

OVERVIEW

On February 20, 1865, four years after approval of its founding charter, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology opened its doors to admit the first class of 15 students. The event marked the culmination of an effort by William Barton Rogers, MIT's founder and first president, to create a new kind of educational institution relevant to the times and to the nation's need, where students would be educated in a way that emphasizes the application of knowledge. A distinguished natural scientist, Rogers stressed the importance of basic research and believed that professional competence was best fostered by the coupling of teaching and research and attention to real-world problems.

Teaching and research—with relevance to the practical world as a guiding principle—continue to be MIT's primary purpose. The Institute is independent, coeducational, and privately endowed. Its five schools—architecture and planning; engineering; humanities, arts, and social sciences; management; and science—and the college of computing encompass numerous academic departments, institutes, and degree-granting programs, as well as interdisciplinary research centers, laboratories, and programs whose work extends beyond traditional departmental boundaries.

Mission Statement

The mission of MIT is to advance knowledge and educate students in science, technology, and other areas of scholarship that will best serve the nation and the world in the 21st century.

The Institute is committed to generating, disseminating, and preserving knowledge, and to working with others to bring this knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges. MIT is dedicated to providing its students with an education that combines rigorous academic study and the excitement of discovery with the support and intellectual stimulation of a diverse campus community. We seek to develop in each member of the MIT community the ability and passion to work wisely, creatively, and effectively for the betterment of humankind.