

MIT Alumni Association – FY2022 Report to the President

Overview

In Fiscal Year 2022, the MIT Alumni Association (MITAA) persevered and forged ahead with determination, creativity, and flexibility. As it weathered the continued challenges and restrictions created by the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as geopolitical divisions and societal conflicts, the MITAA stayed the course in its mission “to connect alumni to the Institute and to each other” and continued toward its strategic vision:

To engage and inspire the global MIT community to make a better world.

FY22 saw most MITAA events continuing to be held online, in observance of MIT’s pandemic protocols, local public health guidelines, and alumni caution. By year’s end, though, restrictions had eased to enable the return of an on-campus Commencement and MIT Tech Reunions that shattered attendance records.

It was a year in which alumni, students, and friend volunteers and the MITAA staff continued to experiment with new strategies and tactics to engage the Institute’s alumni, innovating and risk-taking along the way in a spirit embodying the MIT ethos. The MITAA also maintained its role as a channel for sharing alumni sentiment with the Institute, serving to amplify voices on matters including MIT values; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and freedom of expression.

Within the Alumni Association’s MIT Annual Giving operation, alumni and friend philanthropy achieved solid results on a par with the Institute’s peer institutions.

The partnership between the staff and the Board of Directors was strong, as they worked together collaboratively to execute the fourth and penultimate year of the MITAA Strategic Plan, and efforts began toward refreshing that plan to ensure even greater success in meeting the needs of the 21st-century global community of MIT alumni.

FY22 MIT Alumni Association Highlights

Events

- The MITAA supported 800 events attended by more than 20,700 unique attendees, with cross-staff contributions leading to an enhanced virtual experience for livestream events throughout the majority of the year.

- Commencement and MIT Tech Reunions—held on campus for the first time since 2019—brought back a record more-than-9,800 alumni and guests, including members of the 25th and 50th classes from the last three years, for a weekend that featured 100 events.
- More than 77 percent of alumni from the classes of 2020 and 2021 returned to celebrate their graduation—previously observed during online Commencement—with a special in-person ceremony during Tech Reunions.
- Nearly 40 events were produced for undergraduate alumni classes in nonreunion years.
- Three virtual events were co-presented by the Cardinal & Gray Society, which includes MIT alumni who have reached their 50th-reunion milestones and older, and the Emma Rogers Society, which welcomes the widows and widowers of community members, drawing 1,800 registrants.
- Nearly 2,900 registered for the virtual MIT Alumni Forum series, a programming experiment that linked global themes, Institute priorities, and programming with regional club and affinity group programming to enhance the alumni engagement experience.
- The Brass Rat Melt ceremony drew more than 100 alumni registrants to receive a behind-the-scenes tour of the design and making of the iconic class ring.

Philanthropy

- MIT Annual Giving reached nearly \$89.6 million from more than 36,000 donors.
- The Institute hit an alumni participation rate of 19.7 percent, which represented 26.1 percent of undergraduate and dual-degree undergraduate alumni, and 14 percent graduate for graduate student-exclusive alumni.
- More than 16,900 alumni and friends contributed more than \$20 million to unrestricted and scholarship through Annual Giving.
- Individual outreach to more than 6,700 constituents and visits with 400 individuals resulted in nearly 520 gifts, which totaled more than \$8 million and included a realized estate bequest valued at \$2.5 million.
- The Student Philanthropy Program, which focused this year on cause-based giving, saw 480 undergraduate students making gifts to MIT.
- Members of the 13 classes marking reunion milestones in FY22 collectively raised more than \$316 million in funds for MIT, with four classes setting dollars-raised records and the 60th-reunion Class of 1962 achieving a reunion participation record.
- The MIT 24-Hour Challenge celebrated its sixth year, engaging more than 7,900 alumni and friends to make gifts to various Institute departments and groups totaling \$3.93 million in a single day.
- MIT Annual Giving's efforts to raise funds as part of the international Giving Tuesday resulted in more than 3,300 donors contributing \$1.39 million.
- The MITAA recorded more than 37,400 gifts via credit card and online sources and more than 975 pledges.
- The Annual Giving Leadership Circle, which stewards annual leadership donors making annual gifts of \$2,500–\$100,000, recognized more than 6,000 alumni and friends.
- Comprising donors who give for three consecutive years to the Institute, the Annual Giving Loyalty Circle honored more than 17,430 alumni and friends—nearly 2,160 of whom have given every year since graduation, including one donor who has given for 74 years consecutively.

- The Tech Callers program focused on rebuilding student caller numbers lost during pandemic disruptions, with more than 40 new student callers completing training, and on average nearly 25 students active throughout the year.
- The Tech Callers brought in more than \$318,100 from nearly 1,625 donors, with an average calling hour yielding on average \$120 in gifts.

