

MIT Campus News Guide

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Thank you for submitting articles to publish on MIT News. These guidelines should answer most questions about what to submit, and how, for best results in gaining an audience for your news. Note that exceptions to the guidelines outlined here will occasionally be allowed, depending on the circumstances.

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GUIDELINES BY STORY TYPE

Awards and Honors

MIT News welcomes articles about many, but not all, awards and honors bestowed upon individuals in the MIT community. The MIT News writing staff covers only very major awards; when in doubt, feel free to check in before submitting a campus news piece on an award.

Types of awards covered on MIT News: Major prizes, scholarships, fellowships, and awards given by local, national, or international organizations; major funding awards (please see the section on Sponsored Research Funding and Gifts for more); and select major MIT awards for faculty, staff (including postdocs), and students (see below for what is and isn't accepted).

Types of awards *not* covered on MIT News:

—Best paper or best thesis awards

—Honorary degrees conferred upon MIT faculty by outside institutions (These can, however, be included in a larger award roundup, such as the SoE quarterly roundup.)

—MIT individuals named as finalists or runner up for an award

—MIT individuals being named to organizational boards of directors (Exception: We do post an article each year on new members of the MIT Corporation.) See also: Profiles > Outside professional activities

—People and discoveries named to a media outlet's list of "top" people/discoveries, which, among other things, could be the subject of an "In The Media" instead (Exception: We *will* still accept articles about college rankings.)

—The establishment of new MIT alumni or scholarship funds

—Awards, fellowships, and grants given by MIT entities (schools, departments, labs, centers, etc.) to members of the MIT community, with some exceptions, described below. If any handling of the award is done at MIT, we consider that internal, even if funding is external. We also won't accept event recaps that are primarily ceremonies for such awards.

Exceptions: We *will* still accept articles about the following MIT-based awards:

- Flagship program awards given by DLCs to members of the general public (e.g. Knight Science Journalism Fellows, OMEGA Awards, Lemelson-MIT InvenTeams, McDermott Award in the Arts, etc.);

- Institute-level awards such as the Excellence Awards, Collier Medal, Killian Award, MacVicar Fellowships, Committed to Caring, Edgerton Award, MLK Scholars, etc.;
- Named, endowed awards/fellowships given by outside organizations;
- Announcements of faculty tenure;
- The launch of new awards/fellowships (With the exception of new named professorships, we require announcements of inaugural winners to focus on news of the new award/fellowship, with a brief mention of the winner, rather than an article focusing on the winner as a reason to mention the award now exists);
- Winners of academic contests; and
- Periodic awards roundups, such as the School of Engineering quarterly roundups, as long as the majority of those awards is external.

Multiple MIT winners: In the event an award/honor/fellowship is given to multiple members of the MIT community, please be sure all MIT members are mentioned. The same is true of when an organization gives out different awards at the same time/ceremony or with the same press release: You should only submit one story on recent awards given by any one organization. Also, when submitting a piece to campus news with multiple winners hailing from different areas of MIT, be sure to check in with communications representatives from the other relevant schools/DLCs to decide who will write what and submit to campus news (and to make sure no one else has started working on a similar piece to be submitted). Please note: Alumni recipients of an award with multiple MIT winners may (and should) be included, although we generally prioritize current community members in headlines and in the order and breadth of discussion. Finally, be sure to submit one image including all winners for a story with multiple winners. See section on images later in this document for formatting guidelines.

Alumni and/or former staff members: For the most part, we focus on current faculty, students, and staff — but we are happy to include alumni or former staff if there are multiple MIT recipients and at least one is a current MIT affiliate. Exceptions for MIT News coverage of singular alumni or former staff awards might include major national or international awards and awards given to recent alumni for work done at MIT. It is best to check with Maia first if your story falls into one of these categories. See the section on Research, below, for guidance on stories relating to alumni research.

Events

We accept articles on most event recaps, with one or more photos showing what happened and explaining why it was important, exciting, or especially “MIT.” Note that articles focusing squarely on a program or initiative that also mention an upcoming event in passing are generally OK for publication.

If you plan to submit an event recap, please be sure the recap is timely: We can only accept articles on events that took place on (or near) campus 3-4 weeks prior to your post submission. In addition, event recaps should focus on MIT-sponsored or co-sponsored events and on current faculty, students, or staff, rather than alumni or former community members.

Exceptions to this may occasionally be hosted on MIT News, depending on the situation, but check with Maia first.

MIT News no longer publishes after-the-fact recaps of annual/regular events whose program, and thus the related article, does not substantially change from year to year. For example, regular events featuring a new keynote speaker or new panel discussion are fine, but overviews of poster sessions, student showcases, or networking events are better-suited for DLC websites. We also no longer publish recaps of ceremonies/events focused primarily on the awards we do not accept articles on (see Awards and Honors, above).

