



Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Assistant Dean for Development, School of Science

Cambridge, Massachusetts

THE SEARCH

At the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) (MIT) [School of Science](#) (SoS), research is integral to understanding the world, including detecting and curing disease, preserving the planet and its climate systems, creating sustainable energy sources, studying the hottest and coldest matter in the universe, decoding the brain, and developing the technology of the future. SoS is the second largest school at MIT in enrollment and raises the most in annual philanthropy. It is led by [Dean Nergis Mavalvala](#), an award-winning physicist and trailblazer in the detection of gravitational waves and of quantum measurement science. SoS and Dean Mavalvala seek a highly motivated, collaborative, and intellectually curious assistant dean for development (assistant dean) to advance the dean's vision and create a comprehensive, strategic plan to raise philanthropic support and awareness for the school's six departments, centers, and institutes.

The assistant dean will craft a multiyear development strategy that will ensure sustainable, long-term growth in philanthropic contributions, which yielded \$175 million last fiscal year. The assistant dean will collaborate with the dean, department heads, center directors, and faculty members to articulate the funding priorities and aspirations of the school to key colleagues within MIT Resource Development (RD) and to individual and institutional prospects. They will travel on donor visits, often in tandem with the dean and other key academic partners, and work proactively to bring prospects to campus for substantive visits and engagements. The assistant dean will directly manage two to three staff members and maintain a dotted line reporting relationship with seven department- and center-based fundraisers.

The ideal candidate should be a self-starter with an innovative approach to growing and guiding a philanthropic program. They will have a track record of success working with faculty and development colleagues in a complex matrixed academic setting, and the ability to reach a broader community to promote the mission of an institution. The assistant dean must have prior success raising major and principal gifts and increasing the effectiveness of a development program through established objectives and performance standards. They will possess the communication skills required to articulate the vision and mission of a program and its leader to a diverse group of funding organizations in clear and compelling language. A background in science is desirable; a passion for science is required.

MIT has retained Jack Gorman of Isaacson, Miller to assist in conducting the search. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MIT's first students enrolled in 1865, marking the culmination of an extended effort to establish a new kind of educational institution relevant to an increasingly industrialized nation. The MIT motto, "Mens et Manus," Latin for "Mind and Hand," expresses the institute's ideal of a productive continuum between reflection and action. In the land-grant tradition, MIT promoted teaching coupled with research, focusing attention on real-world problems, and forging the notion of the teaching laboratory.

MIT is independent and co-educational, with a private endowment of over \$24.6 billion, a total annual operating budget of approximately \$4.19 billion, and a workforce of approximately 16,327 on campus and at Lincoln Laboratory. MIT focuses on scientific and technological research and is divided into five schools—comprising more than 30 academic departments as well as interdepartmental programs, laboratories, and centers—and one college. The schools include Architecture and Planning; Engineering; Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences; Science; and the Sloan School of Management. The Fall of 2019 marked the opening of the MIT Steven A. Schwarzman College of Computing. The Schwarzman College is a bold initiative to accelerate pioneering research and innovation in computing, build a profound awareness of the ethical implications and societal impact of computing, and, above all, educate leaders for the algorithmic future.

MIT alumni bring a rare combination of technical mastery and creativity to the solution of complex problems in the commercial, academic, and civic sectors. A study released in February 2009 by the Kauffman Foundation estimated that MIT graduates had founded 25,800 active companies. These firms employed about 3.3 million people and generated annual world sales of \$2 trillion, or the equivalent of the eleventh-largest economy in the world. Distinguished alumni include Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and former Federal Reserve Bank Chairman Ben Bernanke.

MIT's current and former faculty are distinguished for their groundbreaking research and have received some of the highest honors bestowed upon individuals for contributions to science, engineering, the humanities, and social sciences, including the National Medal of Science, National Medal of Technology and Innovation, John Bates Clark Medal, Pulitzer Prize, A.M. Turing Award, Millennium Technology Prize, Guggenheim Fellowship, Fulbright Scholarship, and MacArthur Fellowship. Most notably, 32 present and former members of the MIT faculty have received the Nobel Prize, including nine current faculty members (recognized individually or as part of a team). Close to 350 current MIT faculty hold membership in some of the most distinguished scientific and academic associations, including the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the National Academy of Medicine.

Ranked #1 by Forbes as America's best large employer, MIT is located on the north shore of the Charles River Basin in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on 168 acres that extend more than a mile along the Charles River. The central group of interconnecting buildings, dedicated in 1916, was designed by architect W. Welles Bosworth (Class of 1889) to permit easy communication among schools and departments.