Programs, Communications, and Benefits

- Logins to the Infinite Connection—the MITAA’s suite of online services that includes Email for Life and the Online Alumni Directory—totaled more than 57,700.
- The Alumni Association website, alum.mit.edu, received more than 599,400 unique visits.
- The MIT Alumni Better World Service Initiative, an online portal, was launched to encourage service in communities beyond the Institute and to unite alumni who are interested in these opportunities, highlighting the collective impact of the MIT community as a force multiplier of good in the world.
- The MITAA debuted to the world its new “MIT Alumni” visual identity—developed by design firm Pentagram in partnership with the MITAA staff, Board, and key stakeholders—to both honor the past and celebrate the future of the Institute’s community of graduates.
- The MIT Alumni Career Design Fellowship, a 30-day online program of alumni working together, peer-to-peer, to design what’s next for them professionally, debuted with more than 275 alumni participants.
- The MITAA produced the annual digital holiday greeting message from President and Mrs. Reif to the worldwide community of MIT alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends.
- More than 71,000 unique alumni clicked on links in emails sent from the MITAA, with email overall achieving a weighted average open rate of 48 percent.
- The MITAA’s YouTube channel reached more than 1.8 million views, and its SoundCloud channel had nearly 124,125 plays.
- On social media, the MITAA had more than 51,650 Facebook fans; 32,420 LinkedIn members; 27,720 Twitter followers; and 18,000 Instagram followers.
- Virtual Reunion Books were produced for the classes celebrating reunions in FY22, with an aggregate 5,000 pages of submissions across 16 books.
- The *Slice of MIT* blog received more than 380,100 views.
- The MIT Alumni Advisors Hub, an online platform that connects advisees with alumni advisors for quick 1:1 virtual professional mentoring sessions, engaged more than 8,300 alumni and students.
- More than 14,670 alumni logged into the MIT Alumni Job Board either to post or to search for professional opportunities available to them.

MITAA Board and Volunteer Leadership

- The number of alumni, students, and friends who volunteered for the Institute in FY22 totaled more than 18,100.
- The MITAA Board met eight times throughout the fiscal year, with a return to in-person for its May meeting.

- The MITAA Board and staff collaborated on the successful update of important governance documents—including the MITAA Constitution, which was found to be outdated and due for revision—to bring them into alignment with current operating methods of the MITAA.
- More than 930 participated in the virtual MIT Alumni Leadership Conference (ALC), which celebrates alumni and friend volunteers. ALC also debuted a summer-long online training academy that led up to the event weekend.
- Work began between the MITAA Board and staff for efforts to refresh the MITAA Strategic Plan in FY23.
- The MIT Annual Giving Board was an active partner in assessing data and recommending changes that carried the program over the threshold from the campaign into FY22; working groups focused on three notable and related shifts addressing clarity, community, and inclusion.
- The inaugural Graduating Student Leaders event was held during Tech Reunions weekend, bringing together student leaders and the MIT Alumni Association Board of Directors to educate soon-to-be alumni on volunteer opportunities with the MITAA.
- The MITAA supported regional clubs and affinity group volunteers of large and midsized markets in their programming through bimonthly meetings of its “super admin” Encompass group.
- Monthly Club and Affinity Group Council calls were held by staff to create opportunities for connections among the different group volunteers in service to the MITAA’s and Institute’s efforts.
- More than 270 volunteers engaged in class-based and affinity-group fundraising.
- A triangulated partnership between the MITAA, the MIT Washington Office, and the volunteer-led Legislative Advocacy Network Advisory Committee resulted in virtual visits to Capitol Hill and outbound messages about the Institute’s US legislative priorities—namely, the House- and Senate-approved CHIPS and Science Act of 2022.
- Work with the Graduate Alumni Council led to graduate-degreed alumni-specific events held in FY22.
- Nearly 40 class fundraising agents wrote more than 8,500 thank-you notes to their classmates who gave this year.
- A new online portal was launched to enable alumni to more efficiently nominate their peers for volunteer leadership roles on the MITAA and other boards, committees, and the Corporation and for alumni leadership awards.
- Monthly MIT10 meetings were held to support 30 young alumni volunteer leaders in setting strategy to bolster engagement and philanthropy among their peers.
- The MIT Indigenous Alumni of MIT (IAMIT) was recognized as an official alumni group by the MITAA.
- Support was provided to ensure the success of the MIT Alumni Arab Association (MITAAA)’s Tech Arabia Conference.
- Enhancements were made to the MITAA’s Outreach Management Tool (OMT), which enables volunteers to reach out to their peers on matters related to engagement and philanthropy.