Note that the MIT Events calendar is a fantastic place to promote events; items published in this calendar are considered for placement in the Monday MIT Daily “Happenings” module.

Getting additional visibility for your event:

- If it’s not already added to the [MIT Events calendar](#), add it. Items on this calendar are considered for placement in the Monday “Happenings” module of the MIT Daily.
- Teach out to the Social Media Working Group for help with a signal boost across related social channels around the Institute. If you are not already on the SMWG Slack channel, Jenny Fowler, director of social media strategy, may be able to help.

Courses and Programs of Study

Individual courses: With the exception of online courses or professional education courses that are free for anyone to take, we don’t publish articles about individual classes at the start of a semester with the goal of getting people to enroll. For those we do host, please use news-like language (“A new course exists.”) as opposed to marketing-style language (“Ready to take this new course?”). Note also that due to GDPR regulations, we are limited in how we can promote certain articles if their explicit purpose is to entice registration. For class profiles, we may hold submissions until after the first few weeks of class if that course is being held that semester.

Independent Activities Period: We accept previews of IAP courses, but prefer recaps with images, exploring what students did. As with other event recaps, please submit IAP articles within four weeks of the end of the workshop/activity (unless you are writing about a recurring IAP workshop/activity and the article is more general in nature about an annual offering).

New majors / minors: It is preferred that individual departments refrain from submitting news covering a single or batch of new majors/minors within a specific program, unless they are doing so at a time when there are no other new major/minor announcements. In short, we would prefer fewer articles on new courses of study that many individuals will find relevant rather than more articles that fewer individuals will find relevant.

New programs: We welcome articles on new special programs, provided they don't read like direct advertisements for students to take part: Impact and importance of the program overall should be emphasized over specific course requirements, grading schedules, etc.

Anniversaries

We accept articles highlighting key anniversaries for MIT DLCs, but in general we prefer for the fact of the anniversary to only be mentioned briefly and not be the headline or lede. Headlines should focus of the impact of the program on MIT/the nation/the world. Please keep the mention of anniversaries to increments of 5 years.

Joint Announcements / External Press Releases

From time to time, MIT entities may work together with an outside organization, company, or school on a joint project, and create a joint press announcement to publicize the work. We maintain certain requirements pertaining to joint releases appearing on MIT News:

- A joint news release must be jointly published by both the MIT and other entity/ies. This may mean there will be a version posted somewhere on the submitting MIT entity's website, labeled as a press release/news release from said MIT entity.
- We will not simply repurpose an article from an outside entity, even if it focuses squarely on MIT people and/or projects. This includes announcements about prizes and awards; in such cases, we ask that the relevant DLC create their own version of the story rather than paste the body of an external release into the campus news form.
- MIT's role in the project must be highlighted prominently. Ideally, the version on MIT News features an MIT quote first, followed by a quote or quotes from individuals outside of the Institute.
- While we will certainly entertain any requested changes from the outside organization, as long as they are deemed appropriate by the submitting DLC, we maintain the right to edit the article as needed, in observance of MIT News style and practices.
- Joint announcements will get an italicized line at the top of the article noting that the article was released jointly by the submitting MIT entity and an outside organization. Language for this may change depending on whether other MIT News version differs substantially from the original.
- With very few exceptions, MIT News expects the MIT entity posting to campus news to also plan to handle any additional media outreach related to the work described in the release.

Appointments, New Hires, Promotions, and Tenure

All new faculty/staff hire announcements must be approved by the relevant school's dean before it can be published on MIT News.

For departments: Please gather recent faculty hires and appointments together into one story for campus news. For institutes, centers, or labs: Please coordinate with the relevant department(s) before submitting your piece. If the department has no plans to cover the appointment(s), then go ahead and submit. But the preference is for departments to submit this news.

In articles about new faculty, tenure-track should be the focus — please do not send announcements of new lecturers or visiting/temporary faculty. A new “professor of the practice” who may not be on the tenure track is OK, given some MIT faculty are practitioners as well as professors.

For new staff hires or promotions aside from faculty, please only submit stories where the hire/promotion is to a leading position within a DLC or at the Institute generally. Within DLCs this should be director/head or similar.

All new tenure announcements must be approved by the relevant school's dean before it can be published on MIT News. Please coordinate with the communications lead for your school if you would like to publicize a faculty member's having received tenure. Since MIT News will profile all newly tenured faculty with a unique article in the year following awarding of tenure, we aim to publish at most one campus news article per school when tenure announcements are made.

Profiles

MIT News typically only produces profiles of newly tenured (or new to MIT) faculty, as well as select MIT seniors and select graduate students who are recommended to us by academic and other collaborating administrators. We do, however, accept for posting on MIT News profiles of any current member of the MIT community — current MIT students, staff, faculty, and affiliates (as long as the affiliation is strong and prominently described in the piece). We also generally accept profile articles on alumni who have been gone from MIT for at least a year.

