MIT Industrial Liaison Program & Startup Exchange



IMPACT REPORT

FY26

Connections, Relationships, Global Impact



IMPACT REPORT

FY26

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Connecting Industry to MIT's Innovation Ecosystem	2
Letter from the Executive Director	4
Our Framework	5
A Global Network of Innovation	6
Driving Impact Across Industries	7
Conferences and Events	8
Beyond the Pitch: Curating Startup-Industry Connections	10
How to Engage with Us	12
Industry Success Stories	14
Startup Success Stories	16
Startup Impact	18
Advancing Startup Growth Through Collaboration at MIT	19
Looking Ahead	20



Connections, Relationships, Global Impact

Connecting Industry to MIT's Innovation Ecosystem

MIT Industrial Liaison Program and Startup Exchange (ILP & STEX) serve as gateways to MIT's research, innovation, entrepreneurial ecosystem, and talent.

Through meaningful engagement with MIT's world-class faculty, researchers, and breakthrough startups, ILP & STEX help organizations navigate emerging technologies, address complex challenges, and identify opportunities for collaboration. At the same time, they support MIT-connected entrepreneurs as they scale and bring innovations to market—strengthening industry, advancing entrepreneurship, and helping address some of the world's most pressing needs.

Engagement with ILP & STEX:

- Strategic introductions to MIT faculty, researchers, and innovation leaders
- Access to MIT-connected startups developing emerging technologies and solutions
- Exclusive conferences, webinars, workshops, and networking opportunities
- Insights into breakthrough research, technology trends, and industry challenges
- Opportunities to explore research collaborations, innovation partnerships, and commercialization pathways
- Connections to MIT's talent pipeline and educational resources
- Personalized engagement designed to support organizational priorities and innovation goals

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We believe meaningful progress happens when industry, academia, and entrepreneurs come together to solve complex challenges.

Gayathri Srinivasan

Executive Director,
MIT Industrial Liaison Program and
Startup Exchange (ILP & STEX)



Collaborating with MIT to Shape the Future

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

At MIT Industrial Liaison Program and Startup Exchange, we believe meaningful progress happens when industry, academia, and entrepreneurs come together to solve complex challenges. This year, under President Sally Kornbluth's leadership, MIT continued to advance a bold vision for innovation, impact, and service to society, and we have been proud to help connect organizations with the people, ideas, and opportunities driving that work.

Across the Institute, MIT is preparing students for a rapidly evolving future through experiential learning, industry engagement, and hands-on collaboration, while expanding opportunities to translate breakthrough research into real-world impact. ILP & STEX help strengthen these connections, linking industry with MIT's research and innovation ecosystem through deep industry relationships, startup engagement, and Institute-wide efforts such as the Committee on Accelerating Translation and Entrepreneurship (CATE) and the MIT Quantum Initiative (QMIT), MIT's newest presidential initiatives.

This work is guided by R.I.S.E.—our commitment to advancing Research, Innovation, Students, and Education. Whether supporting breakthrough discoveries, fostering entrepreneurship, connecting organizations with MIT talent, or expanding opportunities for lifelong learning, RISE reflects MIT's distinctive approach to building partnerships that create value for industry, society, and the Institute. As we reflect on the past year, one thing remains clear: MIT's greatest strength lies in its people and partnerships. Together, we are helping shape the ideas, technologies, and talent that will define the future.

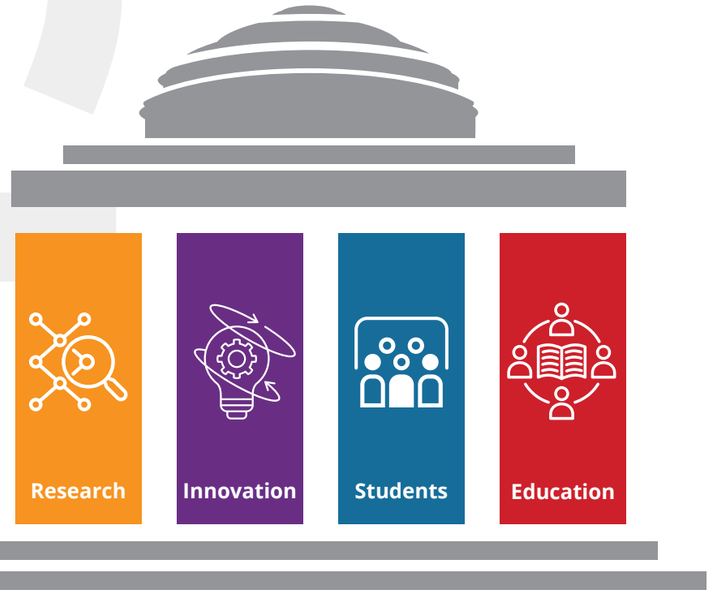
Thank you for your continued collaboration and support.

Gayathri

Our Framework

Breakthroughs rarely happen in isolation. New discoveries and practical advances often emerge through collaboration among researchers, entrepreneurs, students, educators, and industry leaders.

Our framework reflects the many ways organizations and members can engage with the MIT ecosystem, providing guidance for building connections, exploring opportunities, and advancing shared goals. Together, these four areas highlight the pathways through which research, entrepreneurship, talent, and learning come together to create lasting value at MIT and beyond.



Research | Advancing discovery through collaboration, sponsored research, licensing, and commercialization.

Innovation | Connecting organizations with MIT-connected startups and emerging technologies that translate breakthrough ideas into real-world solutions.

Students | Building pathways to the next generation of talent through recruitment, internships, and experiential learning opportunities.

Education | Supporting lifelong learning through professional education, executive education, open learning, and workforce development programs.