Institute Partnerships

- Construction was completed on the MIT Alumni Lounge, a gathering space prominently placed in Building 10 right off the Infinite Corridor on the Institute's main campus, which will be opened ceremonially during the 2022 ALC.
- The MITAA leadership and Board volunteers navigated the varied reactions of the alumni community to the decision not to proceed with the October 2021 Carlson Lecture, providing objective insights for the Institute and the Corporation about alumni community sentiment on the topic of free expression.
- MITAA CEO Whitney Espich represented the alumni community on the Institute committee focused on developing the new MIT Values Statement, engaging alumni for input along the way and working to represent alumni views to the committee.
- The MITAA partnered with the Office of Resource Development in efforts to source a new and transformative customer relationship management (CRM) solution to replace the Institute's aging database of record, Advance, including vetting two potential Salesforce products.
- To engage the families of the Institute's future alumni, the MITAA hosted Family Week, a virtual series of 35 events that attracted more than 755 registrants.
- Nearly 2,000 alumni and donor-related data analytics requests from across the MITAA and the Institute's departments, labs, and centers were fulfilled, as were hundreds of queries around email marketing across campus.
- The MITAA collaborated with MIT's departments, labs, and centers to send nearly 1.24 million emails to those entities' alumni and friend constituents.

Organizational Infrastructure

- In FY22, the MITAA's total expense budget was \$18,011,656—including \$1,879,709 allocated for subscriptions to *MIT Technology Review*—and it was funded by \$15,556,627 in General Institute Budget (GIB) funds and program revenues of \$460,320 and \$115,000 from the Association reserves.
- Significant cost increases – namely supporting the unprecedented turnout for Commencement and Tech Reunions – resulted in the MITAA experiencing a deficit of \$559,000, which was covered by additional drawdowns from the AA reserves of \$285,000, and \$274,000 in additional GIB support from the Institute.
- As campus reopened to welcome back nonessential MIT employees, a smooth and phased return to onsite work on a hybrid basis was made possible with the MITAA's participation in the Institute's Work Succeeding Initiative.
- In FY22, the MIT Alumni Association filled 15 positions, six of which were internal MITAA applicants and considered promotions. Moreover, we promoted an additional 10 existing staff members.
- The MITAA joined with the Office of Resource Development to form the Belonging, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to support employees, while a complementary Accountability Committee worked to define the advancement community's commitment to the work.
- The MITAA continued work with the MIT Federal Credit Union on its alumni-focused affinity agreement, while also shoring up its longstanding partnerships with MIT Professional Education, the MIT COOP, the Harvard Club of Boston, and more.
- A new software vendor was selected for the Tech Caller program.

- In complement to the MIT Values Statement, the MITAA produced a specific Values Statement for its staff.
 - MITAA staff were offered more than 20 professional development training programs and opportunities.
 - Technical debt around software continued to be prioritized, with updates being made to bring new web applications into existing frameworks and an upgrade across the MITAA's websites to the Drupal 9 platform.
 - Alumni updated their biographical data in a series of self-reported updates, including nearly 13,250 home address updates; 15,880 employment or business address updates; and 7,340 email updates.
 - MITAA staff helped record more than 80,600 biographical updates and fielded more than 5,700 help inquiries from alumni, donors, and constituents across the Institute.
 - More than 8,500 requests for assistance were made to help@alum.mit.edu, with 88 percent of post-help survey respondents indicating that they were extremely satisfied with staff courtesy and 90 percent satisfied with staff skills and technical knowledge.
 - Streamlining systems for the various help queues across the MITAA, the new software Freshdesk was launched to more easily track and record those constituents requesting support.
 - More than 30 replacement laptops were deployed, Zoom Phone was put into effect, and equipment like mobile phones, desktop computers, and printers, as well as software, were continually supported as the MITAA transitioned from work-from-home to a hybrid work force in FY22.
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The MIT Alumni Community by the Numbers (data as of July 1, 2022)

- There are 144,788 MIT alumni living in the world today, with the MITAA maintaining contact information for 97 percent.
- 63 percent of living alumni engaged with MIT in FY22.
- 46 percent of alumni hold undergraduate degrees, 54 percent hold graduate degrees, and 25 percent of undergraduate degree holders also have MIT graduate degrees.
- 74 percent of alumni are male, 26 percent are female.
- 77 percent of alumni live in the US, 16 percent are international, and 7 percent do not have verifiable home addresses.
- In terms of the breakdown of alumni by school:
 - 48 percent hold engineering degrees.
 - 20 percent hold science degrees.
 - 19 percent hold management degrees.
 - 7 percent hold architecture degrees.
 - 5 percent hold humanities, arts, and social sciences degrees
 - 1 percent hold other degrees

For further information on the MIT Alumni Association, visit us online at alum.mit.edu.