School of Science

The School of Science is MIT's second-largest school with approximately 278 faculty members, 1,200 graduate students, 800 undergraduate majors, and comparable numbers of postdoctoral researchers and research staff. The school is large enough to carry out research at the frontiers in every field of science. Faculty members in SoS have won 12 Nobel Prizes and alumni have won another 14, most of which have been awarded in the past 20 years. The academic departments that comprise SoS are Biology; Brain and Cognitive Science; Chemistry; Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences; Mathematics; and Physics. The six departments in the school are consistently rated among the best in the world.

Nergis Mavalvala, PhD '97

Dean, MIT School of Science

Curtis (1963) and Kathleen Marble Professor of Astrophysics

Nergis Mavalvala was appointed dean of the MIT School of Science in 2020. She is an award-winning physicist and a trailblazer in the detection of gravitational waves and of quantum measurement science. Dean Mavalvala is a longtime member of the scientific team behind the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO), which in 2016 detected the gravitational waves resulting from colliding black holes. With her doctoral adviser, Rainer Weiss, she helped to develop the gravitational-wave detector technologies that are at the heart of LIGO, which enabled the scientific discoveries that earned Weiss and his colleagues the 2017 Nobel Prize in physics.

The LIGO discovery—ripples in the space-time fabric caused by the motion of black holes and neutron stars—has been widely hailed as the dawn of a new era in astrophysics, allowing researchers to observe objects in the universe that are not visible with light. Thus, Mavalvala's research has been instrumental in capturing the witheringly faint warping and rippling of the very structure of space-time to observe violent cosmic events. To further this research, she has conducted experiments on generation and application of exotic quantum states of light as well as on laser cooling and trapping of macroscopic objects to enable observation of quantum phenomena in human-scale systems.

For her groundbreaking research and her role in achieving the LIGO discoveries, Mavalvala has received numerous awards and recognitions, including a Sloan Foundation Fellowship (2005), a MacArthur Fellowship (2010), the Gruber Prize in Cosmology (2016), and the Carnegie Corporation's Great Immigrant Award (2017). Mavalvala, who has been an outspoken voice for equality and women's access to education, is a dedicated mentor and a highly visible role model for the LGBTQ+ community. In 2014, she was honored as the LGBTQ Scientist of the Year by the National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals. She is a fellow of the American Physical Society and an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences.

ASSISTANT DEAN FOR DEVELOPMENT

The assistant dean will craft a multiyear development strategy that will ensure sustainable, long-term growth in philanthropic contributions; collaborate with the dean, department heads and center directors, and faculty members to articulate the funding priorities and aspirations of the MIT School of Science to key colleagues within MIT Resource Development (RD) and to potential individual and institutional donors; travel to visit prospects, often in tandem with the dean and other key academic partners; and work proactively to bring potential donors to campus for substantive visits and engagements. The assistant dean will directly manage two to three staff members and maintain a dotted line reporting relationship with seven department- and center-based fundraisers.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Programmatic Elevation

- Assess the fundraising potential of SoS and the effectiveness of its current programs; craft a holistic strategy to sustainably increase philanthropic support in keeping with the mission and values of the school.
- Set annual and multi-year goals that span the range of gift categories and grow the pipeline of next generation donors, corporate partnerships, and cross-disciplinary giving opportunities with SoS and other areas of the institute.
- Provide qualitative and quantitative reports of progress and evaluate organizational functions within the school's development operation.

Leadership Engagement

- Guide and support the dean in her role as chief fundraiser and spokesperson for the school, serving as coach, mentor and co-strategist in cultivating and soliciting transformational gifts that will lead SoS to greater levels of distinction; utilize the dean's time efficiently and effectively.
- Recognizing time constraints, engage department heads, center directors, and faculty members in the fundraising process, ensuring their time spent is highly productive and personally rewarding; build strong and mutually beneficial relationships between faculty and external audiences such as donors, alumni, and corporate and foundation leaders.
- Ensure other key leaders are appropriately engaged and effectively leveraged in key fundraising initiatives and donor engagement efforts.
- Work with senior leadership and/or other staff members to develop priorities and design strategies and plans that are specific to the philanthropic goals of SoS; ensure they are apprised of development efforts.
- Serve as key liaison for the Dean of Science Advisory Council, membership, communication, meeting content, and follow-up.

