



MIT Department of Mechanical Engineering
Information for Postdoctoral Associates and Fellows

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Postdoctoral Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows

Postdoctoral Associates are paid by MIT directly and are eligible for the standard MIT employee benefits.

Postdoctoral associates come to MIT to develop their scholarly competence, working under the supervision of MIT faculty members or senior research staff. Appointments to this academic staff rank are of limited term and are designed for those who have recently received the doctorate. This appointment category is comparable in purpose to the postdoctoral fellow, but is distinguished by the fact that the postdoctoral associate is employed by the Institute and afforded the benefits and privileges associated with staff employment. (See Section 7.4 Benefits for Faculty and Staff Members.) Incumbents are not accorded principal investigator status and do not receive consulting privileges. There are guidelines set by the Office of the Vice President for Research regarding the minimum salary and annual salary increases for postdoctoral associates that are based on the NIH postdoctoral salary scale. (see <https://postdocs.mit.edu/home/postdoctoral-position/vice-president-research-statement-salary-and-benefits> for details).

Postdoctoral Fellows are paid by fellowships from institutions other than MIT and are not eligible for the standard MIT employee benefits. They can participate in the MIT Affiliate Health Plan and qualify for the faculty/staff membership rate with the MIT Recreation Department.

Postdoctoral and research fellows come to MIT with fellowship aid to develop their scholarly competence. They usually work under the supervision of MIT faculty members and use the facilities of the Institute. The postdoctoral fellow title is appropriate for those holding the doctoral degree, and the title research fellow should be used by those with comparable professional qualifications. Both are academic appointments. Postdoctoral and research fellows are not degree candidates. Neither principal investigator status nor consulting privileges are available to persons holding appointments at this rank.

The Vice President for Research (VPR) has requested that the increased healthcare fee for postdoctoral fellows be covered by PIs or departments, if the institutional allowance on the fellowship does not cover the difference in the contribution. (See <https://postdocs.mit.edu/home/postdoctoral-position/vice-president-research-statement-salary-and-benefits> for details.)

More information about the difference between these two appointments can be found in MIT Policies and Procedures for Faculty and Staff Members: <https://policies.mit.edu/policies-procedures/50-research-appointments/53->

[academic-research-staff-appointments#5.3.2](#) and on the VPR's site for postdocs: <https://postdocs.mit.edu/mit-policies-and-procedures>.

Postdoctoral Scholars (i.e. associates and fellows) at MIT do not have consulting privileges (see Policies and Procedures [5.3.2](#) and [5.3.3](#)) and are required annually to disclose outside professional activities and interests. The department distributes a form for this purpose each May. Further information can be found in Policies and Procedures [4.4](#) and [4.5](#) and here: <https://coi.mit.edu/community-coi-portal/postdocs-0>.

The A to Z for Newcomers to MIT - <http://hrweb.mit.edu/welcome/>

Things to remember:

- Get your Kerberos ID and personalized certificate by visiting this website <http://ist.mit.edu/start-fac-staff>; once you have your MIT email address send it to Dr. Lynette Jones (ljones@mit.edu) to ensure that it is added to the MechE postdoc email list. Certificates are required to access protected sites such as Atlas About Me or MIT Housing.
- Go to the Atlas Service Center, E17-106, on the day that you start or before you begin working to fill out your I-9. The office is open weekdays from 8 am to 6 pm. Here is a link to more information about the form and a list of the acceptable documents you will need to bring with you: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9>. It is important you bring the correct documents on or before your first day.
- Meet with Anna Churchill (1-104) for a short orientation and to ask any questions you may have.
- If you are eligible for benefits, attend a **New Employee Orientation session**. You will receive a link via email to register. Information about benefits can also be found here: <https://postdocs.mit.edu/postdoctoral-position/benefits>.
- Postdoctoral Associates can enroll in the following benefits within 31 days of your start date through the Atlas site (atlas.mit.edu).

[Dental Plan](#)

[401\(k\) Plan](#)

[Health Plan](#)

[Supplemental Life](#)

[Flexible Spending Account](#)

[Vision Plan](#)

- Sign up for direct deposit of your MIT paychecks and complete the tax withholding forms under 'Money Matters' on the Atlas site (atlas.mit.edu).
- Track your vacation using the SRS vacation tracker at the Atlas site <https://adminappsts.mit.edu/vactrac/EmployeeEntry.action>. You are eligible for vacation time if your appointment is as a Postdoctoral Associate for at least 50% effort for one year or more. If your title is Postdoctoral Fellow or if your

appointment is for less than 50% or for less than one year you do not accrue vacation time. Any time off will be taken as an unpaid leave. Please contact Anna Churchill when you are planning to take time off unpaid.

