

Report to the President year ended June 30, 2025, Dean, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

Intro

The School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS), the third-largest school at MIT (after Engineering and Science), employs a teaching faculty comparable in size to that of most liberal arts colleges and plays a number of important roles at MIT.

Among other functions, the school:

- Offers 20 undergraduate major programs and 30 undergraduate minor programs
- Engages undergraduate students and graduate students each year in Anthropology; Comparative Media Studies; Economics; Global Languages; History; Linguistics; Literature; Music; Philosophy; Political Science; Science, Technology, and Society (STS); Theater Arts; Women’s and Gender Studies; and Writing
- Supports five doctoral programs: Economics, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, and History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society (HASTS)
- Supports four master’s programs: Data, Economics, and Design of Policy (DEDP), the MIT Indigenous Language Initiative in MIT Linguistics (MITILI), Political Science, and Science Writing.
- Provides subjects toward the undergraduate Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) requirement, an eight-class portion of the General Institute Requirement (GIR)
- Hosts more than 30 labs, centers, and programs, including the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), the Center for International Studies, and the Knight Science Journalism Program.
- Operates the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), MIT’s pioneering international education program, which matches students with internship, teaching, and research opportunities abroad.
- As of fall 2024, SHASS administers the MIT Human Insight Collaborative (MITHIC), a Presidential-level initiative.

MIT Human Insight Collaborative

In the fall of 2024, MIT launched the MIT Human Insight Collaborative (MITHIC), a new Presidential-level initiative aimed at elevating human-centered research and teaching across the Institute.

MITHIC is administered by SHASS and is co-chaired by Anantha Chandrakasan, chief innovation and strategy officer, dean of the School of Engineering, and the Vannevar Bush Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science; and Agustin Rayo, Kenan Sahin Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS). It is led by a steering committee made up of faculty from all five MIT schools.

Keeril Makan, Associate Dean and Michael (1949) and Sonja Koerner Music Composition Professor, was named inaugural faculty lead for MITHIC. Two new MITHIC staff were hired to help support the initiative: a senior program manager and a program coordinator.

MITHIC primarily consists of three new funding opportunities for faculty:

- The SHASS+ Connectivity Fund supports research that bridges between SHASS fields and other fields at MIT.
- The Humanities Cultivation Fund supports projects from the humanities and arts in SHASS.
- The SHASS Education Innovation Fund supports new educational approaches in SHASS fields.

A call for proposals for all three funds went out in fall 2024 and yielded 89 proposals from across the Institute. Among those, 31 were chosen for funding.

In addition to funding, MITHIC helps to facilitate and spark new ideas for collaboration through a series of events called Meeting of the Minds. These events are proposed by a faculty member from MIT and administered by MITHIC. Meeting of the Minds were held on various topics, including food security, bioeconomy, and cybersecurity.

Faculty-Driven Initiative (FDI)

In addition to the three primary funds, MITHIC supports the Faculty-Driven Initiative (FDI), a new opportunity that supports programs that build community and scholarship on a defined topic of relevance to the humanities, arts, or social sciences. FDIs bring together faculty or teaching staff from multiple units across SHASS or the Institute, collaborating on a common area of study or issue. At least one faculty lead must have their primary appointment in SHASS.

In the spring of 2025, the Living Climate Futures Lab (LCFL) was named the recipient of the inaugural Faculty Driven Initiative (FDI) Seed Grant from the MIT Human Insight Collaborative (MITHIC). The FDI award comes with a \$500,000 seed grant.

SHASS Faculty Fellows

SHASS Faculty Fellows is a new initiative that gives SHASS faculty the opportunity to participate in a semester-long internal fellows program. Administered by (MITHIC), the fellows program provides SHASS faculty with time to focus on their research, writing, or artistic production, and to receive collegial support for the same; to foster social and intellectual community within SHASS, including between faculty and students beyond the classroom; and provide informal opportunities to develop intergenerational professional mentorships. The inaugural group of fellows for Spring 2026:

- Héctor Beltrán, Class of 1957 Career Development Associate Professor, MIT Anthropology
- Volha Charnysh, Ford Career Development Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
- Kevin Dorst, assistant professor, MIT Philosophy
- Richard Nielsen, associate professor, Department of Political Science
- Emily Richmond Pollock, associate professor, MIT Music
- Jessica Ruffin, assistant professor, MIT Literature
- Robin Scheffler, associate professor, Program in Science, Technology, and Society