200+
Industry Member Companies

$96M
Industry Sponsored Research

$24M
Industry Gifts

800+
MIT-Connected Startups

244
Startups Supported

110
New Startups Onboarded

2.7K
ILP & STEX Member and Startup Meetings Globally

435
Member Meetings with MIT Faculty and Researchers on Campus

19
Startup Assessment Calls

359
Startup Meetings with ILP & STEX Members Across the Globe

A Global Network of Innovation

ILP & STEX bring together organizations from across North America, Europe, Asia, and beyond, creating a dynamic international community with a shared interest in innovation. Through their connection to MIT, members gain access to new ideas, emerging research, and expertise that can inform strategy, spark new opportunities, and help address challenges across industries and markets.

29%
North America

20%
Europe

6%
South America



32%
East & South Asia

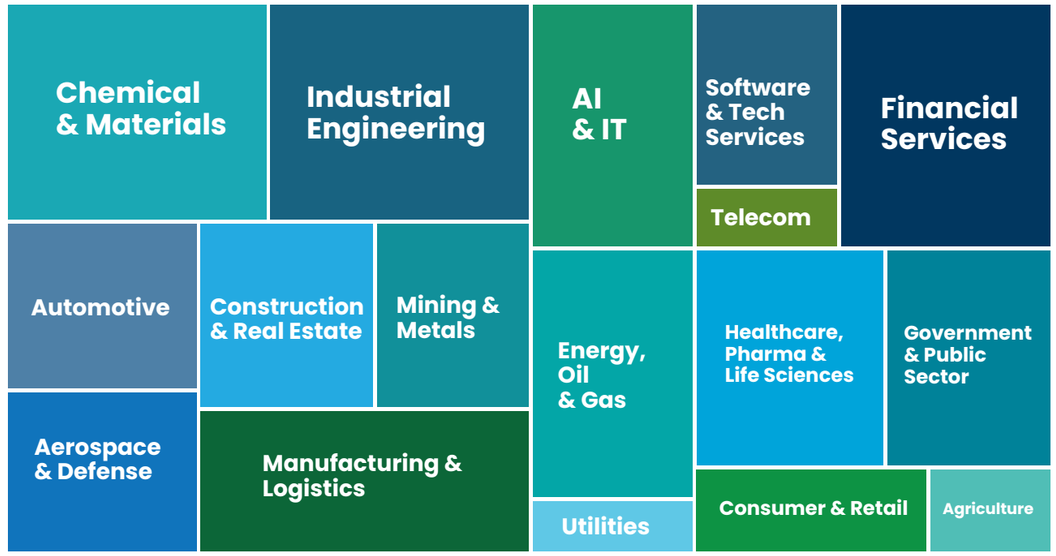
8%
Middle East & Africa

5%
Southeast Asia & Oceania

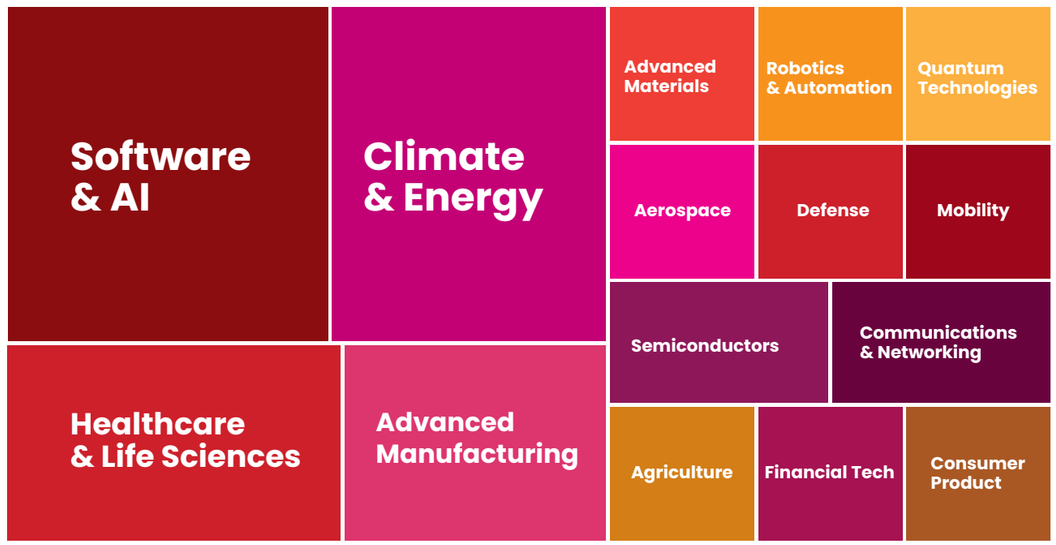
Driving Impact Across Industries

From advanced manufacturing and energy to healthcare, finance, and digital technologies, ILP and STEX bring together companies and startups tackling challenges from distinctly different industry perspectives. The resulting exchange creates opportunities for ideas, research, and emerging technologies to find relevance across sectors and applications.

INDUSTRY SECTORS



STARTUP SECTORS



Box sizes are proportional to estimated sector coverage.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

ILP & STEX connect members with MIT faculty, researchers, entrepreneurs, and peers to explore emerging technologies, inform strategic priorities, and build relationships. Over the past year, more than 20 events on campus and around the world provided direct access to expertise and connections that extended well beyond individual programs. Collectively, these programs engaged more than 4,000 participants across industries and geographies, creating opportunities for exchange and collaboration across disciplines and sectors.

Our major events on campus brought industry executives together for discussions on emerging technologies and global industry trends. Participants engaged directly with MIT faculty and researchers, as well as peers navigating similar challenges across sectors. Located in Kendall Square, one of the world's most concentrated innovation ecosystems, these gatherings offered a unique environment where research, startups, and industry intersect. Beyond formal presentations, members had opportunities to exchange ideas and identify potential areas for future collaboration. In several cases, conversations that began at ILP & STEX events led to subsequent engagement with faculty, research groups, startups, and other Department, Lab, Center, and Institute (DLCI) programs.



Throughout the year, specialized forums and workshops provided focused settings for deeper engagement. Sessions featured presentations by MIT experts on pressing topics, followed by discussion and Q&A that helped participants connect research insights with real-world organizational priorities. By convening participants from across MIT alongside executives, entrepreneurs, and policymakers from around the world, these forums encouraged meaningful dialogue and fostered ongoing relationships.

