Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research Administration

Vision To Address Emerging Opportunities and Historical Pain Points

Research take place in in 32 departments within five schools and the college, and also within labs and centers that fall outside of the schools and college (in VPR or Provost units). There are over 65 interdisciplinary centers, laboratories, and institutes. Research Administration professionals in central offices, schools and college and local departments, labs, and centers (DLCs) all collaborate with principal investigators (PIs), helping them bring their ideas to life in support of the MIT Mission. Research excellence and research administration excellence go hand in hand. Talented staff within the offices of the provost and the vice president for research support faculty and PIs to build relationships, translate echnology, navigate industry and non-federal sponsorship, submit proposals and manage awards, find new funding, and streamline access to tools and resources.

The Research Administration Enterprise Faces External Pressures

Increasing Research Administration Complexity threatens to affect administrative efficiency and overall research ecosystem.

- Fraction of research volume from non-federal sources, including industry and private foundations, is approximately 40%.

- Research agreements themselves, federal and non-federal alike, have grown more complex, due to a range of factors such as new compliance, data privacy, and disclosure requirements.

- Many principal investigators (PIs) at MIT now manage more diverse research portfolios composed of more complex individual agreements.

- Several years ago, the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) was not fit to purpose; attempting to apply one size fits all to agreements.

MIT has laid ground work to address challenges by creating new offices at MIT

Faculty and staff committee proposed various options to transform OSP, with the recognition that working with different types of sponsors requires different sets of skills and areas of expertise. This led to creating two new centra research administration offices.

- Research Administration Services (RAS) has the immediate responsibility for the business administration aspects of research projects sponsored by the government, industry, or foundations in accordance with the established policies of the Institute.

- Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT) Core supports MIT faculty and researchers in developing, negotiating and launching engagements with non-federal research sponsors and collaborators, as well as a variety of research-related agreements, such as non-disclosure, data use and material transfer agreements (NDAs, DUAs, and MTAs).

Transforming Research Administration Enterprise at MIT had a Major Interruption

The Plan to reinvent research administration infrastructure and reimagine engagement with faculty and staff, sponsors, collaborators, and supporters of MIT's mission began in Fall 2019. But the actual launch and stand up Research Administration Services (RAS) and the Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT) — to replace and expand on the work of the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) occurred in Spring 2020, just as the pandemic was beginning.

Next Steps and Strategic Planning

When the new APAVPR took the role in November 2022, discussions with faculty and staff colleagues in November revealed that the many changes in structure from OSP to RAS and OSATT were not fully absorbed by PIs and faculty and by local DLC administration teams. The last eight months have brought an Opportunity to Build Awareness of Teams & Tools and to Build Community for Research Administration. Following a smooth transition of leadership and roll-out of organizational changes during 2022-2023, in the next year, 2023-2024, our team will focus on developing a data-informed and community-driven strategic plan for research administration at MIT.

Highlights

The Industrial Liaison Program (ILP) celebrated its 75th anniversary in March at the reception of its 2023 MIT Innovations in Management Conference. A team of current CR employees, some with decades of experience and others in their first year, narrated the rich history of ILP. The crowd of faculty, corporate executives, and entrepreneurs as well as current and former employees and their families were also addressed by Professor Anne White, Professor Vladimir Bulovic, and Professor Julie Shah as well as Karl Koster (retired executive director of CR).

OSATT Core's Strategic Transactions Team (STT) handled 364 sponsored or unfunded research agreement negotiations to finalization, and the STT's NDA/DUA/MTA team negotiated, reviewed and executed an additional 829 agreements. Catalysts in OSATT Core supported approximately 300 engagements and Alliance Managers assisted in the project management of 22 master research agreements across the Institute. In addition, a recently-created role in OSATT Core – a designated liaison to RAS – triaged and addressed 67 unique issues, removing them from the queue of assignments, resulting in a more efficient response time to faculty and DLCIs.

RAS (Research Administrations Services) worked closely with OSATT Core to institute new industry sponsored research agreement workflows, with identified liaisons and "point people" in each office.

Research Administration Support and Education also launched a new program for central administrators called RAS-ED in FY23 in response to internal demand for learning and discussion on "hot topics". RAS-ED are one-hour learning sessions offered bi-weekly for VPR and RAS staff that support MIT's research administrators. Research Administration Support and Education team in the VPR offered 27 educational opportunities for the MIT Research Administration Community and 13 educational

opportunities for VPR/RAS staff in FY23. Self-paced eLearning modules have been expanded and weekly virtual drop-in sessions are offered to provide the user community and VPR/RAS staff with flexibility and just-in-time learning solutions. 74% of the 450 member MIT Research Administration community has participated in the educational offerings.

Research Development created a new Early Career Funding Guide to help faculty find funding and navigate resources for managing industry/non-federal funding and moving research to the marketplace.