Number of major MITHIC events: 2

Number of units: 11 SHASS + 13 non-SHASS

Number of faculty: 46

Number of postdocs: none

Number of Grad students: none

Number of UROPs: 7

Programs or workshops sprouted from MITHIC:

Meeting of the Minds – 9 fall + 2 spring

SHASS Workshop: Developing a Competitive Proposal – May 12, 2025

Timeline of major milestones:

Launch event – October 28, 2024

First round of funding (SHASS+, HCF, EIF):

- September 9, 2024 – call announced
- September 18, 2024 – MITHIC info session
- November 22, 2024 deadline
- December 20, 2024 decisions announced

Awarded projects lunch – March 18, 2025

Faculty-Driven Initiative:

- February 2, 2025 – call announced
- April 8, 2025 – deadline

- May 19, 2025 – decisions announced
- Second round of funding (SHASS+, HCF, EIF):
- April 11, 2025 – announced second round

Personnel

New faculty

SHASS welcomed nine new faculty members:

- Sonya Atalay, professor in the Anthropology Section.
- Anna Huang, assistant professor in the Music and Theater Arts Section with a shared appointment in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
- Elena Kempf, associate professor in the History Section.
- Matthias Michel, assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy.
- Jacob Moscona PhD '21, assistant professor in the Department of Economics.
- Sendhil Mullainathan, the Peter de Florez Professor in the Department of Economics with a shared appointment in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
- Elise Newman PhD '21, assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy.
- Oliver Rollins, assistant professor in the Program in Science, Technology, and Society.
- Ishani Saraf, assistant professor in the Program in Science, Technology, and Society.

Tenure

SHASS announced eight members of its faculty were granted tenure:

- Dwaipayan Banerjee is an associate professor in the Program in Science, Technology, and Society.
- Kevin Dorst, PhD '19 is an associate professor in the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy.
- Paloma Duong is an associate professor in MIT's Comparative Media Studies/Writing program.
- Amy Moran-Thomas is an associate professor in MIT Anthropology.
- Justin Reich is an associate professor in MIT's Comparative Media Studies/Writing program.
- Bettina Stoetzer is an associate professor in MIT Anthropology.
- Ariel White is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science.
- Bernardo Zacka is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science.

Leadership changes

SHASS announced several leadership changes:

- Chris Walley, the SHASS Dean's Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, was named head of Anthropology.
- Seth Mnookin was named head of the Comparative Media Studies/Writing Program.
- Kieran Setiya, the Peter de Florez Professor, was named head of the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy.
- Sandy Alexandre and Stephanie Frampton were named co-heads of the Literature Section.
- Jay Scheib, the Class of 1949 Professor, was named head of the Music and Theater Arts Section.
- Kate Brown, the Thomas M. Siebel Distinguished Professor in History of Science, was named Interim Head of the Program in Science, Technology, and Society.
- Sana Aiyar, was named Interim Head of the Women's and Gender Studies Program.

Fotini Christia, the Ford International Professor of Social Sciences in the Department of Political Science, was named director of the Institute for Data, Systems, and Society (IDSS).

Honors and Awards

QS World University Rankings

- QS World University Rankings rated MIT No. 1 in 11 subjects, including Linguistics, for 2025. The Institute also ranks second in seven subject areas, including Economics and Econometrics.

Times Higher Education

- Times Higher Education ranked MIT No. 1 in arts and humanities, business and economics, and social sciences. The Arts and Humanities ranking evaluated 750 universities from 72 countries in the disciplines of languages, literature, and linguistics; history, philosophy, archaeology; and, art and performing arts. MIT was also ranked first in economics and econometrics.

Undergraduate and Graduate students

2025 Burchard Scholars

- Mariam Abdelbarr, sophomore, brain and cognitive sciences/business analytics
- Oyinade Esther Adeyemi, junior, humanities and engineering