Our regional symposia extended ILP & STEX programming globally, connecting MIT perspectives with regional priorities and industry challenges. Over the past year, events were held in key innovation hubs, including Japan, Korea, London, Madrid, Bangkok, Vienna, and Chile, in collaboration with local partners. These gatherings brought global and regional perspectives into the same conversation, expanding opportunities for exchange and collaboration across geographies.

Our signature Leading Edge webinars extend access to timely MIT research, emerging technologies, and faculty insights. These virtual programs allow members to stay connected to developments from anywhere, while broadening participation across regions and organizations. For many participants, the webinars serve as a starting point for further exploration of specialized topics and continued engagement with MIT. This past year, participants joined from more than 75 countries, with the series receiving an overall satisfaction rating of 4.8 out of 5.

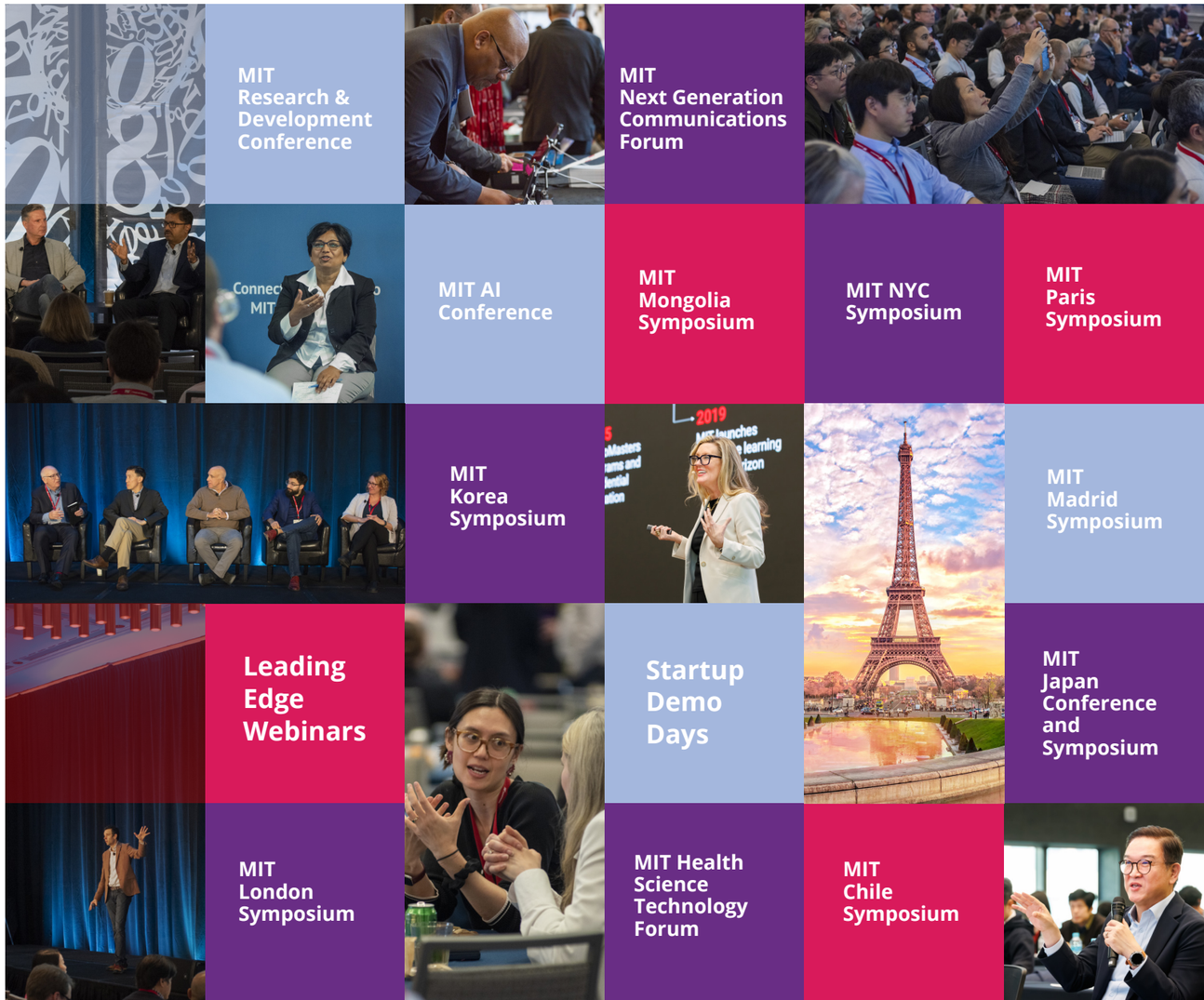
Across every format, the goal remains the same: to bring the right people, ideas, and expertise together in ways that create value for our members and the MIT community. By connecting industry leaders with MIT faculty, researchers, students, entrepreneurs, and peers, ILP & STEX continue to create opportunities for ideas to be exchanged, relationships to grow, and new collaborations to take shape.