A note about soon-to-graduate MIT students and recent alumni: For several reasons, we strongly prefer not to publish profile articles about students who have recently graduated and have left MIT. Articles about new alumni who are continuing on at MIT for another degree are fine because those individuals are still current students. Also, articles about ongoing or past work that includes a recent alum is fine.

If you would like to profile a graduating senior or advanced degree candidate, please be sure to send those articles to us by no later than two weeks before their graduation date. We will likely

not accept articles on recently departed students if they are submitted any later than that. We will generally accept articles on alumni once they've been away from MIT for at least a year — enough time so that they've been able to start making a mark on the world beyond the confines of the Institute. If you are interested in profiling an alumni-founded venture, please see the next section.

Outside professional activities: We limit the types of announcements that we will accept on outside professional activities (OPA) — i.e. those not directly sponsored by MIT — for MIT faculty and staff. Articles on OPA that we do accept typically focus on a new creative work (book, film, artwork, exhibit, etc.), the promotion of an individual to a senior-level position in the U.S. government, or participation in a high-profile media production (such as appearing on a popular game show). We will consider other examples on a case-by-case basis.

Interviews (3 Questions / Q&A)

We accept articles in which one or more MIT community members are interviewed, although interviews with a single person are preferred. Interviews can take the 3 Questions format or be a longer Q&A, with as many questions as you like. All interview articles must have a brief summary introduction in italics. The intro should not include quotes from the interviewee(s). Interview articles should not include individuals who are not current MIT affiliates or alumni; we also prefer that interviews with alumni include at least one other respondent who is a current MIT faculty member, staff member, or student.

Interviews of more than one person should separate answers by person — the idea is these should be seen as actual interviews rather than prepared remarks written by committee. Subjects for interviews are wide-ranging; they can be related to just about anything that has an MIT connection, so long as they conform to our other guidelines. If you have any questions about whether your interview is appropriate for MIT News, please contact Maia.

Articles on Staff / Faculty Who Are Retiring or Otherwise Leaving MIT

We accept articles on staff and faculty who are retiring, going emerita/us, or leaving MIT after a long and impactful tenure. However, we prefer the fact of the retirement not to be the headline. We strongly prefer heds and deks (i.e. subheadlines) to focus on what the person did during their time at MIT and what their impact has been.

For staff retirement articles, we recommend running the piece by Stacie Slotnick in Human Resources before you send them to us.

For faculty, administrators, or other high-level leaders who have taken new permanent positions outside of MIT (i.e. they are leaving MIT for new jobs with no plans to return): We typically do not host these kinds of articles, as they are more a story for the new institution to tell rather than MIT's story. We may make exceptions from time to time depending on the person's longevity and impact at the Institute.

Obituaries

In some cases, MIT News will take the lead on writing and producing an obituary; please check in with us if there's any question. In most cases, however, we must rely on DLC contributors to write obits. We recommend working with former colleagues and family members for information and images.

We accept obituaries for: current faculty/staff (student deaths are generally handled by the Office of the Provost and MIT News); professors emeritus; former faculty/staff (the individual should have had a relatively long or impactful tenure at MIT for placement on campus news); alumni, but only in rare circumstances, such as their being very high-profile or having a current MIT connection.

Research

MIT News staff writers don't have the bandwidth to cover every important scholarly work that comes out of MIT labs, centers, and institutes. As such, MIT News welcomes research articles on campus news. It's always a good idea to check with the MIT News staff writer of the beat your researcher(s) falls under to make sure there's no overlap. (Maia can tell you who that is.)

Timeliness: Research articles must be timely: We accept articles on scholarly work that was published or presented at a conference **no more than four weeks prior to article submission.**

Peer review: For the most part, we do not publish articles on non-peer reviewed research or on working papers that are actively undergoing peer review. This means that, in most cases, we won't accept work that is still in preprint stage on Arxiv. We prefer for you to wait to submit your research-related news until the research has been officially published by a journal, or a publication date has been officially scheduled. (Or, if the work is contained in a new book, until the book has been published.) If the work is initially presented at a conference and will later be published in a peer-reviewed journal that enforces a press embargo, that journal's embargo policy may prohibit advance publicity before they publish the paper. Only a small subset of peer-reviewed journals have press embargoes, but if this scenario applies to the work you're covering, please check the journal's embargo policy. In all cases, we prefer to point to an online version of a paper that describes the work. For our purposes, the publication date of record is the date of online publication, not a later physical publication date.