The Technology Licensing Office (TLO) is proud that Abram Barret was selected as a recipient for the Innovative Solutions Excellence Award. The 2023 MIT Excellence Awards recognize outstanding employees across MIT who have made significant contributions to their departments or the Institute as a whole. Abram is the TLO's IP Special Projects Manager. One of his most significant contributions to the TLO was improving the handling of communications from outside law firms and other constituents to relevant TLO staff. His ingenuity and extensive knowledge of patent prosecution led him to implement a mail sorting software solution and develop routing matrices for over 100 types of communication, which amount to over 1,500 weekly communications related to MIT's IP portfolio.

Staffing Changes

Retirements

None

New Hires

Vivian Holmes was hired as the Director of Research Administration Services (RAS) in February 2022, following a national search.

Susan Gomes, Director of Research Development. The Research Development team at MIT is relatively new to MIT (circa five years), and for the past two years had an interim director, Karen Shirer, who Susan replaced as permanent director in March 2023. As a field, Research Development is roughly 15 years old, much younger compared to research administration field as a whole.

Joe O'Brien, Program Manager, Research Development. Reporting to Karen Shirer in VPR.

Transitions

Professor Krysten Van Vliet stepped down as Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research in October 2022 and left MIT in February 2023 for Cornell.

Professor Anne White became the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research Administration in November 2022. The Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research Administration reports to the Provost and has secondary reporting to the Vice President for Research.

Vivian Holmes, Director of Research Administration Services (RAS), began reporting to Anne White in November 2022; prior to that she reported to Colleen Leslie. Vivian's title was changed to Executive Director in January 2023.

Carol Wood became the Director if Research Administration Systems and Support, reporting to Anne White, in November 2022. Prior to that Carol reported to Colleen Leslie.

Colleen Leslie, Assistant Provost, transitioned away from direct oversight of RAS and Research Administration Systems and Support in November 2022. She took on new expanded responsibilities under the VPR to foster an initiative around nurturing research administration careers in the department, labs and centers at MIT. Colleen reports to Anne White for this initiative and to VPR Maria Zuber for her other roles.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research Administration Office team is comprised of the following members (in alphabetical order).

Within Provost Office

Meghan McCollum Fenno is the executive director of OSATT Core, Office of Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT).

OSATT Core supports research sponsored by industry and other non-federal sponsors. They aid such sponsors and other collaborators to engage in the development, negotiation and launch of sponsored research and research-related activities to enable innovation for a better world. Three OSATT Core teams--Catalysts, Strategic Transactions and Alliance Management--provide a tripod of support for these engagements. OSATT Core will coordinate with, and serve as a resource to, MIT department and school administration, Research Administration Services (RAS), the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) and other operational offices. Externally, OSATT Core is a primary contact for non-federal sponsors interested in sponsoring or otherwise engaging in research opportunities at MIT. Catalysts serve as an initial point of contact for MIT faculty and organizations that fund or sponsor research (or research-related activities) at MIT to support the development and refinement of project ideas and expectations towards the realization of mutually beneficial engagements. The Strategic Transactions Team (STT) is responsible for drafting, reviewing and negotiating sponsored research and collaboration agreements, as well as confidentiality, data use, material transfer and other research-related agreements. Alliance Managers connect faculty and other MIT researchers with the appropriate information, resources, and connections they need to facilitate their commitments to MIT's external partners and collaborators.

Lesley Millar Nicholson is the executive director of the Technology Licensing Office (TLO), Office of Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT).

The TLO mission is to move innovations and discoveries from the lab to the marketplace for the benefit of the public and to amplify MIT's global impact. The TLO cultivates an inclusive environment of scientific and entrepreneurial excellence, and bridge connections from MIT's research community to industry and startups, by strategically

evaluating, protecting, and licensing technology. TLO supports MIT faculty, staff or students who wish to disclose an invention if they believe their research could be commercialized for public use and benefit. TLO manages implementation of the Institute's policy on ownership, distribution, and commercial development of MIT IP. University IP obligations are mandated in Federal Law through the Bayh Dole Act. MIT P&P 13.1 covers Intellectual Property, and was updated this year.

John Roberts is the executive director (interim) of the Office of Corporate Relations, ILP and ILP Startup Exchange, Office of Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT).

MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP) is industry's most comprehensive portal to MIT, enabling companies worldwide to harness MIT resources to address current challenges and to anticipate future needs. The MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP) and MIT Startup Exchange is a membership-based program for large organizations interested in long-term, strategic relationships with MIT. ILP will engage with organizations from around the globe – in any sector – that are concerned with emerging research- and education-driven results that will be transformative.

Deb Shafran is the executive assistant.

Deb's responsibilities include support for project management of the various portfolios in the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research Administration Office. Deb provides daily calendar management services for the Associate Provosts Anne White and Brent Ryan.

Anne White is associate provost and associate vice president for research administration.

The associate provost and associate vice president for research administration oversees Research Administration Services, Research Administration Systems and Support, and Research Development. She also oversees the Office of Strategic Alliances and Technology Transfer (OSATT), which includes the Technology Licensing Office, Corporate Relations, and OSATT Core. The associate provost and associate vice president for research administration engages with Task Force 2021 and Beyond to advance its recommendations as well as with special projects of the provost. The associate provost and associate vice president for research administration reports to the provost with secondary reporting to the VPR.