20
Events

10
Webinars

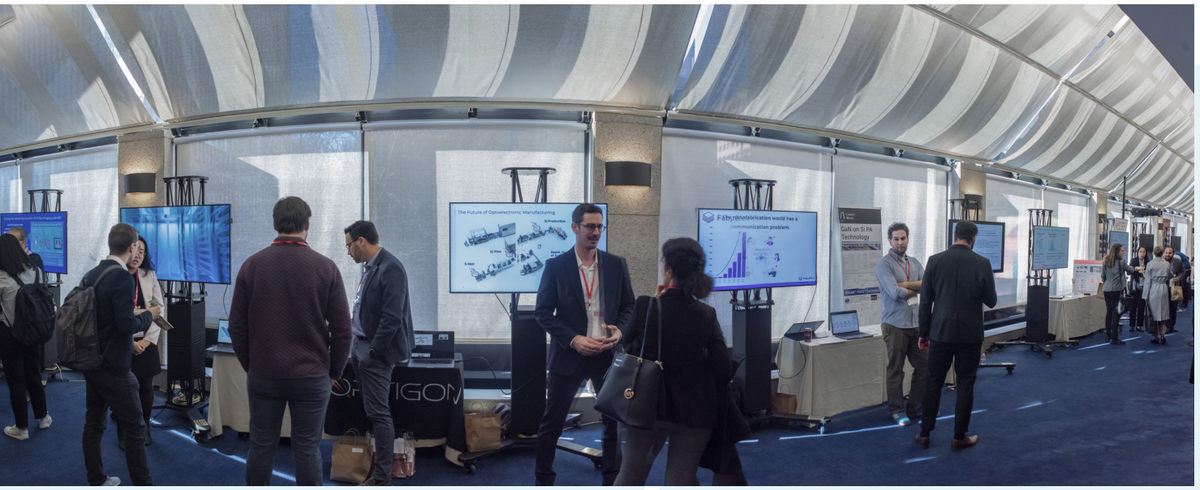
4.3K
Attendees

4
Startup Demo Days



BEYOND THE PITCH: CURATING STARTUP-INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS

For many early-stage startups, building breakthrough technology is only part of the challenge. Reaching the right audience at the right moment in their growth can be a game-changer. That is where ILP & STEX play a unique role, offering entrepreneurs a progression of industry engagement opportunities: from an initial, sector-agnostic introduction to industry-curated audiences, and ultimately to highly targeted engagement with a single corporate partner. Each opportunity serves a distinct purpose, helping startups connect with industry in ways that align with their stage of growth and commercial objectives.



Demo Days at a Glance

Demo Days are designed to do more than showcase innovation—they help founders begin building relationships with industry. As the first speaking opportunity for many newly onboarded portfolio startups, these quarterly virtual events introduce entrepreneurs to corporate representatives and the broader MIT innovation ecosystem, often before they participate in industry-focused lightning talks. In FY26, four Demo Days featured 32 startups and attracted 328 attendees, earning a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 67. For many founders, Demo Day is not the destination—it is the starting point.

Tata Startup Conference: Designed for Collaboration

The Tata Startup Conference took ILP & STEX's startup engagement a step further, creating a highly curated experience built around the specific priorities of a single, deeply engaged member.

The event brought together 56 carefully selected startups from the STEX portfolio and broader innovation ecosystem with representatives from six Tata business units, including Tata Motors, Tata Power, Tata Electronics, Agratas, and Tata Steel. By matching startups with clearly defined business interests before the event, the conference created focused opportunities for meaningful engagement, with follow-up discussions now underway to explore potential collaborations and pilot projects.



Lightning Talks: Curating Startup-Industry Connections

Before entrepreneurs step onto the stage, the team works closely with founders to understand their solutions, stage of development, roadmap, and commercial priorities. Through a comprehensive startup assessment process and ongoing engagement with founders, the team identifies startups that are ready to engage with industry and matches them with opportunities where their solutions align with corporate priorities and emerging industry challenges.

Throughout FY26, ILP & STEX curated startup lightning talks across 10 conferences and forums, selecting 54 startups to present their solutions to audiences of industry leaders, technical experts, researchers, and business decision-makers. Altogether, these events attracted nearly 2,000 attendees from more than 300 companies spanning a broad range of industries and geographies.

Presentations took place both on MIT's campus in Cambridge and at conferences in Detroit, New York, Tokyo, and Seoul, connecting entrepreneurs with corporate audiences as well as regional innovation ecosystems.

Unlike traditional startup events, where founders often present to broad audiences with diverse interests, these lightning talks are organized around industry-defined themes. Every presenter is carefully selected, and every audience is intentionally curated, ensuring startups present to organizations with a genuine interest in their solutions. The emphasis is not on the number of startups on stage, but on creating the right opportunities for interaction and follow-up.

Each startup receives a focused five-minute opportunity to communicate its solution, demonstrate its value, and begin discussions that can lead to pilot projects, joint development efforts, customer relationships, or strategic partnerships. Some founders return to present as their companies evolve, providing new opportunities to build industry relationships while bringing emerging technologies to new audiences.

For some founders, those five minutes can become a catalyst for significant business growth. Aidalos, an MIT-connected startup, presented at the 2026 MIT AI Conference while raising its seed round and credits the opportunity with helping accelerate its momentum.

The lightning talk gave us visibility, and the connections we made with major multinationals, including Tetra Pak, lent us real credibility," said Arnulf Hagen, Founder and CEO of Aidalos. "We exceeded our funding targets, in no small part thanks to that platform."

The value flows both ways. Startups gain visibility with audiences that are often difficult to reach independently, while corporate participants gain access to highly vetted MIT-connected startups developing solutions across manufacturing, mobility, healthcare, energy, semiconductors, artificial intelligence, sustainability, robotics, advanced materials, and other emerging fields. By organizing presentations around industry priorities rather than broad technology categories, ILP & STEX help create introductions that are more likely to develop into meaningful collaborations.

In FY26, entrepreneur satisfaction with the lightning talks reached 4.5/5, with a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 67. While these metrics reflect the quality of the experience, the true measure of success lies in the connections created—bringing MIT innovation closer to industry and helping promising startups take the next step toward real-world impact.

Corporate participants likewise value the curated format, which enables them to efficiently discover emerging technologies and engage directly with founders whose innovations align with their strategic priorities. Davide Borghi, Manager of Partnerships and Academia at Tetra Pak, said the Startup Lightning Talks offered an efficient way to identify technologies relevant to the company's business challenges.

"The format enabled valuable connections and meaningful discussions, creating opportunities to explore potential collaborations and better understand emerging technology trends," Borghi said.

Many of the startup success stories featured in the following pages began with opportunities like these, where meaningful introductions became lasting industry relationships.

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH US

ILP & STEX provide organizations with a trusted connection to MIT's expertise, research, and resources. Through dedicated relationships with industry, members gain a deeper understanding of the Institute's capabilities and identify opportunities to engage with faculty, startups, and programs that align with their strategic priorities.