- Please log into the sick leave tracker any time that you are absent for illness or appointments with health care practitioners. You can access the tracker by going to atlas.mit.edu and searching for 'Sick Time Reporting' in the Full Catalog.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident you must register with the International Scholars Office: <http://web.mit.edu/scholars/>
- Sign up to add your name to the MIT postdoc email list: <http://postdocs.mit.edu/join-postdoc-mailing-list>. Announcements regarding professional development workshops, social functions, etc. are sent to the MIT postdoc community.

Helpful Resources:

- MIT Medical - <https://medical.mit.edu/>
- HR/Payroll Service Center - (617) 253-4255 <http://vpf.mit.edu/site/payroll>
- MyLife Services - <http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/mitmylifeservices>
- MIT Police - dial 100 from any campus phone
- International Scholars Office - <http://web.mit.edu/scholars/> or (617) 253-2851
- MIT Information Systems and Technology Service Desk - computing-help@mit.edu or 617.253.1101
- MIT Card Office - <http://web.mit.edu/semo/card/index.html> Atlas Service Center E17-106
- MIT Map - <http://whereis.mit.edu/>
- MIT Staffing - <http://careers.mit.edu/> (lists postdoc positions available at MIT)

Additional Resources

Networking on the MIT Campus:

Postdocs in the Department of Mechanical Engineering - there is a postdoc email list for the Department (me-postdocs@mit.edu) that is used to send out general information such as academic job announcements, professional development workshops, seminars in the department, and PhD thesis defense announcements. If your name is on the email list, you can send emails to other postdocs in the department.

Postdoctoral Association (PDA) at MIT - this is an association at MIT run by postdocs that provides support for the postdoc community and organizes social events, professional development workshops and advocates for postdocs at MIT

(<http://pda.mit.edu/>). A list of the career services put together by the PDA is available at <http://pda.mit.edu/resources/career-tools/>.

Faculty Postdoctoral Advisory Committee (FPAC) - this committee includes the governing members of the MIT Postdoctoral Association, the Vice President for Research, and several other faculty members. The committee is positioned to provide advice in response to issues raised by the PDA and to help implement postdoc-related improvements at MIT.

Postdoc Forum - a listserv created by the MIT Postdoctoral Association for open discussion of postdoc issues and dissemination of information pertaining to postdoctoral life (<http://mailman.mit.edu/mailman/listinfo/postdocforum>)

MIT Global Education and Career Development Office (GECD) - offers career related resources, workshops, access to job listings through CareerBridge and one-on-one counseling appointments for postdoctoral scholars (<http://gecd.mit.edu/explore-careers/services-alumni-and-postdocs>)

National Postdoc Association (NPA) - MIT is a sustaining member of the National Postdoc Association and so any postdoc affiliated with MIT and with an MIT email address can join the NPA for free as an affiliate member and is entitled to free subscriptions and access to members-only web content <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org>.

Machine Shop Facilities:

The AMP Graduate Machine Shop in 1-307 is run by Pierce Hayward (phayward@mit.edu). The shop is open to all MechE graduate students and postdocs. The machine shop has a CNC machine, lathe, bandsaws, sander/grinder etc. If you are unfamiliar with any of the equipment, the shop will offer introductory training courses. For more information including shop rules and hours, see the website at: <http://amplab.mit.edu/>. Please familiarize yourself with the shop safety and guidelines: <http://amplab.mit.edu/shop-safety-and-guidelines>.

The MIT libraries maintain a guide to the shops and tools on campus: <http://libguides.mit.edu/make>. If you have any questions about this resource please reach out to the Department of Mechanical Engineering's librarian, Elizabeth Soergel, esoergel@mit.edu.

Professional Development:

Professional Development Workshops - The Department of Mechanical Engineering offers workshops and panel discussions during the academic year. Topics covered include: Writing Research and Teaching Statements, Interviewing for Academic Positions, Course Planning and Teaching, Job Opportunities in Industry, Setting up a Laboratory as a Junior Faculty Member, A meeting with postdocs in the Department is held at the beginning of the academic year to discuss which professional development activities postdocs want during the coming year.

The MechE Communication Lab offers coaching and resources for engineers, by engineers. It uses a peer-coaching model, in which specially selected MechE graduate students and postdocs are trained to become exceptional communication coaches: the Communication Fellows. The Fellows work one-on-one with MechE clients, providing guidance for the effective creation of all forms of technical communication. These include, but are not limited to, scientific journal articles, conference presentations, course materials, research posters and job applications. The MechE Communication Lab manager [Dr. Svetlana Boriskina](#).