- Hana Gabriela Albuquerque Sousa, sophomore, chemical engineering
- Serena An, junior, mathematics
- Juan Manuel (Manolo) Barroso, sophomore, architecture design/urban studies and planning
- Abhay Bestrapalli, junior, physics/computer science and engineering
- Will Bland, sophomore, finance
- Cristine Chen, junior, electrical engineering with computing
- Srihitha Dasari, sophomore, brain and cognitive sciences
- Oluwadara (Dara) Deru, junior, mechanical engineering
- Luke Fitzgerald, junior, mathematics
- Julianne Hannon, junior, mechanical engineering
- Yongao Hu, junior, physics/mathematics
- Elizabeth Jackson, sophomore, aeronautics and astronautics
- Ander Jurs, junior, mechanical engineering
- June Kayath, sophomore, mathematics/computer science and engineering
- Catherine Kung, junior, biological engineering/computation and cognition
- Haydn Long, junior, history/art and design
- Calvin Macatantan, junior, computer science and engineering/urban studies and planning
- Alexis MacAvoy, sophomore, chemical engineering
- Zachary (Zach) Marinov, junior, computer science and engineering
- Layna Oberg, sophomore, physics
- Jiwoo Park, junior, physics/mathematics
- Kannammai (Kanna) Pichappan, junior, brain and cognitive sciences
- Kartik Pingle, junior, computer science and engineering/physics
- Braedon Rudolph, junior, economics/physics
- Jayashabari (Shabari) Shankar, sophomore, chemistry and biology
- Karie Shen, sophomore, biological engineering
- Anson So, junior, computer science and molecular biology
- Gilford Ting, junior, electrical engineering and computer science
- Sophia Maria Torrellas, junior, computer science and engineering
- Woods Windham, sophomore, mechanical engineering/philosophy
- Sophia Yao, junior, computer science and molecular biology
- Akua Yeboah, sophomore, computation and cognition
- Emily Zhang, sophomore, finance/computer science, economics, and data science
- Leqi (Alexis) Zhou, junior, mathematics and computer science

Churchill Scholar

- Mishael Quraishi '25, a double major in material sciences and archeology with a minor in ancient and medieval studies, was named a 2025 Churchill Scholar.

Envisioning the Future of Computing Prize

Doctoral student Annaliese Meyer won the Envisioning the Future of Computing Prize, offered jointly by the Social and Ethical Responsibilities of Computing (SERC), a cross-cutting initiative of the MIT Schwarzman College of Computing in collaboration with the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS).

Gates Cambridge Scholars

- Markey Freudenburg-Puricelli '25, who majored in Earth, atmospheric, and planetary sciences and minored in Spanish, was named a Gates Cambridge Scholar.

2025 Hertz Foundation Fellowships

- Matthew Caren '25 studied electrical engineering and computer science, mathematics, and music
- Benjamin Lou '25 graduated from MIT in May with a BS in physics and a minor in philosophy
- Isabelle A. Quaye '22, MNG '24 studied electrical engineering and computer science as an undergraduate at MIT, with a minor in economics

2025 Knight-Hennessy Scholar

- MIT alumnus Steven Truong '20, who double majored in biological engineering and creative writing, was awarded a 2025 Knight-Hennessy Scholarship

Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans

- Rupert Li '24, was a double major in mathematics and computer science, economics, and data science
- Arjun Ramani is a doctoral student in economics and the Carl Shapiro (1976) Fellow in the Department of Economics

Rhodes Scholars

- Anushka Nair '25 was named a Rhodes Scholar. She earned BS and MEng degrees in computer science and engineering with concentrations in economics and AI.

Sloan Research Fellows

- The Sloan Research Fellows Award honors early-career researchers for creativity, innovation, and research accomplishments. Christian Wolf, the Rudi Dornbusch Career Development Assistant Professor of Economics, is one of the recipients.

Faculty and staff

MIT economist and Institute Professor Daron Acemoglu was a co-recipient of the Nobel Prize in economics. He shared the award with MIT Sloan economist Simon Johnson PhD '89 and University of Chicago political scientist James Robinson. They were recognized for their collaborative studies “of how institutions are formed and affect prosperity.”

MIT linguist Irene Heim shared the Schock Prize in Logic and Philosophy.

Susan Silbey, the Leon and Anne Goldberg Professor of Humanities and professor of sociology and anthropology, was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

MIT economist Parag Pathak was named to the National Academy of Sciences.

MIT political scientist Adam Berinsky was named to the 2025 class of Andrew Carnegie Fellows.

Professor Emeritus Olivier Blanchard PhD '77 received the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award. He shared the award with MIT alumni Jordi Galí PhD '89 of the Centre de Recerca en Economia Internacional and Pompeu Fabra University in Spain and Michael Woodford PhD '83 of Columbia University.

