

MIT Spotlight

Strangers in a Strange Land

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MIT

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Introduction

International students at MIT make around 10% of the undergraduate population, 40% of the graduate population. Qualitatively, my living group is mostly non-Americans or Americans raised abroad.

They are not *explicitly* captured by spotlights.

Exigence and Designing

On the other hand, 90% of the undergraduate population is American, and MIT is an American institution. Moreover, MIT is funded by American taxpayers. How to capture the international experience without alienating the general population? Should it be captured at all?

Benchmark

Fewer Foreign Students Means a Smaller Contribution to U.S. Economy

New international enrollments declined for the first time in 12 years amid growing global competition

Politics & Policy

Trump's Student Visa Clampdown Hurts the Rust Belt

Ailing towns that see places like College Station, Texas, as a model are going to have trouble.

Constraints, Again

- No political stuff. Too divisive between Americans. It would risk a PR problem and it wouldn't be helpful.
- Relatable to Americans at large, not only "liberal pockets".
- No visa stuff. Too political and not relatable.

MIT Thanksgiving's spotlight is **bad**. Thanksgiving is a very American thing, and most Americans (who can afford it) travel back to spend it with their families.

International students still get the break, but it's more expensive to travel and there's no real reason to.

We can use this as the base for the spotlight.

Elements

Central photo



What can we extract?

Most of the food in the photo are plates that students eat in their home countries. To be concrete, 11 international students and one american student. It still contains some food served traditionally in Thanksgiving. Few, but some, of the people in the picture had actually been in a "real" Thanksgiving. Internationals in America parallel the Pilgrims in the new world.

Like many [international students](#), members of the highly international [Number Six](#) stay at MIT during Thanksgiving and celebrate a tradition that is new for them.

The link to the full story would be "Strangers in a Strange Land: Celebrating Thanksgiving as an International Student".

Featured in

December 2018

Urine test for pneumonia	Nov 30
Targeting osteoarthritis' source	Nov 29
Engineering fun in 2.00b	Nov 28
"Trying to help people back home"	Nov 27
The gift of music	Nov 26
Life lessons in jumping rope	Nov 23
Strangers in a Strange Land	Nov 22
When Japan met the world	Nov 21
The MIT Museum's long view	Nov 20
Where BE and BCS meet	Nov 19
Coding for social good	Nov 16
A hand up for farmers	Nov 15
Balancing science and the circus	Nov 14
More durable metal-air batteries	Nov 13
Wounded, but not broken	Nov 09
Dopamine puts us on high alert	Nov 08
Improving early sepsis care	Nov 07
More potent antibiotics	Nov 06
Executives, information, and growth	Nov 05
Forest search and rescue	Nov 02
Farm-inspired green energy	Nov 01



Spotlight: Nov 22, 2018

Like many **international students**, members of the highly international **Number Six** stay at MIT during Thanksgiving and celebrate a tradition that is new for them. Happy Thanksgiving!

[Full story](#) Share [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

Thanksgiving hence it's a good option because it's very recognizable, because of the already existing connotations of people in a new place.

People outside MIT will understand the general scene. Americans will be familiar, internationals will be happy to know they will have a community in this new place.

[1, 2]

Conclusion

Questions?



N. Ndugga.

Fewer foreign students means a smaller contribution to u.s. economy, Nov 2017.



N. Smith.

Trumps student visa clampdown hurts the rust belt, Sep 2018.