MIT Writing and Communication Center (E18-233) offers free individual professional advice about all types of writing and speaking to all members of the MIT community. The Center's professional lecturers help with papers being written for journals and conferences, teaching and research statements, CVs, job applications, slides and oral presentation skills. To register with our online scheduler and to make appointments, go to <https://mit.mywconline.com/>. To access the WCC's many pages of advice about writing and oral presentations, go to <http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center/>.

MIT Teaching and Learning Lab (TLL) - promotes excellence in teaching and learning throughout the Institute and contributes to MIT's commitment to educational innovation and its standing as a leader in science and engineering education. The TLL provides help with teaching statements and will run small workshops for postdocs in the department if there is sufficient interest. The TLL offers a *Teaching Certificate Program* to graduate students and postdoctoral researchers who wish to develop their teaching skills: <http://tll.mit.edu/>

MIT Human Resources Facilitated Classes - Classes on scientific and technical writing, preparing and giving presentations, management and leadership available on MIT Learning Center on the Atlas site <https://atlas.mit.edu/>

Professional Development Video Portal - PRO-DEPOT is a compilation of MIT event videos geared toward professional development that is maintained by the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (<http://odge.mit.edu/development/prodepot>)

Teaching Opportunities - The Department of Mechanical Engineering offers teaching opportunities for postdocs. The Associate Department Head for teaching often makes requests before each semester for postdocs interested in assisting in lab courses or doing recitations.

Learning Opportunities - Independent Activities Period (IAP) is a special four-week term at MIT that runs from the first week of January until the end of the month. A wide variety of activities are offered during this period including lecture series, forums, tours, recitals and how-to sessions. Non-credit activities are open to all members of the MIT community. The IAP schedule is usually posted online in November: <http://web.mit.edu/iap/>

Communication Opportunities - The Medical Department coordinates a language conversation exchange, in which an international postdoc can arrange to meet regularly with someone else in the MIT community who is interested in the language/culture of the postdoc. See <http://lce.scripts.mit.edu/about.php>

Language Learning - Transparent Language Online makes over 80 languages available to anyone with an MIT ID. Use it on your mobile phone, at home or while you're traveling. Go to <https://connect.mangolanguages.com/mit/login> to register.

Postdoctoral Mentoring:

MIT requires that a mentoring/career development plan is developed for each postdoc at the time that his/her postdoctoral appointment is processed and when an extension is requested. A basic outline for a mentoring plan and background material on mentoring and career development is available at: <https://postdocs.mit.edu/career-development/mentoring-and-advising/postdoctoral-mentoring-and-advising-toolkit>

Job Search Resources:

MIT Alumni Association Infinite Connection:

An Infinite Connection account provides access to networking opportunities, job listings, career advice and other resources. A postdoc may register for an account after having a MIT postdoctoral appointment of nine months or longer.

Academic Job Search:

Chronicle of Higher Education - provides articles about academic job search and interviewing: <https://www.chronicle.com/>

Job Sites:

- Academic 360 - widely used web site for posting academic jobs: <http://www.academic360.com/>
- AcademicJobsOnline - widely used web site for posting academic jobs: <http://academicjobsonline.org/ajo>
- Academic Keys is an organization that has email lists that you can sign up for and they will send you faculty job postings in your area of interest. Link can be found here: <http://www.academickeys.com>
- New England Higher Education Consortium (NEHERC) - a web site capturing all openings (academic and staff) in the higher education institutions in New England: http://www.hercjobs.org/new_england
- Inside Higher Ed - widely used web site for posting academic jobs: <http://www.insidehighered.com/>

Industry Job Search:

MIT Human Resources offers classes on Resume Writing, Interviewing Skills, and Networking in a Job Search; available through the MIT Learning Center link in Atlas or <http://hrweb.mit.edu/learning-development>

MIT Global Education and Career Development Center provides MIT postdocs with guidance on career exploration including job search strategies for both industry and academia. Appointments can be made with a postdoc counselor through their website: <https://gecd.mit.edu/explore-careers/services-alumni-and-postdocs>

Versatile PhD is a robust resource on non-academic careers for grad students and postdocs, designed to help identify and prepare for careers beyond academia. Through the generous support of the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education, MIT students, postdocs and alumni now have access to Versatile PhD Premium Content. You'll have to register the first time you access the website: <http://versatilephd.com/>

Family Resources:

MIT Spouses and Partners provides support, networking and educational opportunities for the wives, husbands and significant others of MIT students, postdocs, staff, and faculty. A Newcomers' Guide is available that provides a wide range of information from language classes to places of interest for children (<http://spouses.mit.edu/resources>). Contact person - Jennifer Recklet Tassi (617-253-1614 or reck@med.mit.edu).