Every member organization has unique goals. From the start of membership, ILP & STEX work closely with members to understand their priorities, help them navigate MIT's extensive research and technology landscape, and connect them with the people, ideas, and opportunities most relevant to their needs.

Member Benefits Include



Dedicated Program Director

A dedicated Program Director provides personalized guidance throughout the member relationship, helping organizations identify relevant MIT experts, resources, and engagement opportunities aligned with their priorities.

Connections to MIT Expertise and Research

Facilitated introductions and meetings with MIT faculty, laboratories, centers, institutes, and interdisciplinary research initiatives provide members with access to expertise across a wide range of fields.

Access to MIT-Connected Startups and Emerging Technologies

Members connect with MIT-connected startups developing new technologies and solutions, creating opportunities to explore partnerships, commercialization pathways, and technology adoption.



Exclusive Events and Insights

Complimentary access to ILP & STEX conferences, Leading Edge webinars, forums, executive briefings, workshops, and networking opportunities provides members with insights into emerging research, technology trends, and industry challenges.

Research Collaboration and Technology Engagement

ILP & STEX help members explore opportunities for sponsored research, intellectual property licensing, consortium participation, visiting scholar programs, and other forms of collaboration with MIT.

Talent and Professional Development Resources

Members gain access to MIT's talent pipeline, recruiting resources, and guidance and discounts for MIT Open Learning, MIT Sloan Executive Education, and MIT Professional Education.



Executive Briefings & Custom Services

For organizations seeking to build on the connections and insights gained through ILP & STEX programming, Executive Briefings provide tailored opportunities for deeper engagement with MIT. Designed around each organization's strategic priorities, these experiences can take place on campus, immersing participants in the Kendall Square ecosystem, or be delivered directly at member locations. Last year, ILP & STEX delivered 34 Executive Briefings around the world, engaging 799 unique attendees from 96 companies. These briefings featured 160 MIT faculty and researchers, involved 44 startups, and connected leadership teams across industries and regions.

These engagements also extend beyond faculty presentations to include connections across MIT's broader network, including research labs, departments, centers, entrepreneurial initiatives, the Venture Mentoring Service (VMS), and other entities. By aligning MIT resources with organizational priorities, Executive Briefings and other custom services help members build stronger connections across the MIT community.

Expert Research & Analysis

A core benefit of the membership is access to a dedicated research team that continuously monitors emerging technologies, industry trends, and the evolving education landscape. The team produces timely, technically grounded analyses to help members stay informed and engage more effectively with faculty and research initiatives at the Institute. In addition to surveys, the team prepares country and company reports that support the work of ILP & STEX and provide strategic insight for senior MIT administration.

During the fiscal year, the research team produced comprehensive surveys on a range of topics, including Computationally-Assisted Materials Discovery, Data Centers, Digital Twins, Agentic AI, Drug Discovery, Entrepreneurship, Microgrids & Microreactors, Decarbonization, and much more.

These resources reflect a sustained effort to provide members and staff with access to some of the most current and relevant information available across science and industry. This research is ongoing, tracking developments, evaluating significance, and translating complex information into actionable insight.

INDUSTRY SUCCESS STORIES

We were Ferrovial's first point of contact with MIT. Since then, we've been their eyes and ears within the MIT ecosystem.

— José Ramos, Program Director, ILP & STEX

A Long-Term Vision for Innovation: Ferrovial's Journey with MIT

For nearly two decades, Ferrovial has leveraged its membership in ILP & STEX to access MIT's research, expertise, and innovation ecosystem in support of its evolving business priorities.

Since joining the program in 2007, the company has expanded its involvement across multiple areas of MIT, including sponsored research, faculty engagement, startup exploration, and participation in initiatives such as the MIT Energy Initiative (MITEI), the MIT Mobility Initiative, and CSAIL.

Today, Ferrovial is finalizing its fourth consecutive five-year agreement with MITEI, extending an involvement with MIT that now approaches twenty years. Throughout that time, ILP & STEX have helped the company navigate the Institute's ecosystem, identify relevant expertise, and connect with emerging technologies aligned with its priorities in infrastructure, transportation, energy, and construction.

"We were Ferrovial's first point of contact with MIT. Since then, we've been their eyes and ears within the MIT ecosystem," said José Ramos, program director, ILP & STEX.

As Ferrovial continues exploring opportunities in smart infrastructure, energy systems, transportation technologies, artificial intelligence, and data center development, the relationship demonstrates how sustained engagement can help organizations connect business priorities with MIT's research, innovation, and entrepreneurial ecosystem.





From a Campus Visit to a National Mentorship Network

A connection between MIT and Reykjavík University formally established nearly a decade ago has grown into something much larger: a mentorship network of more than 200 business leaders, ongoing access to MIT expertise, and a relationship that continues to create new opportunities across the Icelandic innovation ecosystem.

Since joining the MIT Industrial Liaison Program and Startup Exchange (ILP & STEX) in 2017, Reykjavik University, together with Icelandic Innovation Partners (IIP), has worked with ILP & STEX to connect members of its consortium with the people, research, and resources at MIT that align with their priorities.

One of those connections proved particularly consequential. During a visit by Reykjavik University and its IIP to MIT, ILP & STEX introduced members of an Icelandic delegation and MIT's Venture Mentoring Service (VMS), whose team-based approach to mentoring entrepreneurs immediately resonated.

"We were trying to connect them with resources at MIT that we felt matched their interests, and the VMS was an absolute match. It was the perfect match," said José Ramos, program director, ILP & STEX.

The idea traveled back to Iceland. Consortium member KLAK Icelandic Startups adapted key principles of the MIT VMS model and, working with local partners, built a mentorship network that today brings together more than 200 mentors from Iceland's business community to support entrepreneurs.