Peer review in the journal eLife: Due to this journal's peer-review system, we require a) any article appearing on MIT News about an eLife study to have the paper go through the full process of publication with a "Version of record"; and b) that paper needs to have its "Strength of evidence" rating be "solid," "convincing," "compelling," or "exceptional." We will not accept articles that only get to the "Publication of reviewed preprint" or "Publication of revised version" phase, nor will we accept any that have a version of record with a "Strength of evidence" rating of "incomplete" or "inadequate."

Software releases: If a technical paper accompanies or will accompany the public release of any software/computing model, the MIT News article should follow the rest of our guidelines on peer review and timing as noted above.

MIT connections: We do not typically publish articles about new research led by alumni, unless at least one other current MIT community member is a co-author on the paper. We are more likely to accept articles on alumni-led research if most or all of the work was performed at MIT.

Handling critiques: From time to time, research interpretations or other academic views may differ between individuals within the MIT community, or others in academia more broadly. While aiming to combine freedom of inquiry and its expression on the one hand with collegiality on the other, we ask contributors of MIT News articles to ensure a respectful tone when quoting MIT community members who wish to critique a particular line of inquiry. Please also ensure that any characterizations of work done in other MIT departments, labs, or centers are accurate and fair.

Research with animals: Research involving animal subjects contributes greatly to scientific knowledge, human health, and animal care, but it is a complex topic that should be communicated with heightened awareness of how the readers of MIT News may understand and relate to the findings. We accept articles on papers describing new animal research only if the articles clearly show how the findings help to answer a significant scientific question or open significant new routes of scientific inquiry. Such submissions should state somewhere in the body of the article that the findings were demonstrated “in animal models” (or “in mice,” or similar); this is especially important on health-related topics to help readers recognize that, with further study, exciting pre-clinical advances may or may not end up translating to humans.

In general, the value of an MIT News article is in elucidating what is newly understood and why it matters to the public. Papers that primarily present a new method or technology for carrying out research on animals bear a greater potential for misunderstanding by the general public; the Institute Office of Communications will consider these articles for MIT News on a case-by-case basis. We suggest you share an advance draft with Kathy or Maia for review.

While the IOC is responsible for final editorial decisions about MIT News content, we also advise that you share any articles about research on animals in advance with Kelly Pate, director of the Division of Comparative Medicine, for review of the content prior to submission. The IOC may also seek input from the Office of the Vice President for Research and/or the Office of the Provost. In all cases: We do not publish images or video of animals, or animal use and care facilities, as part of MIT News articles involving animal research subjects.

Amplification: For consideration of elevation to top news, and/or inclusion on the Infinite Corridor display TVs, in the MIT Daily, or on social media: The article should be very timely; have significant impact in the relevant field; have a strong image or video; be accessible to a general audience, with limited jargon or technical terminology (all of which must be clearly

explained); and ideally should have outside comment from someone not involved in the research (preferred to be someone not at MIT). Contact Maia for tips on soliciting outside comment.

Sponsored Research Funding and Gifts

We welcome articles announcing new funding sources from outside MIT, but such articles should be thoroughly vetted before they are submitted to MIT News. (Please note that MIT News writers are generally unable to produce articles on new funding if the amount coming to MIT is less than \$5 million per year. Contact Maia or Kathy if you have any questions.)

We have not yet identified a one-size-fits-all review process for every situation, but we have developed a baseline of steps to take in vetting your new funding and gift announcements. Some key guidance follows, but please be sure to also thoroughly review the **Guide for Announcements of Sponsored Research Funding and Gifts**, which contains additional details, suggestions, and considerations.

For sponsored research, including grants, collaborations with companies or other universities, or other research agreements, please send a near-final copy of the MIT News article and a copy of the signed agreement to Caroline Perry, director of communications in the Office of the Vice President for Research. If the sponsoring entity is outside the U.S., a near-final copy of the article and copy of the signed agreement should also be shared with Catherine Williams, director of communications in the Office of the Provost, at the same time. Considerations during this review will include:

- consistency between the news story and the research agreement;
- an accurate description of the relationship between MIT and the funder;
- an indication that all relevant internal committee and review protocols were followed (including the [Elevated-Risk Review Process](#));
- the amount of funding provided (unless contractually prohibited from including this fact); and
- an accurate, balanced characterization of the scope and goals of the project.

For stories that relate to gifts, local communicators are encouraged share the draft with Resource Development for review prior to submission to MIT News. **Prior review by RD is required** for stories about gifts from individuals or organizations that meet any of the following criteria:

- \$2.5 million+ from a U.S.-based donor;
- \$500,000+ from an international donor;
- the gift is subject to the [Elevated-Risk Review Process](#) (in this case, please also share an advance draft with Catherine Williams in the Provost's Office);
- capital gift to name a space; or
- possibility for controversy due to any aspect of the gift, regardless of gift amount ([example](#)).