There is a support group for mothers who are full-time MIT graduate students or postdocs that meets monthly:

<http://mailman.mit.edu/mailman/listinfo/gradmoms/>

MIT Work-Life Center - provides all members of the MIT community with advice, referrals, and resources on parenting, child care, schools, legal and financial issues, and oversees the Institute's child-care centers: <http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/>.

Technology Childcare Centers - MIT operates four child-care centers in Cambridge and one in Lexington so that parents can choose the location most convenient to home or work. The centers are run by Bright Horizons: <http://childcare.mit.edu/>.

Scholarship applications are available at:

<http://childcare.mit.edu/tuition-scholarships/mit-childcare-scholarship-program>

Parents in a Pinch provides in-home back up childcare and adult care for up to 15 days annually at preferred rates through MIT. The screened and trained caretakers are available day or evening, 7 days a week

<http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/child-care-parenting/backup-child-care>.

Housing:

For information on off-campus and on-campus housing options, visit this website:

<http://postdocs.mit.edu/home/campus-services-resources-and-tips/housing>

Suggested web sites for additional housing/accommodation:

<https://www.sabbaticalhomes.com>

<http://www.academichomes.com>

Banking:

For banking needs there is an MIT Federal Credit Union, located in the Stratton Student Center, W20-016 and at 700 Technology Square,

NE48: <https://www.mitfcu.org/>

Taxation:

The Vice President for Finance Office provides payroll information for Postdocs:

http://vpf.mit.edu/static/pdf/PostDoc_Fiscal_Info_V3.pdf

MIT Payroll Service Center can respond to all tax and payroll related questions:
payroll@mit.edu or 617-253-3337 or <http://vpf.mit.edu/payroll>

International Scholars Office offers workshops on taxation usually at the beginning of each calendar year:

<http://web.mit.edu/scholars/intlscholars/taxes/index.html>

The Vice President for Finance Office also maintains a website with guidance for non-resident aliens:

<https://vpf.mit.edu/tax-guidance-for-nonresident-aliens>

Taxes are processed through two separate offices depending on the type of payments involved, HR/Payroll and Accounts Payable.

Tax Form	Issued for:	Issued by:
W-2	Salary and wage payments to employees and students excluding wages that are exempt under a tax treaty	HR/Payroll payroll@mit.edu or 617-253-3337
1042s	1) Salary and wage payments to employees and students who are non-resident aliens covered by a tax treaty 2) Fellowship payments covered by a tax treaty which had federal income tax withheld	HR/Payroll (payroll@mit.edu or 617-253-3337): Salary and wage payments, fellowships Accounts Payable (Accounts-payable@mit.edu or 617-253-2750): Honoraria, prizes and awards, fellowships, non-graduate student salaries, etc.
1099-MISC	Independent contractors, royalties and other income	Accounts Payable Accounts-payable@mit.edu or 617-253-2750
1099-R	Pension payments to retirees and Long Term Disability payments	HR/Payroll payroll@mit.edu or 617-253-3337

Parking and Transportation:

An interactive tool that helps MIT employees better manage their commutes:
Commuting Benefits (atlas.mit.edu).

Public Transportation - All postdoctoral fellows and postdoctoral associates on MIT's Cambridge campus are eligible for free, unrestricted subway and local bus access:
<http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/tpass.html>

Driving - You can drive to campus and get assigned to a parking lot available to you through the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Contact our parking coordinator, Janice McCarthy, jmcc@mit.edu or 617-253-5904. Information about parking and current parking rates is available at:
<http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/parking/index.html>

Hubway - Current MIT employees and students can buy subsidized annual Hubway (a bike sharing system) memberships and ride at a discounted hourly rate. The subsidized annual membership for MIT employees and students is \$25 (regularly \$85). Follow this link <http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/bicycling.html> to learn more. An MIT certificate is required in order to register.

Shuttles - Shuttles, operated by the Parking and Transportation Office, are available to the MIT community as an alternate mode of transportation:
<http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/shuttles/index.html>

Zipcar - an option to rent a car on campus whenever you need it:
http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/car_sharing.html

Zimride - social network for sharing rides with MIT friends, colleagues:
<http://zimride.mit.edu>

Registry of Motor Vehicles - general driving information for Boston, issues MA driving licenses: <http://www.massrmv.com/>

Additional Questions:

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