



The Need

A gift of \$20,000 will support a School of Engineering research intern from an underrepresented and underserved background for the summer

MIT Summer Research Program

Today only limited progress has been made toward shifting the patterns of representation in STEM fields. Comprising roughly 32 percent of the total U.S. population, underrepresented minority groups earn only 22 percent of science and engineering bachelor's degrees and just 9 percent of doctorate degrees. At MIT, we are unwavering in our resolve to address this systemic imbalance.

MIT'S Summer Research Program (MSRP)—an Institute-wide program—is driving positive change by advancing the intellectual and professional growth of undergraduate students from underrepresented and underserved backgrounds. MSRP promotes the value of advanced education and cultivates the capacities of emerging investigators for graduate education at MIT or our peer institutions. The program's ultimate goal: to improve representation in the research enterprise.

Instilling a Growth Mindset and the Joy of Discovery

A transformative learning experience, MSRP is available to sophomores, juniors, and non-graduating seniors attending U.S.-based universities. Participants discover the joy of graduate-level research by interning under the guidance of MIT faculty and postdoctoral fellows. They also attend professional development workshops aimed at preparing them to pursue advanced degrees. Above all, they join a supportive community that instills in them a growth mindset, extending its mentorship well beyond the students' time on campus.

During the 9-week summer research program, each MSRP intern receives a weekly stipend, round-trip travel, health insurance, and campus housing, at a cost of approximately \$20,000 per participant.



“Without MSRP, I can literally say I would not be where I am today. Being able to spend time working with an MIT professor for a summer paved the way for me to later be admitted for graduate school at MIT, which then led to many other amazing things.”

Asegun Henry, Robert N. Noyce
Career Development Associate
Professor

Building Success

In 2019, MSRP admitted 39 interns out of 456 applications, of which 23 were hosted by the School of Engineering. At the close of the intensive program, the interns expressed an increased interest in pursuing a doctoral degree and in applying to an MIT graduate program.

The impact of MSRP is clear. Over the last 35 years, the program has provided hands-on research experiences to more than 900 students. Of the 419 alumni who responded to a recent survey, 372 reported earning or working toward an advanced degree (including 129 from MIT). Also, 36 respondents indicated that they’ve gone on to become faculty members at various universities, including MIT Associate Professor Asegun Henry.

Increasing Impact

Building on the proven success of MSRP, the School of Engineering plans to host 60 interns this summer, a significant increase over summers past.

To support this expansion, the School of Engineering has developed strategic partnerships with four institutions, including two historically black colleges or universities, to identify talented undergraduates who might benefit from spending the summer at MIT. The admitted students will not only experience all that MIT has to offer, but once they return to their home institutes, they will also participate in joint mentoring and research collaborations between faculty on both sides.

By expanding its commitment to and participation in MSRP, the School of Engineering aims to help address systemic imbalances in STEM and to improve representation in the research enterprise.

For More Information

Heather Kispert Hagerty
Assistant Dean for Development
hkispert@mit.edu