

The Senior Program Assistant plays a central role in supporting the operational success of the Sustainability Certificate Program and the Initiative's flagship sustainability courses. Working closely with the Senior Associate Director, this person ensures seamless program management, efficient logistics, and consistent tracking of student engagement and progress.

- Lead day-to-day operations and administration of the Sustainability Certificate, a five-course program enabling MIT students to develop deep expertise in sustainability.
- Collaborate with the Senior Associate Director to continuously improve and streamline program processes, ensuring efficient and effective operations.
- Track MIT courses eligible for the certificate each semester, maintaining an accurate and up-to-date database and coordinating with MIT Sloan's education services office to verify student records and course eligibility.
- Plan and organize student engagement activities, including informational sessions, recruitment and networking events, collaborative gatherings, and webinars connecting prospective students, current certificate candidates, alumni, and external stakeholders.

- Support budget management for the certificate program, tracking and forecasting expenses to ensure efficient allocation of resources.
- Oversee logistical support for core sustainability courses, managing classroom arrangements, materials, catering, website support, and related logistics for courses led by the Directors (e.g., 15.915, 15.385, 15.878, and short-format classes in SIP, IAP, and LEAD week).
- Coordinate the action learning component of S-Lab (15.878), including outreach and recruitment of host organizations, review of project proposals, matching of projects to student teams, and support for deliverables and event participation.
- Set up guest lecturers and course mentors in MIT systems, facilitating access to course materials and processing payments.
- Monitor course waitlists and Canvas during registration periods; manage student and guest access to course resources.

Event Management (20%)

The Sustainability Initiative organizes a wide range of events throughout the year, including group meetings, strategic planning sessions, Advisory Board meetings and conference calls, the Sustainability Lunch Series, the Certificate Graduation Ceremony, and other events engaging students, alumni, faculty, allied organizations, and donors. The Senior Program Assistant is responsible for planning and executing all event logistics.

- Manage full event lifecycle including budgeting, marketing, space reservation, food and materials ordering, participant registration, data entry, and cleanup.
- Execute executive-level events with formal menus, refined design, and vendor coordination.
- Manage environmental sustainability of events, minimizing and directing waste in alignment with the Initiative's values.
- Cultivate a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere at events, fostering connections among students, alumni, and guest speakers, and creating touchpoints for ongoing community engagement.

Research Project Coordination and Researcher Onboarding (20%)

The Sustainability Initiative oversees two key research projects—the Catalytic Climate Finance Project and the Owning Impact Project—each involving collaboration with a range of researchers. The Senior Program Assistant serves as the primary administrative liaison supporting these projects.

- Serve as the primary administrative contact for lead researchers on both projects, supporting communications with the SI team and facilitating knowledge transfer and outreach activities.
- Coordinate onboarding and offboarding processes for all temporary and permanent researchers, including Postdoctoral Associates, Research Assistants, and Visiting Fellows, working closely with each project's Research Scientist.
- Ensure all researchers are properly set up in MIT payroll systems and have appropriate access to project databases, research tools, and administrative resources.
- Manage offboarding logistics, including terminating database access, coordinating equipment return, and ensuring smooth transitions.
- Support financial management for both research projects, including budget preparation and tracking and ensuring expenditures align with project budgets.
- Organize events, guest speaker lunches, and collaborative gatherings related to research projects, fostering engagement and knowledge exchange within the research community.
- Provide flexible, responsive administrative support for ad hoc tasks across both research projects.

Accounting (15%)

- Prepare purchasing and accounting forms for approval using Adaptive, SAP, or the Buy2Pay Coupa purchasing platform.
- Approve and process procurement card expenses, requisitions, RFPs, journal vouchers, and travel expenses.
- Set up external vendors, independent contractors, and MITemps for payment, including management of complex contract processes.
- Process payments and reimbursements for students, guest speakers, and alumni working with the Initiative.
- Maintain records for all purchases in accordance with MIT's record retention policy.
- Conduct monthly account reconciliation and manage end-of-fiscal-year close-out activities.
- Serve as the team's point person for questions related to MIT finance and travel policies and regulations.

General Department Administrative Support (15%)

Support for Director and Senior Associate Director:

- Manage calendars and meeting schedules, including office hours; proactively identify and resolve scheduling conflicts; ensure sufficient time is allocated across priorities including the Catalytic Climate Finance Project and the Owing Impact Project.
- Manage expense reports for travel and other expenses.
- Assist with occasional travel planning and booking for domestic and international trips.
- Coordinate purchasing of materials and supplies (e.g., books and equipment).

Office Administrative Support:

- Provide day-to-day office support, including purchasing and organizing supplies and equipment, responding to inquiries, and serving as a welcoming presence for the Initiative.
- Provide logistical support for ad hoc meetings and events convened by team members, including room reservations, food ordering, and complex scheduling.
- Manage the Initiative's stakeholder database, including contact data entry, campaigns, and building and running reports.

Other role related responsibilities as needed or required.

Supervision Received

Supervision is provided by the Senior Associate Director. This position requires the ability to perform with a high degree of independence, exercise sound judgment, and proactively manage workload and priorities.

Supervision Exercised

No direct reports. Will require coordination with the broader Initiative team, including the Director, Associate Directors, and Assistant Director.

Qualifications & Skills

REQUIRED:

- High school diploma or equivalent required.
- Minimum 5 years of administrative, office, or related experience required with progressively responsible administrative or program support experience.
- Ability to work in person at MIT Sloan, with remote work options available.
- Strong organizational skills with demonstrated ability to manage multiple priorities simultaneously.
- Strong interpersonal, problem-solving, and collaboration skills; meticulous attention to detail and commitment to high-quality work.
 - Positive, can-do attitude with a high energy level and willingness to learn new technologies, software, and processes.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision as well as collaboratively as part of a team.
- Proficiency on PC and Mac, including Microsoft Office applications.

PREFERRED:

- Bachelor's degree
- Experience with MIT and/or MIT Sloan School of Management highly desirable.
- Experience with Salesforce, Canvas, content management systems, and/or financial platforms such as SAP, Adaptive, or Coupa a strong plus.
- Familiarity with event management, grant or research project administration, or academic program coordination a plus.
- Familiarity with sustainability concepts, ESG frameworks, climate policy, or sustainable business practices is a plus. A demonstrated interest in sustainability, whether professional, academic, or personal, is welcomed.

MIT Sloan Competencies

Collaborate:

Works toward team success with humility, both as a member and as a leader of formal and informal teams. Communicates openly and effectively by exchanging high-quality information, ideas, and opinions in a transparent and timely manner within and outside the school.

Engage:

Fosters innovation and experimentation by applying original thinking, expertise, and professional experience to solve problems and develop new options and approaches.

Lead:

Focuses on impact and outcomes while working to make a difference and achieve organizational goals.



*** To comply with regulations by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the principal duties in job descriptions must be essential to the job. To identify essential functions, focus on the purpose and the result of the duties rather than the manner in which they are performed. The following definition applies: a job function is essential if removal of that function would fundamentally change the job.*