That early connection also became part of a much broader relationship with MIT. Over the years, the ILP & STEX has continued to create opportunities for consortium members to engage with MIT faculty and experts around priorities ranging from emerging technologies to leadership and organizational development.

In 2025, Melissa Webster, of the MIT Sloan School of Management, led AI-focused workshops for two separate groups visiting MIT, while Professor Janelle Knox-Hayes, of the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, brought MIT expertise directly to Iceland through a workshop with consortium members.

The exchange has continued in both directions. Earlier in the year, Reykjavik University, the lead member within the consortium, welcomed Melissa Webster and Jayne Tan of MIT Sloan to Iceland for "Making Feedback Work for You: From Awkward to Actionable," an interactive workshop exploring practical ways to make workplace feedback more effective. This workshop included representatives from the various companies in the consortium.

What began with connecting Icelandic organizations to the right resources at MIT has evolved into a sustained exchange of ideas, expertise, and relationships. From a mentorship model that took root and grew in Iceland to new conversations around AI and leadership, the relationship demonstrates how the right connections can continue to generate value long after the initial introduction.

STARTUP SUCCESS STORIES



Innovation moves forward when the right expertise meets the right challenge. ILP & STEX aim to strengthen the momentum by strategically connecting MIT-connected startups with industry members whose technical priorities align with a startup's capabilities. Over the past year, these curated introductions have led to a wide range of outcomes, from technical evaluations and pilot discussions to strategic partnerships, commercial engagements, and investment opportunities. While not every introduction results in an immediate collaboration, each interaction provides startups with valuable industry insight while giving industry members early access to emerging technologies and entrepreneurial talent across the MIT ecosystem.

The result is a growing portfolio of industry connections that foster meaningful technical dialogue and lay the groundwork for collaboration, commercial engagement, and long-term strategic relationships. Rather than facilitating introductions at scale, the program focuses on identifying where a startup's technology can help solve an industry member company's real-world challenge, creating a stronger foundation for productive engagement.

The examples that follow represent a small selection of outcomes generated over the past year. Together, they demonstrate the program's ability to identify high-potential opportunities where technical alignment can create meaningful value for both MIT-connected startups and industry members.

TechNext.ai

TechNext helps R&D leaders make strategic technology investment decisions by analyzing technology improvement rates, forecasting performance and cost inflection points, and identifying critical bottlenecks. Its platform enables organizations to determine which technologies to fund, acquire, monitor, or discontinue based on quantitative technology intelligence.

Co-founded by:
Christopher L. Magee, MIT Professor Emeritus, and Anuraag Singh, MIT SDM Fellow (2018)

Success:
A paid pilot that originated from a speaking engagement evolved into a multi-year recurring contract with a global materials manufacturer. TechNext mapped the company's R&D roadmap into underlying technology domains, quantified technology improvement trajectories, forecasted performance and cost crossover points, and identified bottlenecks that informed long-term capital allocation decisions. The engagement progressed from an initial evaluation to recurring annual renewals, demonstrating sustained value for the company's enterprise R&D strategy.

Narratize

Narratize is an AI-powered product innovation platform that helps R&D, engineering, and product teams accelerate new product development by capturing organizational knowledge, automating technical documentation, and improving cross-functional collaboration. Serving as a centralized intelligence layer, the platform streamlines product development workflows, reduces documentation burdens, and helps organizations bring new products to market faster.

Co-founded by:
Katie Trauth Taylor, Ph.D., Catherine O'Shea, and Kara Uchtman, P.E.

Success:
Following an introduction through ILP & STEX, a global industrial equipment manufacturer integrated Narratize into its new product introduction (NPI) and innovation workflows. The deployment accelerated product development cycles, streamlined technical documentation, and improved cross-functional collaboration, enabling engineering teams to bring new products to market more efficiently.

GelSight

GelSight digitizes human touch through high-resolution tactile imaging technology that transforms surface inspection and metrology. Its conformable elastomeric sensors capture detailed 3D surface data, enabling precise, repeatable measurement of defects, texture, and topography across materials and lighting conditions.

Co-founded by:
Edward H. Adelson, Micah K. Johnson, Janos Rohaly, and William Yost (2011)

Success:
Following an introduction through ILP & STEX, a global consumer products company conducted a paid evaluation of GelSight's technology for quantitative skin texture analysis before and after skincare treatments. Customer feedback during the evaluation identified a critical product capability that GelSight subsequently developed and incorporated into its commercial platform. The feature has since been released broadly to customers, extending the impact of the collaboration well beyond the initial engagement.

Helix Carbon

Helix Carbon is developing electrochemical technology that converts carbon dioxide into high-value industrial chemicals using renewable electricity, providing manufacturers with lower-emission alternatives to conventional chemical production while reducing reliance on fossil feedstocks.

Co-founded by:
Evan Haas, SM '24, MBA '24; David Brown, MBA '24; and Professor Ariel Furst, MIT Department of Chemical Engineering

Success:
An introduction through ILP & STEX led to the launch of a joint development program with a multinational materials science company. The collaboration provides Helix Carbon with the opportunity to validate its technology in an industrial setting while accelerating development toward commercial deployment through direct engagement with a strategic industry partner.

Hopara

Hopara develops a digital twin platform that transforms complex operational data into intuitive, interactive visualizations, enabling organizations to monitor assets, explore real-time information, and optimize operations across industrial, manufacturing, and life sciences environments.

Co-founded by:
Professor Michael Stonebraker, MIT CSAIL and Turing Award recipient, together with the Hopara founding team, building on MIT's Kyrix data visualization research.

Success:
Following an invitation to present during a company's visit to MIT, Hopara secured a pilot project with the global infrastructure company. The engagement created an opportunity to validate Hopara's digital twin platform in a real-world operational environment while laying the foundation for a broader commercial relationship.