Articles announcing major gifts that will go toward establishing new research centers should also be reviewed by Caroline Perry in VPR, as well as by RD.

MIT-Affiliated Companies

We accept articles on MIT startups / spinouts — companies founded by MIT affiliates, either while at MIT or after leaving — if they meet certain criteria.

Companies must be more than three years old, so that they have demonstrated traction and staying power. They must also have strong MIT “roots” that are described prominently in the story, ideally in the headline or dek in addition to high up in the story. If you have questions about whether a story featuring an MIT-affiliated firm will work for MIT News, please touch base with Kathy and/or Maia.

Campus Design, Construction, and Renovation

Stories that feature campus planning, design, renovation, or construction activities should be vetted with the MIT Department of Facilities and the Office of Campus Planning. The communications director for Campus Services and Stewardship (CSS) will assist with reviews to confirm details with the project team and to confirm that the MIT Executive Committee and MIT Corporation have been briefed and approved the project prior to publication of the story. In addition to reviews by CSS, planning and construction activities are vetted with the Office of the Executive Vice President, Office of Government and Community Relations, and Resource Development as needed.

A few guidelines for campus design and construction stories:

- Do not include project budgets or costs. Note that donation amounts may be made public, in coordination with Resource Development guidance.
- Hold off on publishing renderings of buildings when a project is in design, as design plans and scope may change as the project is reviewed by MIT and goes through final budget reviews. Once a project is under construction, renderings may be made public following approval by CSS.
- Vendor teams, including architects, are made public only after a contract has been signed. Naming of an architect is shared as a detail within a story of how the project fulfills the MIT mission and not as the lead message in a story.

Contact Monica Lee, communications director in CSS, for assistance in vetting the story at molee@mit.edu or 617-258-9366. Monica can also vet use-of-name requests from design and construction vendors with Peter Bebergal, use-of-name officer in the Institute Office of Communications. Note that vendors are not eligible to request permission to publicize a design/construction project until it is completed to the satisfaction of MIT.

Books, Film, Arts, and Other Creative Endeavors

We welcome articles about certain creative works produced by members of the MIT community. For example, we generally accept articles on new books written or edited by community members. These may be academic in nature, but should not be highly specialized academic works, as our readership is a general audience; with rare exceptions, we do not typically publish articles about textbooks.

Similarly, we welcome articles about podcasts, film, artworks, and other creative endeavors. Articles about podcasts should focus broadly on a new or existing podcast rather than on an individual episode. We recommend running articles about new films/videos by Maia before submitting, as some articles may not be a good fit for the MIT News platform, while others may be best suited for the “Featured Video” format (see below).

Featured Video

This campus news “featurette” highlights a video with a long (at least 90-word) caption. Videos must be on YouTube or Vimeo (see also the Video section below with additional technical requirements). Videos may be from any source, but will be selected for quality and subject matter, which may include campus life, popular presentations, media appearances, etc. Strong video candidates may also/instead be submitted as a candidate for featuring in the MIT Daily email newsletter. If placement in MIT News is desired, email Maia or sceneatmit@mit.edu to suggest a video; if placement in the MIT Daily is desired, fill out the [content suggestion form](#).

Scene at MIT

This campus news “featurette” highlights crowdsourced images from around the Institute. Captions must be at least 90-100 words long and may be written in the first person; those that are will be set in quotation marks. We are looking for images that capture the beauty of MIT — remarkable scenes of people, objects, settings, and goings-on both serious and silly at the Institute — and we want the stories behind those images.

Images may be taken and submitted by anyone, including individuals with no connection to MIT. Strong image candidates may also/instead be submitted for potential featuring in the MIT Daily email newsletter. If placement in MIT News is desired, email Maia or sceneatmit@mit.edu to suggest a photo; if placement in the MIT Daily is desired, fill out the [content suggestion form](#).

GENERAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES/TIPS:

Submitting via the MIT News Content Management System (CMS)

How to submit: Please use the CMS to submit campus news. Once you are logged in, you will be ready to submit as long as you have all of your content ready, including: article, image(s), any

necessary videos (which must be properly captioned; see the Video section below), related links, etc. Unfortunately, submissions cannot be saved and completed at a later time, nor can submissions be edited once you've submitted them. We can accommodate late changes/additions via email if necessary, but it is far easier and faster to produce your piece if all of the content is ready to go when you submit it. Tip: Use the campus news template to organize your content and then copy and paste into the CMS.

Who can submit: With a few exceptions, we generally only grant campus news submission privileges to MIT communications professionals, and to only one person per DLC. If you do not have but would like campus news submitting privileges, you may request access through Maia. Note: For someone who goes on temporary leave with an expected return date (such as parental leave), you may designate another individual to submit on your behalf during that time. That person can send materials via email, and we will process manually for the duration of the leave.