Within Office of the Vice President for Research

Susan Gomes is the director of research development.

Under the new permanent Director, Susan Gomes, a strategic vision for research development at MIT is being developed. Currently the team focuses on working directly with faculty to identify available funding opportunities matching research needs and priorities. The team serves as the VPR liaison to the Office of Foundation relations and other entities on and off campus; runs MIT Limited Submission Competitions that are announced on MITfundops Listserv, maintains funding databases: like Pivot-RP, A searchable curated database of global funding opportunities covering over 13,000 public and private sponsors and more than $70 billion of funding.

Vivian Holmes is the executive director of research administration services (RAS)

RAS Research Administration Services (RAS) is the central administrative office responsible for submitting proposals and accepting awards on behalf of MIT. However, RAS coordinates closely with other central offices, notably OSATT Core, TLO, VPF, OGC, and OFR, during the lifecyle of an award. In addition, to monitor compliance, RAS will engage with the VPR Compliance team.

The Principal Investigator (PI) has overall responsibility for the technical and fiscal management of a sponsored project, including the management of the project within funding limitations, and assuring that the sponsor will be notified when significant conditions related to the project status change. Responsibility for the day-to-day management of project finances may be delegated to administrative or other staff. But accountability for compliance with MIT policy and sponsor requirements ultimately rests with the PI. Hence, RAS will coordinate closely with PIs and DLC administrators during the lifecycle of an award.

RAS is composed of three groups: the Grant and Contract Teams, the Subawards Team, and the Data Services Team.

The Grant and Contract Teams provide the Grant and Contract Administration support function. The team is organized to support research through one primary point of contact. Each department, laboratory, center or institute (DLCI) is assigned a Grant/Contract Administrator. This person is responsible for providing services to the DLCI throughout the entire life-cycle of the sponsored program, including proposal review and submission, award negotiation and setup, award management, and award closeout. The Grant and Contract Team includes Team Liaisons for major sponsors, such as NIH, NSF, DOE, NASA, DOD and Other Federal. In addition, there are Liaisons with expertise in Foundations and non-Profit sponsors, industry sponsors, international sponsors and USAID and state and local government.

Research Subawards Team handles the negotiation and processing of subawards to other research organizations under MIT's sponsored research agreements.

The Data Services Team (DST) is responsible for reviewing, establishing and maintaining all sponsored program awards using Kuali Coeus, MIT's enterprise grants management system.

It is important to note that the lifecycle of an award involves many MIT personnel, distributed both centrally and locally. For example, post-award financial management falls into DLCs and lives at the intersection of activities within the VPF and RAS. Part of the strategic planning for RAS involves identifying such gaps, e.g. Research Finance, and developing near term and long term plans to close strategic gaps and seize opportunities.

Colleen Leslie is assistant provost for research administration new initiative lead.

The purpose of the new DLC initiative within the VPR is to recognize, celebrate and leverage research administration excellence at MIT to support research excellence. The initiative will focus on enhancing research administration functions within DLCs. The overall goal is to build research administration capacity, enhance coordination and foster the adoption of best practices at the department, lab, and center level. The initiative features: formalizing central collaboration with DLC leadership and their administrative teams, school/college Assistant Deans, Human Resources, the Vice President for Finance, Internal Audit, and the Provost; developing processes and resources that strengthen MIT's competitiveness in recruiting and retaining all research administrators at the department, lab, and center level and in central administration; focus on community building, Onboarding & Trainings, Professional Development so that local administrators feel pride and ownership in their roles, ultimately improving support of faculty and PIs and the research enterprise.

Carol Wood is the director of research administration systems and support.

The team's mission is to provide direct access, resources and training guides, to the tools and systems important for research administrators and faculty. Research Administration (RA) Systems & Support provides electronic research administration (eRA) systems/applications, education, reporting and support for MIT's faculty and departmental administrators. The two teams work closely with Research Administration Services (RAS), the DLC initiative, and VPR Compliance implementing solutions, guidance, education and tools to meet the growing needs of MIT's research administration community.

The Research Administration Systems team is responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining MIT's electronic research administration (eRA) systems/applications. The team collaborates with campus business owners to identify needs, design, develop and implement solutions, provide quality assurance and testing and ongoing maintenance and support. They work closely with MIT IS&T to develop tools, such as

- Research@MIT App https://apps.mit.edu use to centrally manage tools and resources.

- Informal International Collaborations (IIC) tool iic.mit.edu/iic

- NDA/DUA submission portal https://nda.mit.edu/ (research related)

The Research Administration Support and Education team offers ongoing educational opportunities for the MIT Research Administration Community and for VPR/RAS staff. Offerings include self-paced eLearning; weekly virtual drop-in sessions; sessions focused on RAP, KC, NCURA, RAS-ED live webinars and curated eLearning educational offerings.

Anne White
Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Research