

Director, MIT Libraries

Throughout the 2022 academic year, the Libraries continued to be guided by [MIT Libraries' Vision: A New Urgency](#)—a set of principles that inform our operational decisions and activities. In a year characterized by a return to in-person teaching, research, and learning at MIT, a shift to hybrid work schedules for our staff, and an ongoing global pandemic, our vision was as relevant as ever.

Our progress over the past year falls within these priorities: a commitment to being a digital-first library; an open scholarship agenda that accelerates the progress of science and promotes equity; support for data-intensive and computational research and learning; and a focus on an essential core of physical collections, services, and spaces. As we aim to exercise bold leadership in defining a model for research libraries, we also reaffirmed our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and social justice through our work and within our organization.

A Digital-First Library

In order to maximize digital access to content and services, the Libraries:

- Launched a new library search platform to the MIT community, providing a more intuitive and seamless experience searching, browsing, and accessing our collections
- Secured approval by MIT Faculty vote of a policy change designating the digital copy of a thesis as the version of record, after building MIT's first fully digital thesis and dissertation management system
- For the second year in a row, more than doubled our digitization output: an increase of 124% for overall pages scanned and an increase of 110% for retrospective theses scanned from FY2021
- Implemented new workflows for our [DSpace@MIT Open Access \(OA\) collection](#) to reduce the cataloging backlog to zero; increased the average monthly number of items added to this collection by 40%; also, 57% of faculty articles are now in the OA Article Collection
- Increased access to another 70,000 ebooks through new agreements with five publishers, including Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and Springer/Palgrave

Open and Equitable Scholarship

To accelerate the progress of science, promote equity and inclusion across disciplines, and reduce the marginalization of scholars and scholarship from disadvantaged communities, the Libraries engaged in the following activities.

- We successfully negotiated contracts with Springer/Nature, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, ProQuest, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers that align with the [MIT Framework for Publisher Contracts](#), providing open access publishing options to MIT authors at no additional cost to them and providing a model for other libraries and publishers to pursue. This brings the total number of Framework-aligned agreements to 10.

- We responded to concerns about lack of immediate access to new Elsevier content by implementing a new service for rapid interlibrary borrowing, resulting in near-instant access for 95% of requests for canceled Elsevier journals.
- Three postdoctoral associates (funded by a Mellon Foundation grant) were hired at the [Center for Research on Equitable and Open Scholarship \(CREOS\)](#), each of whom is working with a faculty member on an original research project.
- The Libraries oversaw the development and vetting of draft language to advance the [2019 Open Access Task Force \(OATF\) recommendations](#) with input from the OATF Implementation Team and the Committee on the Library System. This included new policy language to formalize the Faculty Open Access Policy in *MIT Policy and Procedures* and to expand the open access policy to all MIT authors and to draft MIT principles for open and equitable scholarship. We will continue soliciting additional community feedback and seeking faculty and MIT senior leadership approval in AY2023.
- Finally, we supported the MIT Press' successful open access initiatives by funding Direct to Open, a new business model for scholarly books, at a level that offers smaller libraries subsidized pricing, and by investing in *Rapid Reviews COVID-19*, an open access interdisciplinary medical journal.

Data-Intensive and Computational Research

The Libraries supported data-intensive and computational research and learning across the Institute.

- The Data Management Team provided more than 20 workshops and consultations on data management planning, including a presentation to the School of Science Council on new National Institutes of Health data sharing requirements.
- Libraries staff led Carpentries@MIT hands-on workshops with Institute researchers, covering basic research computing concepts, including program design, version control, data management, and task automation.
- Work began on the Research Data Index, a project aimed at providing a single point of discovery for MIT's research data, with the goal of delivering a proof of concept and beginning user testing with project partners in fall 2022.
- The Libraries have been coordinating with the Office of the Vice President for Research around the newly announced [Office of Research Computing and Data](#) and will be a part of its forthcoming advisory committee.

Essential Core: Physical Collections, Services, and Spaces

Physical resources are critical to MIT research, teaching, and community building.

- The Libraries reopened the renovated [Hayden Library and Building 14 Courtyard](#) in August 2021 to significantly higher use than before the renovation (a 53% increase in the September 2021 gate count compared to September 2019) and rave reviews from students, faculty, and staff. The renovation secured LEED Gold certification, has won architecture and interior design awards, and been featured in architectural publications, including *Architectural Record*.

- A reinvigorated program of community engagement events was launched, with 46 events in Hayden’s new gathering space, the Nexus, and the renovated Building 14 Courtyard. These events reached a broad audience both in person and remotely: 550 attendees joined events in the Nexus, 1,000 attendees participated in the courtyard events, and 2,100 attendees joined hybrid events virtually.
- A mold abatement project was completed in the Wunsch Conservation Lab, with continued monitoring of the ventilation and HVAC problems in the Hayden Library basement; proposals for studies of critical improvements to staff spaces were also developed.

Supporting Activities

People

Key positions that were vacated in FY2022 include associate director for administrative services, director of human resources, head of data and specialized services, and institute archivist. We concluded a successful search for a head of distinctive collections, created and filled the new position of music technology and digital media librarian, and welcomed 27 new staff members.

Efforts to increase compositional diversity saw results at the management level. Forty-two percent of new managers hired in the Libraries in the past two years were people of color. The Libraries also established and hired for a two-year residency—the Association of College and Research Libraries Diversity Alliance Administrative Fellowship—a managerial leadership learning opportunity for an early careerist from an underrepresented population who is interested in becoming an academic library administrator.

MIT successfully concluded two and a half years of negotiations with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 93, representing approximately 60 library support staff, and signed an initial collective bargaining agreement in April 2022.

Organizational Effectiveness

The Libraries implemented a libraries-wide flexwork policy, ensuring that managers were trained and empowered to approve all reasonable flexwork requests.

A new professional development policy was rolled out to address equity, sustainability, fiscal responsibility, decision making, and resource allocation in the professional development requesting process.

We completed the first phase of a multi-year internal communications project, working with Habanero Consulting to conduct staff research and plan a range of projects designed to improve internal communications, with a goal of increasing trust, transparency, and inclusion within the organization.

Visiting Committee Meeting

The Libraries' Visiting Committee, chaired by C.J. Whelan III '92, '93, met on March 15–16, 2022, in a hybrid format. Session topics reflected the New Urgency vision:

- Supporting data-intensive and computational research
- Advancing open and equitable scholarship
- Research presentation from CREOS
- Organizational effectiveness and belonging
- Balancing digital-first and essential core
- Taking a deep dive into the Elsevier negotiations

The committee congratulated the Libraries on its excellent progress on strategic projects, its stellar response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and its exceptional leadership and management teams and staff. They urged the Libraries to strengthen its commitment to open scholarship and maintain progress on organizational effectiveness and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The committee noted that the key challenges and opportunities ahead will be establishing the Libraries' role in data and computation at MIT and raising the Libraries' profile as a key strategic partner at the Institute.

Fundraising

The MIT Libraries raised a total of \$1,129,868 in FY2022. This was the sixth consecutive year the Libraries have raised more than one million dollars in grants and gifts from donors. The Libraries continue to work on raising the outstanding funds needed to complete the Building 14 Courtyard renovation. To this end, we secured a \$500,000 gift and initiated a collaboration with the School of Engineering to expand efforts to raise the remaining \$3.5 million.

Chris Bourg
Director of Libraries