

## International Scholars Office

The [International Scholars Office \(ISO\)](#) facilitates visas for international researchers and faculty who come to MIT for teaching, research, meetings, and programs. ISO advises on immigration matters, issues visa documents, files petitions with government agencies, 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. Orientations—specifically for new international tenure-track faculty members—are offered biannually. Workshops are given for department, laboratory, and center personnel administrators about working with the ISO, MIT visa sponsorship policies, and visa processing. Additional programming for scholars and events open to the campus community are held throughout the year. ISO also engages in advocacy efforts to protect international educational exchange, prevent burdensome government regulations, and clarify and improve immigration related regulations and procedures.

### MIT's International Scholar Population FY2020

During FY2020, ISO served 2,237 international scholars affiliated with MIT and their accompanying family members (“international” is defined as non-US citizen, non-US permanent resident). According to the 2019 Institute of International Education Open Doors report, MIT ranked 11th nationally with regard to the numbers of international scholars at US institutions.

Foreign national scholars came to MIT from 93 countries, with the highest numbers coming from China, India, South Korea, Germany, Canada, Japan, France, Italy, Spain, and Israel. This closely resembles the top 10 countries of origin of the total international scholar population in the United States over the same period. Scholars from these top 10 countries constituted 65% of MIT's international scholar population.

ISO worked closely with administrators in the 72 departments, laboratories, centers, and programs that hosted international scholars. The areas hosting the largest number of scholars were (in descending order), the Department of Mechanical Engineering; Research Laboratory of Electronics; Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research; Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory; Department of Chemistry; Department of Biological Engineering; Sloan School of Management; Department of Chemical Engineering; McGovern Institute; and Civil and Environmental Engineering.

The majority of MIT's international scholars were sponsored on MIT's J-1 exchange visitor program. There were 1,150 scholars on MIT's J-1 program in FY2020. An additional 78 scholars were here through other J sponsors (e.g., Fulbright, Cultural Vistas, and other academic institutions). There were 283 scholars on H-1B status sponsored by MIT. Twenty-six scholars were in TN status and 10 were on O-1 visas sponsored by MIT. The rest of the scholar population had other sponsors or were in other nonimmigrant categories. ISO also submitted permanent residence petitions to US Citizenship and Immigration Services on behalf of tenure-track faculty members and upper-level researchers.

Of our international scholars, 73% identified as men and 27% identified as women.

International postdoctoral fellows and postdoctoral associates accounted for 65.5% of MIT's total postdoc population. Of those scholars on so-called visiting appointments at MIT, 51% were international.

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