What to submit: Be sure when you submit that you send a) an article of at least 250 words — or 90 words, for Featured Video or Scene at MIT; b) an image (see image guidelines below); and c) as much metadata as possible. That means you should fill in all fields in the form; more information on each field type is listed below.

How often to submit: Most campus news contributors submit between one and five articles per calendar year. We ask that those who contribute more frequently limit submissions to at most four per month. One reason for this limitation is to ensure fair representation of DLC's on campus news. A second reason is that the more articles there are in our queue, the longer it takes to edit and process any one of your pieces from the time you submit. If you have a number of items to promote, please feel free to brainstorm with Maia and/or Kathy as to which pieces might make the most sense to select for campus news submission to ensure you are submitting no more than four per month. As a general rule, we prefer articles that have a broad audience and strong art.

When to submit + turnaround times: Unless there is an urgent deadline, most stories are processed in the order in which they were received. During busy periods, it may take up to 10 or more business days for a story to reach its turn for posting. Note that DLCs are free to post the same articles on their own websites on their own timeframe. There is no requirement that they appear on MIT News first.

If you would like an article you've submitted to go live on a certain date, it is best to get it to us at least 3-5 business days in advance, and please **email Maia as soon as you are aware of your timing needs** so she is aware of this request. (Do also mention it in the "notes" section of the submission form, but know that Maia doesn't see that field until she actually goes to edit the piece.) If something is coming down the pike for posting on a certain day, but you won't have the final copy or images until shortly before, reach out to Maia to explain; often we can accommodate such "rush" situations.

During especially busy times of the year — Mar-May and Sept-Nov — we may have a harder time publishing articles on specific dates without significant lead time. If an article has been submitted with enough advanced notice, and Maia has been notified of a need for a specific deadline, then she is usually able to meet that deadline. At any given time, however, she may be managing multiple requests to expedite articles, while also trying to curate the right arrangement of content to appear on MIT News, with several new submissions arriving daily. We therefore cannot practically provide pub dates in advance for most articles. When the piece is published, the person who submitted the story will be notified.

Use of Generative AI

Recently, the Institute Office of Communication embarked on an effort to understand how communications professionals across MIT are using or considering generative AI (genAI), and whether these tools should have a role in producing public-facing content on our platforms. What follows is an overview of the principles that will guide the use of AI on MIT News and other IOC platforms, effective Dec. 6, 2023. For additional details, see the [Guidelines on Generative AI and IOC Platforms](#).

- **Articles on MIT News must be written by humans. However, we will allow the use of generative AI tools in the production of articles in limited circumstances.** Specifically, MIT communicators may use genAI to assist in the early stages of writing or production, including for generating ideas, researching background information, creating outlines, or analyzing data. AI chatbots may also help with copyediting, cutting text, or drafting headlines, image captions, alt-text, and meta descriptions.
 - Whether or not you use genAI in the preparation of an article, **you are responsible for fact-checking and vetting the work** to ensure its accuracy before submitting it to MIT News.
 - **Please tell us about any genAI uses** when you submit articles through the MIT News campus portal or through the MIT Daily submission link; both forms have been updated with a field in which you can describe your AI usage (if any). This will be for our informational purposes only, as we seek to stay abreast of how these tools are used in communications work over time.
- **We do not publish images produced by generative AI.** See the “Images” section below for a list of free sources to help you find images for your articles.
 - We may make exceptions for images generated with AI tools for research purposes, in cases where these images directly illustrate the research being described in an article. Such exceptions must be clearly labeled with the name of the image generator platform used (Dall-E, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, etc.).
 - Similar to our position on editorial content, it’s acceptable to use genAI in a preparatory way, such as for brainstorming, planning color palettes, moodboarding, or developing an image concept. In addition, AI-generated thumbnail images pointing to content on non-IOC websites are acceptable — for example, in a newsletter or in the automatic preview that appears for a link on a

social media post. However, **please tell us about such uses** when you submit your content; as noted above, genAI fields now exist in the MIT News and MIT Daily submission forms, and any information shared will be for internal use only.

- Whatever online tools you use, the longstanding principle of not taking credit for work that is not your own is still the best rule of thumb.
- Take care not to feed confidential or sensitive information into an AI chatbot.
- If you use a third-party tool or platform that employs AI in helping you create, in the preparatory/planning ways described above, content submitted to MIT News or the MIT Daily, please tell us when submitting the material, via the genAI field in the relevant submission form.
- We trust communicators to uphold these guidelines. We also reserve the right to inquire about the source of submitted items.

Basic Formatting

See the MIT News Style Guide for detailed guidance, but note that we do not:

- Use italics, except for genus/species, journal/news outlet names, and *MITx*.
- Use bold, except for subheds and names to start a series of paragraphs describing a list of individuals.
- Use press release boilerplates. (The same language can appear, but it should be shown as an extension of the article rather than separated by “About Program X.”)

