



MIT Science and Engineering Program for Teachers
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Greetings and Happy New Year from the Science and Engineering Program for Teachers (SEPT) at MIT. We look forward to hosting more teachers this summer at SEPT 2011. MIT Alumni Club involvement has long been an important part of our program, and we value your participation highly. Following are details on this year's iteration of SEPT.

In 2010 we re-launched SEPT in the form of SEPT 2.0. This new version of SEPT aimed to capture the unique experience of hearing about the latest in cutting-edge research while providing a more in-depth, hands-on experience with applications in and after school. SEPT 2.0 provided an emphasis on technology-enabled education and classroom innovation while continuing our program's tradition of cutting edge lectures by MIT faculty. While the 2010 program was a great success, we wanted to continue evolving the curriculum to reflect the needs of our participants following our inaugural SEPT 2.0 year.

Given that our program structure has evolved from lecture-based (basically unlimited class size) to a largely hands-on program, we need instructors to personally interact with the participants.

This is both labor-intensive and only effective in the 25-30 participant range. Further, we have many activities that are limited simply by space and materials. This year our goal is to raise the cap slightly (from the 20-25 teachers we had last year to 25-30 this year). The next step would hopefully be to double that and run parallel sessions, perhaps in summer 2012.

Almost all of our applicants come from US-based MIT Alumni Clubs. We have a small handful sponsored by overseas Clubs, other scholarships, or who attend on their own dime. So we expect to be able to accommodate at least one teacher from each of the Clubs. Again, if this turns out to be beyond our expectations, we will communicate with you.

With the shift in focus, many of our sessions last summer integrated technology in a substantial way. This summer we will have several new MIT labs participating. We will offer increased lectures, but still maintain a strong technology component. Although we don't have a requirement for web development/simulation modeling/programming, we believe your ongoing commitment to SEPT would be even more impactful if the program brought in teachers who have the knack for learning new technologies and spreading this knowledge throughout their school and community upon returning to school. We have adjusted the application to try to learn more about each candidate's abilities with respect to this, especially in math, the sciences, and technology. We generally think of those teachers as being "tech savvy" as they go through the early learning curve.

We have modified the application this year to reflect these criteria, without being burdensome or seeming like we are going through a college admissions process. With this in mind as you select and prioritize your candidates, we ask that when you send along their applications, please be sure to wait for communication back from the SEPT office prior to ultimately accepting/notifying the candidate of sponsorship. If we have any questions on the applications we will directly contact you to discuss. Similarly, if you have any questions, you should feel free to contact us at any time. We want this to be an open process that is beneficial to all.

As always, applicants to SEPT must be teaching full-time at the junior high school level or higher (or equivalent). Teachers will receive 40 hours of professional credit for their successful participation in the 2010 program, and will also become members of our active SEPT alumni network, the Network of Educators in Science and Technology (NEST), which offers many valuable benefits. More information about NEST may be found on our website at <http://web.mit.edu/scienceprogram/nest/index.html> .

We are aware that the messaging wasn't clear enough last year and that it felt to some as if we made changes to the program that weren't properly communicated. That was our mistake and we want to make sure that we provide much better guidelines and information along with this year's materials. We hope that both this letter and the application reflect this.

All of that said, we welcome dialog with the Clubs and your feedback is very helpful. If any information is unclear, you have questions about changes, or just want to provide feedback please do not hesitate to contact us.

Deadline for this year's SEPT applications is April 1, 2011. When submitting an application, be sure to mark "SEPT 2.1" on it, to indicate your receipt of the SEPT 2.1 information contained in this letter. The application file may be downloaded from <http://web.mit.edu/scienceprogram/apply.html>

Application Submission:

Email is the preferred method of application submission. In the event that this is not possible, please send your applications for review to the address at the top of this email.

Notification of Sponsorship:

Notification directly to Alumni Clubs of candidate acceptance status will occur on or about May 16, 2011 via email. Please wait to hear from the SEPT office prior to notifying your candidates of their acceptance status.

We're very excited about this year's program, and we very much look forward to receiving applications from teachers you wish to sponsor. Please do not hesitate to contact Jennie Pakradooni, our Program Administrator, with any questions you might have. Jennie may be reached via email at jenniep@mit.edu .

We look forward to working with you again this year, and to many more years of SEPT!