

# Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for Engineering Excellence

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Q1: Am I eligible to apply if I already hold a postdoctoral position at MIT or another institution?

Recent PhD recipients within one year of graduation who hold a postdoctoral position within MIT or other institutions and who satisfy all other eligibility criteria are welcome to apply.

### Q2: Am I eligible to apply if I am currently a graduate student at MIT and will have earned my PhD by the start of the program?

This postdoctoral fellowship is primarily intended to introduce incredible new candidates to the MIT School of Engineering community as postdoctoral fellows. However, current MIT graduate students who are graduating with a PhD and will have earned the degree by the program's September start date and who satisfy all other criteria are welcome to apply.

### Q3: Am I eligible to apply if I am not a citizen of the United States?

The program accepts applications from international scholars. However, non-U.S. nationals who are offered a postdoctoral fellowship must hold appropriate non-immigrant status, such as J-1, F-1 OPT / STEM, or other employment authorization (EAD), for the duration of the fellowship appointment. Please note that H-1B and E-3 employment-based, non-immigrant visa sponsorship is not possible for this position.

### Q4: Am I eligible to apply if I have not yet earned my doctoral degree by the time of application?

We will accept applications from those who will have earned their doctoral degree by the start of the program in September 2023.

### Q5: What if I do not know which MIT faculty research supervisor I would like to work with?

We encourage all applicants to review School of Engineering faculty listings to get a sense of faculty and departments who may fit their postdoctoral research areas. A list of suggested

faculty advisors is not essential but is desirable. The program will also help selected applicants in finding a faculty research advisor. Please review the School of Engineering faculty directories on our webpage at

<https://engineering.mit.edu/the-mit-postdoctoral-fellowship-program-for-engineering-excellence/>.

#### **Q6: Do you require a MIT faculty member as a reference?**

No, a reference letter from a MIT faculty member is not required to apply to the program. Your required three reference letters should come from previous advisors who can speak to your intellectual capabilities and your promise as a researcher.

#### **Q7: How will faculty mentors be assigned to selected fellows? And when will fellows be informed of their mentor?**

The program requires an MIT faculty member to affirmatively agree to be an advisor to the postdoctoral fellow. All fellows in the program will be associated with at least one School of Engineering faculty member and a School of Engineering department.

#### **Q8: Will it be possible to have more than one faculty advisor?**

Fellows will be matched with at least one faculty advisor but may name potential co-advisors. The program will also connect you with other mentors related to your career development interests.

#### **Q9: Do I need to contact a faculty member for funding?**

Applicants do not need to contact MIT faculty to apply for this fellowship funding and program. In the application process we ask applicants to name their faculty members of interest who may later serve as their faculty advisor. If an applicant is selected as a fellow, their fellowship funding is contingent upon agreement from a MIT faculty member who will serve as their research advisor.

#### **Q10: What are your expectations for the application research summary?**

Research statements will be reviewed by a broad set of faculty members encompassing all engineering disciplines. Please write your research statement to appeal to this audience.

The research statement is meant to be more of a research narrative than a proposal. The program intends the research summary to aid in identifying an appropriate research supervisor and core department for the fellow. The research statement should address your past work, including why, what, and how you conducted this research and its challenges and successes. In addition, the statement should include your future work, including its feasibility, value, and match with the MIT School of Engineering faculty members you would like to work with. Finally, the research statement should also include your unique research vision or approach.

### Q11: Are fellows required to participate in all of the professional development opportunities?

Fellows are admitted to the program as a cohort and expected to participate in research as well as the career development paths that are meant to expose fellows to opportunities within academia, engineering leadership, and entrepreneurship.

### Q12: Can fellows participate in the program remotely?

No, postdoctoral fellows are expected to work with MIT faculty and engage in the program activities *primarily* in person and on campus. They should arrive by the September start date of the program.

### Q13: Can fellows conduct a joint postdoc in collaboration with another research university?

In this program a postdoctoral fellow's appointment and primary faculty advising will occur at MIT. While there may be opportunities for collaboration with external research advisors at other research institutions, it is important for postdoctoral fellows to consult with their faculty advisors and departmental human resources team to be aware of MIT policies regarding outside professional activities and conflict of interest.

## Additional questions?

Contact us at [soe-pfpfee@mit.edu](mailto:soe-pfpfee@mit.edu).