Headlines and Deks (subheadlines)

MIT News articles tend to feature shorter, more generally worded headlines and longer, more specifically worded deks. Headlines should give some direct indication of what the article is about. Headlines should ideally be four to 10 words. Deks should be no more than about 20 words and will be cut to fit, where necessary.

Images

To get people to read your story, images are often more important than the content of the piece itself. Some guidelines for sending in properly formatted images:

- Use horizontal images of the highest resolution possible. We prefer original images, not cropped images. Ideal aspect ratio is 3:2 (horizontal:vertical). Any of the following sizes is perfect: 3000x2000 pixels, 2000x1333, 1500x1000, or 1000x667
- The smallest size we can consider for adding to the Infinite Corridor displays is 948x632.
- We will often crop vertical images, and they may not render well on the MIT News homepage. But we can include them on the main story page if needed.
- It's best to avoid images with text; images with a lot of text may not be usable.
- Some sources of free or reasonably priced images:
 - [MIT Image Library](#) (free to use for the MIT community)
 - [Wikimedia Commons](#) (free to use, with appropriate credit)
 - [Flickr](#) (many images with Creative Commons licenses are available for reuse, with appropriate credit)
 - [Unsplash](#) (free photo and image library)
 - [Pexels](#) (free photo and video library)
 - [iStock](#) (photos, video, and vector art at multiple price tiers)
 - [Shutterstock](#) (photos, vector art, illustrations, and 3D objects at multiple price tiers)
 - [Pond5](#) (video, audio, and images at reasonable prices)
- Images found via Google or Yahoo image search cannot be used unless there is an appropriate license attached or unless you've contacted the photographer/author to get permission.
- A simple logo or stock image is sufficient if you can't think of anything else to use; be sure you have exhausted all other options for photographs before using a logo. Keep in mind you may request a generic campus shot, or you can find generic images using the free image resources above.
- Give images file names with keywords, for better search engine optimization, and use dashes to separate terms.

Good examples:

MIT-NCAA-Scholar-Athletes-2016.jpg
 Mildred-Dresselhaus-MIT-00.jpg
 MIT-J-WAFS-Conference-00.png

Avoid:

SO4_MIT_News.jpg
 IMG_6743.jpg
 Photocredit_JacksonLynch.png

Alternative Text, Caption, Photo Credit

All images require **alternative text**, which is a brief, literal description of what you are seeing in the image. Image descriptions are used for accessibility for users who may experience deficits of sight. They should be written as a brief phrase or sentence. Please do not submit the same information for both the alt text and the caption. *Examples: Headshot photo of MIT Professor Paula Hammond sitting in an office with books in the background; Conceptual illustration showing the atoms in a double helix, with some atoms in red and others in blue.*

Captions may be descriptive (i.e. describing the photo) or more generally discuss the focus of the article. Captions should be written in lay terms so that they can be understood by the general public, and they should stand alone: Anyone reading the caption should be able to understand who and what it's referring to, even if they haven't read the article. Aim for captions of 40 words or fewer — under 20 is best for viewing on a mobile device. Do not submit captions pulled from research articles that are intended to be read by other scientists or engineers. Captions should be written in complete sentences (including a verb) when possible. Extremely short captions — for example, a person's name — are fine, but shouldn't take a period.

See the MIT News Style Guide for details on **photo credit** wording.

Video

YouTube or Vimeo videos that are directly relevant to the story may be embedded. If you wish for a video to be embedded, be sure to include the URL and any captioning/credit information that you want. (If no caption/credit information is given, any such information on the YouTube/Vimeo landing page may be used.) Also: Only videos that have been manually closed captioned can be embedded; videos with only Google's auto-captions are not sufficient. The only exception is if there is no speaking at all in the video; in such cases, it's preferred that descriptive captions (such as a caption saying "Music playing") are included.

Video that's only peripherally related or that lives on a platform other than YouTube or Vimeo may be listed as a related link.

If you'd like your video to be the centerpiece of the story, that's fine; consider submitting as a Featured Video if you don't have a full article to support the video.

Related Links

Please include a few related links for each article, but know that we don't just show any link. The following guides are for the "Related links" area of our CMS; you should feel free to hyperlink at will within the body of the article (in fact, there's reason to believe hyperlinks are far better for SEO than our related links).