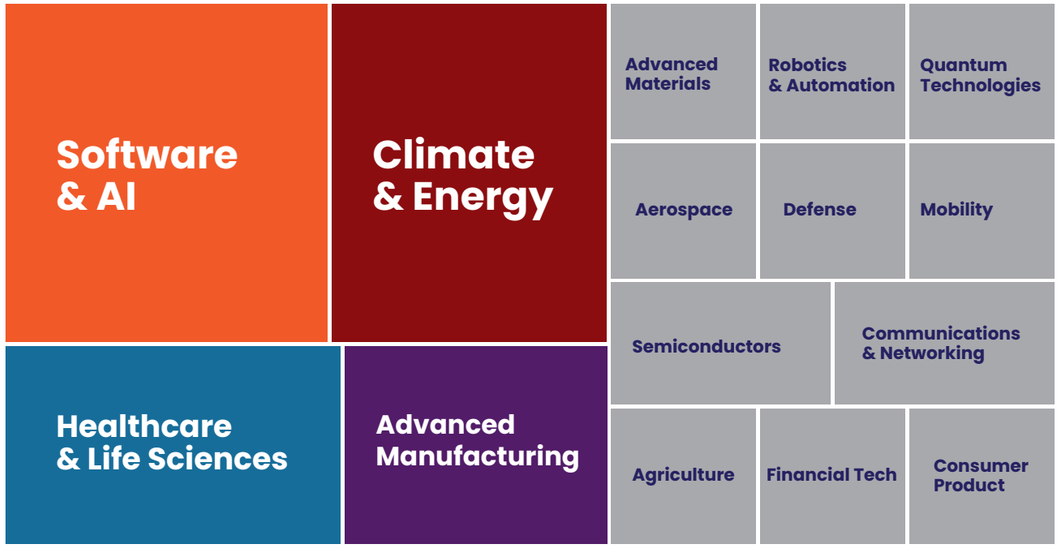
STARTUP IMPACT

Throughout FY26, ILP & STEX actively supported 244 MIT-connected startups, creating opportunities for founders to engage with MIT's ecosystem and industry through calls for startups, curated one-on-one meetings, business development initiatives, international activities, events, Demo Days, and startup exhibits. These engagements are designed to help founders build relationships, validate their solutions, and accelerate market validation, business development, and growth. Their true value, however, is measured not by participation alone, but by the opportunities and outcomes they create.

The startups supported during FY26 reflect the breadth and strength of the MIT innovation ecosystem, combining technical excellence, novel approaches to complex challenges, and strong potential for real-world impact. Reflecting the global reach of the MIT innovation ecosystem, the startups supported through ILP & STEX span 17 countries. At the national level, 92% of startups are headquartered in the United States, representing 17 states and Washington, D.C.

The startups are primarily composed of small- and medium-sized, commercially ready ventures, with 83% employing 50 or fewer people. While startups span the full commercialization journey—from pre-seed through Series C—the largest segment (30.5%) is at the Seed stage, reflecting strong engagement with companies as they begin to scale.

Startups span 15 technology focus areas, led by Software & AI (28%), Climate & Energy (21%), Healthcare & Life Sciences (13%), and Advanced Manufacturing (9%). Together, these four areas account for 71% of supported startups, reflecting MIT's strengths in science- and engineering-driven innovation while providing industry with access to emerging technologies and solutions. The remaining startups span a diverse range of technology areas, including advanced materials, robotics and automation, semiconductors and quantum technologies, aerospace and defense, mobility, communications and networking, agriculture, financial technologies, and consumer products.



Box sizes are proportional to estimated sector coverage.

ADVANCING STARTUP GROWTH THROUGH COLLABORATION AT MIT

ILP & STEX work with founders who have moved beyond the idea stage and are ready to engage with industry—when the right introduction can accelerate product validation, partnerships, and commercialization.

"As a startup, finding the right enterprise partner can be extremely time-consuming—but also transformative," said Ali Merchant, CEO of iQ3Connect. "MIT ILP & STEX made that possible by creating a connection that quickly evolved into a strategic, multi-year partnership with a global industry leader. It's a powerful example of how ILP & STEX helps corporate partners access innovative technologies while giving startups the unique opportunity to validate, scale, and deliver lasting business value."

Measuring the Impact

To better understand the impact of these engagements, the team surveyed supported startups at the end of FY26. Startups responded, providing insight into the relationships and business generated through the program.

Fifteen percent of respondents reported a tangible business outcome, such as a proof of concept, pilot, or customer agreement. When broader outcomes—including increased visibility, expanded networks, and follow-up meetings—are considered, this figure rises to 20%. In addition, 52% reported ongoing conversations with industry, demonstrating a strong pipeline of potential future collaborations.

64
Startup Engagement Net Promoter Score (NPS)

52%
Ongoing conversations with industry

15%
Tangible business outcomes

By curating a portfolio of commercially ready MIT-connected startups and facilitating meaningful engagement with industry, ILP & STEX help founders build relationships that can lead to validation, partnerships, commercialization, and long-term growth.

Engagement Across Campus

Foundation EGI and Profit Isle illustrate how startups can benefit from these complementary relationships as they expand their industry networks and explore new opportunities. Through ILP & STEX, Profit Isle engaged with corporations spanning the healthcare, insurance, and mobility sectors and participated in events and business development activities in Boston, New York, Silicon Valley, Tokyo, and Seoul.

"Through MIT ILP & STEX and CSAIL Startup Connect Plus, Profit Isle has secured valuable keystone accounts and forged critical business relationships," said John Wass, co-founder and CEO of Profit Isle. "This includes a major global consulting firm with whom we are currently in discussions to integrate our Profit Operating System into their client offerings."

Building on this engagement, Foundation EGI also connected with CSAIL Startup Connect, a peer program at MIT, which supported the startup through VC introductions, additional corporate connections, and a headlining spot at the CSAIL Alliances Annual Meeting, its largest event of the year.

LOOKING AHEAD

Investing in the Future Through Collaboration and Discovery

More than eighty years ago, Science: The Endless Frontier made the case that sustained investment in research and talent is essential to national prosperity, health, security, and progress. That principle remains just as relevant today. The world's most complex challenges require discovery, collaboration, and strong connections between those creating new knowledge and those positioned to put it to work.

