



Transforming a signature detail of MIT architecture into a state-of-the-art hub for collaborative research and education

Crowning Achievement: Rooftop Commons for Mechanical Engineering

The mechanical engineering program at MIT is one of the Institute's proudest traditions and has developed some of the most lauded breakthroughs of the 20th and 21st centuries. Embodying the best of "mens et manus" (mind and hand), the Department of Mechanical Engineering (MechE) has long been a magnet for innovative thinkers and doers seeking to answer society's most significant questions. Now, critical to their mission of making the world a better place, MIT is expanding the capacity of the department to address the challenges of our time.

FOSTERING THE INTERPLAY OF PEOPLE AND IDEAS

The Rooftop Commons will soon rise from the heart of campus through an extensive renovation of the pyramid-like ziggurat at the intersection of Buildings 1 and 3 enhanced by the construction of a sweeping new structure across the rooftop of Building 1. Designed by Annum Architects, a firm with world-leading expertise in historically significant buildings, this dynamic hub for research and education will strive to meet the standard for Leadership in Energy Environmental Design (LEED) ID+C Gold certification and provide the department, which has outgrown its current facilities, an additional 5,000 square feet.

Above: The terrace for outdoor gatherings will offer magnificent views of the Charles River campus and Boston skyline. (The current rendering is subject to change.)



The Rooftop Commons will nourish collaborative endeavors—becoming a place where bright people, unconventional ideas, and bold solutions collide together in new and interesting ways. As a nexus for research and education, the vibrant space will provide vital linkages between different disciplinary areas. It will foster a culture of creativity and innovation, preparing the next generation of passionate mechanical engineers to solve the world’s grand challenges and improve the well-being of people everywhere. And it will act as a centralized home for MechE’s faculty, students, and staff, as they passionately work together to create a better future for us all.

A VISION FOR THE ROOFTOP COMMONS

Fostering a sense of community, the Rooftop Commons will be a warm and welcoming destination. A light-filled atrium, with thoughtfully designed nooks, will encourage impromptu conversations and nurture connectedness. The gathering space will hold 120 people and, from its mezzanine, offer a bird’s-eye view of the bustling activity below. There will be reconfigurable spaces for a workshop and lab as well as a private meeting room for quiet work and learning. The signature terrace, with a breathtaking view of the Boston skyline, will offer the community an open-air gathering place and provide an important new capacity for outdoor research.

To further discuss this opportunity, contact:

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The interior will provide a welcoming assembly space that can be reconfigured as needed for teaching, meetings, or collaborative research.

“By sparking creative interaction, this strikingly reimagined space will build community while advancing the department’s mission to foster groundbreaking teaching and research.”

Pierre Lermusiaux

Nam Pyo Suh Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Ocean Science and Engineering

Associate Department Head for Research and Operations