What to link:

- Think of related links area like a return address on a snail mail letter: You should include (and they will usually appear this way from top to bottom) any relevant research paper(s); the MIT person/people involved; directly relevant websites, videos, or related non-MIT News articles; relevant MIT center/lab/program(s); all relevant MIT department(s); and all relevant MIT school(s). We generally don't link out to external (non-MIT) people, schools, or companies, except in stories related to MIT spinoffs/startups. Look at older articles related to your DLC for examples. See additional guidance in the section below on linking to open access versions of new research.
- Important: We limit related links (i.e. non MIT News archived links) to 10 total links, not including paper link(s). For many articles this may be fewer, especially if the piece itself is particularly short. Note that when space is tight, we prioritize MIT links over external links, so if you want to link to an external entity, it's best to do this within the article.
- With certain exceptions, we don't include links to people or entities that are not mentioned at all in the story. To add a related link, be sure that person/thing is mentioned explicitly in the article. If it's not, and you don't have a way to squeeze it into the piece, it's probably best to skip it.
- As many as 5 related MIT News articles can be submitted with your related links, but they will appear in a separate section below the other links. Additional details at "Archived MIT News" below.

Who to link: To keep the number of related links manageable, we usually only link to the main researcher(s) or person(s) in a story. If more than a few people are listed, either pick the most central to link on the right or don't list anyone and instead link within the article.

Archived MIT News: For most articles, we request archived MIT News pieces as related links. You will see these at the bottom of any MIT News article. When time allows, we will generally search for relevant items on your behalf if you don't provide any, but submitting the ones you want gives you more power to choose this content. The links do not show up automatically by connecting with tags or keywords, so please choose and submit them for every story.

Linking to Open Access Research Articles

When submitting stories about newly published research, campus communicators are asked to provide links to open access (OA), or non-paywalled, versions of journal articles when available.

In our updated campus news template and online submission form, we will ask if the journal paper is OA. (Unsure whether the article is/will be OA? Contact the MIT Libraries at scholarlypub@mit.edu for a fast answer.) If the paper link is not already OA, we ask you to take an additional step before submitting your article to MIT News:

1. Ask the author for the accepted manuscript, also known as the author's final manuscript. This version ([example](#)) has been peer reviewed and accepted by the journal but is not in the publisher's formatting or on the publisher's website.
2. Email the manuscript to the MIT Libraries at scholarlypub@mit.edu for deposit into the open access [DSpace@MIT](#). Please include the journal name, publication date, and DOI or URL of the published paper, if you have it. Most articles published by MIT authors can be freely distributed through DSpace, regardless of publisher. Unless the publisher requires a period of exclusivity (a period of time in which only the publisher may publish the article; this is different from a press embargo), articles typically go live the same day, and library staff will provide a link. In the event the article does have a period of exclusivity, the newly created DSpace page will note that, and the full article will appear automatically when the exclusivity period lifts.
3. Include the link to the DSpace version in the "Related Links" section of the campus news submission form.

You may submit links to both an OA version and the publisher's version of the paper if you wish.

If you are unable to provide a link to an OA version, please select that option in our form and provide the URL for the publisher's version.

For links to published research that is not the focus of the MIT News article: If possible, additional published research with an MIT author or authors (such as earlier work on a similar topic) that is linked in the body of the article should go through the same process, and the OA version should be linked.

Questions? The MIT Libraries can help; contact scholarlypub@mit.edu.

Topics/Keywords

In campus news submission form, you'll find fields for both tags and keywords.

Topics: These are a set listing of terms that MIT News uses to a) organize content on the MIT News website; and b) feed related MIT News RSS feeds, which often populate other Institute websites. The tags we use are fairly general in scope and are constantly being improved upon. Maia can provide a listing of the most commonly used tags so that you can highlight the ones you might want to include in your campus news stories. But keep in mind there are many other tags beyond the most common ones that we do also employ, so suggest away, and if there's a relevant useful tag, we will add it. Note we do occasionally create new tags — for example, if there's a new MIT entity or initiative that will likely be written about extensively — but we are actively consolidating our tag list, so these cases are rare.

Keywords: Keywords are not often used by search engines anymore, but we retain this field in case it's useful. Limit these to very specific terms, such as name(s) of people listed in the story and technical terms or entities unique to the story.

Meta Description

All MIT News articles require a one-to-two sentence (30-40 word) description of the news, including as many specific keywords as possible. Meta descriptions can appear in search results as well as social media previews, so they should be clear and concise, with the news appearing first, not people/entities appearing first (unless the news is specifically about them).

Ideal example (lead with the news, keep it brief):

Biopsy samples can now be imaged with much higher resolution — an advance that could help pathologists develop more accurate and inexpensive diagnostic tests. The technique, developed at MIT and Harvard Medical School, is based on expansion microscopy.

Less-than-ideal example (don't lead with who did the thing, don't add too much detail):

MIT and Harvard Medical School researchers have devised a way to image patient biopsy samples with much higher resolution — an advance that could help pathologists develop more accurate and inexpensive diagnostic tests. The technique relies on expansion microscopy, or expanding a tissue sample to 100 times its original volume before imaging it.