Across the Institute, MIT is preparing students for a rapidly evolving future through experiential learning, industry engagement, and hands-on collaboration, while expanding opportunities to translate breakthrough research into real-world impact. MIT's presidential initiatives reflect the Institute's commitment to focusing its extraordinary capabilities on some of the most important challenges and opportunities of our time. As we continue to support these presidential initiatives—from climate, health and life sciences, artificial intelligence, manufacturing, and education to newer initiatives such as the MIT Quantum Initiative (QMIT) and the Committee on Accelerating Translation and Entrepreneurship (CATE)—ILP & STEX play a vital role in connecting industry with MIT's research and innovation ecosystem through deep industry relationships, startup engagement, and opportunities for collaboration across the Institute.

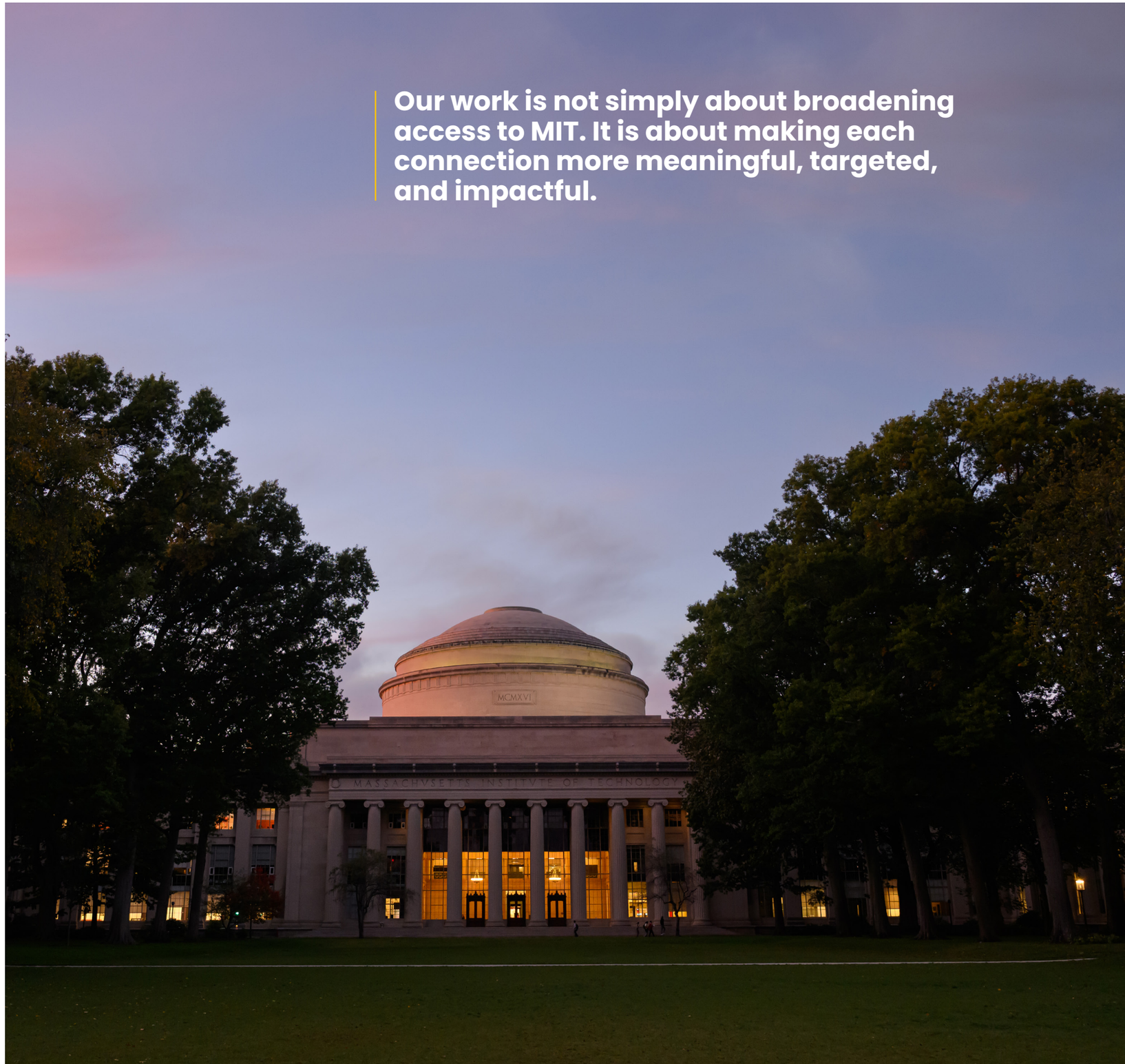
We connect global thought leaders from industry and other sectors with MIT faculty, researchers, startups, and innovation ecosystem. We help organizations understand where MIT is leading, identify the areas most relevant to their strategic priorities, and build relationships that can turn insight into action. At the same time, we bring industry perspectives back to campus, helping faculty, and researchers engage with the challenges organizations are working to solve.

Looking ahead, our work is about more than broadening access to MIT. It is about making each connection more meaningful, targeted, and impactful. Guided by our RISE framework — Research, Innovation, Students, and Education — and the expertise of our Program Directors, we will continue to help organizations connect with the people and ideas most relevant to their strategic priorities.

MIT's strength comes from its people, its research, and its ability to tackle difficult problems. ILP & STEX help extend that strength beyond campus by connecting the brightest minds across sectors to advance discovery, develop talent, accelerate innovation, and address real-world problems at scale.

As science and technology continue to reshape industries, the need for trusted bridges between discovery and application has never been greater. ILP & STEX are those bridges—connecting MIT's excellence with global leaders working to transform ideas into progress for industry, society, and the world.

MIT Industrial Liaison Program
& Startup Exchange





1 Main Street
12th Floor, E90-1201
Cambridge, MA 02142

For more information:
ilp-stex@mit.edu

ilpstex.mit.edu

Powered by MIT Corporate Relations