Collaborate, Advocate, and Raise Awareness

- Formulate a keen understanding of the research initiatives within SoS, the vision of the dean, and the aspirations of key faculty members and leaders; identify stories that will elevate awareness and understanding of funding priorities; communicate those stories in clear and compelling terms with multiple internal and external audiences.
- Foster strong collaborative working relationships with colleagues in RD (including, but not limited to, Philanthropic Partnerships, Leadership Giving, and Foundation Relations); MIT Corporate Relations and the Industrial Liaison Program; MIT communications units; MIT Alumni Association; and members of the MIT Corporation; Visiting Committees; and external volunteers to advance the fundraising strategy for SoS, educate them on funding goals, and partner with them on prospect strategies that will engage potential donors in relevant activities and lead to their support of key funding initiatives.
- In conjunction with the dean and RD, develop, produce, and disseminate compelling content related to the school—people, programs, and facilities—including opportunities for funding and reaching important goals.
- Work with department colleagues to plan events to identify new prospects and to cultivate and steward current donors. Events include the twice annual School of Science breakfasts, Patrons and Champion stewardship dinners, Friends of Biology and Chemistry events, and every other year MIT's Brains on Brains.
- In collaboration with department development officers, prepare marketing communication materials and disseminate content rich brochures, fact sheets and briefings. Work with central resource development to develop materials for initiatives such as VITALS, Quantum and the SoS postdoc fellowship program.

Frontline Fundraising

- Manage a portfolio of 50 prospects through identification, cultivation, and solicitation, who are primarily individuals, though some corporations and foundations may be approached for specific initiatives.
- Devise cultivation plans and solicitation strategies that lead to gifts in support of SoS; leverage the network of existing donors and launch systematic initiatives that will identify new individual and institutional prospects capable of making significant contributions in support of the school.
- Research and prepare background information, draft high-level strategy briefings, and prepare correspondence or other communications as needed.
- Participate in donor/prospect visits (often as staff to faculty, unit and program heads, dean, and/or senior administrators); strategically orchestrate meetings and other interactions between faculty/staff and donors or prospects; maximize unit head/faculty travel to engage with prospective donors; provide updates on all relevant donor/prospect records accordingly.

Program and Team Management

- Provide direct management to two to three staff members and dotted line leadership to seven department- and center-based fundraisers. Define and contribute to developing and measuring performance metrics and professional development opportunities for staff. Lead searches for new department- and center-based fundraisers.
- Meet regularly with SoS development staff to track performance and ensure effective strategies are developed and executed that result in the meaningful engagement and successful solicitation of donors.
- Foster an environment that rewards risk-taking and creativity, strives for excellence through mastery of best practices and implementation of new ideas, and ensures the continued collaborative and collegial nature of the team.
- Establish and manage the fundraising budget, including travel, events, and related expenditures; review and approve all expenditures and assume full responsibility and accountability.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of 10 years of direct fundraising experience required, preferably within a complex institution of higher education.
- Exceptional communication skills with the intellectual depth and curiosity necessary to understand and translate academic, technical, and research information for all audiences.
- Superior interpersonal skills with the ability to engage comfortably and effectively with faculty, leadership, professional and administrative staff, donors and alumni, and other external constituents in a matrixed environment.
- Ability to operate effectively, flexibly, and collegially in a complex organizational environment.
- The credibility, maturity, and sound judgment required to effectively engage and leverage the dean, department heads, and faculty in the cultivation and solicitation of high-net-worth individuals.
- A highly motivated self-starter who is successful working both independently and as a team member.
- A problem solver who can anticipate challenges and obstacles and has the intelligence, creativity, and tenacity to provide and execute strategic and effective solutions.
- The ability to build bridges and strong and productive collaborative relationships across complex institutions, as well as the ability to influence and engage peers.
- A background in science is desirable, a passion for science is required.
- The ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and with confidentiality and discretion.
- Familiarity with business travel and willingness to travel approximately 30 percent of time.
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

This search is being led by Jack Gorman with Grace Zakim and Ryan Cheung. For more information, to make a nomination, or to apply for this role, please visit:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/massachusetts-institute-technology-school-science/assistant-dean-development>

MIT is an equal education/employment opportunity institution dedicated to building a diverse community. As part of our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we strongly encourage applications from women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. We strive to be and promote a family-friendly environment and recognize that supporting this culture, at times, includes assisting dual-career couples with employment needs.