Héctor Beltrán '07, the Class of 1957 Career Development Associate Professor in Anthropology, was awarded the 2025 James A. and Ruth Levitan Prize in the Humanities.

The 2025 MacVicar Faculty Fellows included Paloma Duong, the Ford International Career Development Associate Professor of Latin American and Media Studies in the Comparative Media Studies/Writing program; and, Frank Schilbach Associate Professor in the Department of Economics.

MIT philosopher Sally Haslanger, the Ford Professor of Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies, was honored with the Quinn Prize.

Eran Egozy Teaching with Digital Technology Award

MIT economist David Autor was named the inaugural Daniel (1972) and Gail Rubinfeld Professor. Autor was also named a 2024 Schmidt Sciences AI2050 Fellow.

The winner of the 2025 MIT Press Faculty Book Award is “The Work of the Future: Building Better Jobs in an Age of Intelligent Machines” (2023), by David Autor, the Ford Professor of Economics and Margaret MacVicar Faculty Fellow; David Mindell, professor of aerospace engineering and the Dibner Professor of the History of Engineering and Manufacturing; and Elisabeth Reynolds, professor of the practice in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

The 2025 Infinite Mile Awards winners included Elizabeth Bond, Senior Design Manager, J-PAL Global; John Congdon, Director, Administration and Finance, Music and Theater Arts; Carl Holt, Multimedia Production Assistant, Literature; Patee Pinkney, Director, Administration and Finance, Program in Science, Technology, and Society; Jessie Leah Schanzle, Administrative Assistant, Comparative Media Studies/Writing; and, Ekaterina Zabrovski, Managing Director, MIT-Eurasia Program, Center for International Studies.

Edward and Joyce Linde Music Building

A new landmark on campus, the Edward and Joyce Linde Music Building relocated MIT's music program to the dynamic and evolving West Campus area and consolidated many of its activities under a single roof. The building officially opened in February 2025.

Designed by SANAA, the brick-clad building has three corresponding volumes – the Thomas Tull Concert Hall, the Jae S. and Kyuho Lim Music Maker Pavilion, and the Beatrice and Stephen Erdely Music and Culture Space – connected by a glass-walled lobby providing multiple entrance points that invite people to pass through the airy, open heart of the building. The volumes house rehearsal and recording spaces as well as a large-scale, purpose-built performance space, all incorporating sound-insulating walls and optimized acoustical design. Several indoor spaces serve as smaller, informal performance areas, and the outdoor plaza is configured to host performances. Below grade, a two-level garage provides approximately 140 parking spaces.

Designed to advance the vibrancy and diversity of MIT's evolving West Campus sector, the Music Building was made possible by a cornerstone gift from Joyce Linde, a longtime supporter of MIT and the arts. The project is targeting LEED v4 Gold certification or above.

Diversity

The SHASS Diversity Predoctoral Fellowship program welcomed its 2024-25 class:

- Jaime Landinez Aceros, MIT Anthropology
- Damanpreet Pelia, MIT History
- Nora Suren, MIT Comparative Media Studies/Writing & the Women's and Gender Studies Program
- Adam Szetela, MIT Literature

The program aims to enhance diversity in SHASS and to provide fellows with additional professional support and mentoring as they enter their fields. The fellowships are intended to support scholars from a wide range of backgrounds who can contribute to SHASS and the higher education community.

Fellowships support graduate scholars for a nine-month appointment at MIT that generally runs from September through May. They offer an opportunity for scholars who plan a career in higher education and have completed all other PhD requirements to finish their dissertations with access to libraries and faculty of the school.

Development

In FY2025, new gifts and pledges to the School totaled \$55,011,034. Some highlights include: a \$5M gift from the Stone Foundation to create the James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Center on Inequality and Shaping the Future of Work in the Economics Department; a seven-figure expendable pledge from an individual donor to support graduate student fellowships in the new Music Technology and Computation Graduate Program; several 7-figure gifts from private foundations to support research the social sciences; and a set of six-figure gifts from individual donors to support the MIT Human Insight Collaborative (MITHIC).

Statistics

Undergraduate Enrollment: 52

Graduate Enrollment: 300

Degrees Awarded

- Bachelor's degrees: 24
- Master's degrees: 37
- Doctoral degrees: 44

Faculty

- Full professors: 122
- Associate professors with tenure: 39
- Associate professors without tenure: 13
- Assistant professors: 18

Agustín Rayo

Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences