



MIT REAP
REGIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
ACCELERATION PROGRAM

MIT Innovation Diplomats Program

"The program allowed me to extend my perspective past my research to observe the macro environment in which I was working. I was better able to analyze and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the ecosystem and see my startup's role within it."

– MISTI Intern, SB '17 (Mechanical Engineering)

Overview

The MIT Innovation Diplomats Program invites MIT students participating in global initiatives to more meaningfully engage with regional/national innovation ecosystems while abroad.

The MIT Innovation Diplomats Program leverages existing MIT cross-campus offerings and equips student participants with frameworks, knowledge, and tools they can use in preparation for their global experiences and while on the ground. Students will be better prepared to explore how stakeholders in the innovation economies they visit come together to create the conditions for innovation-driven prosperity across international cultures and policies, while:

- Enhancing their professional **network** in that region
- Becoming eligible to earn 6 to 9 **academic credits**
- Becoming eligible to receive a **stipend** for local travel to interviews and innovation hubs

Outcomes

Students will be better positioned to serve as leaders in both local and global ecosystems through:

- **Innovation Frameworks:** Based on ecosystem research from a number of MIT faculty and curricula from the MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (MIT REAP), the MIT Innovation Ecosystem frameworks provide a structured approach to gathering and analyzing data on the as-is state of a regional ecosystem.
- **Innovation Contexts:** Through an analysis of the specific policies and programs that amplify innovation and entrepreneurship, students will acquire region-specific cultural and political insights into the nature and role of innovation diplomacy that complement their other region-specific activities.
- **Diplomacy & Networks:** Students will meet with alumni and others in the region to continue their on-the-field analysis, allowing students to forge relationships with leaders in government, the corporate sector, entrepreneurship, risk capital, and academia while leveraging MIT Innovation Initiative, MIT REAP, and MIT alumni networks.

Program Structure

- All MIT students participating in international opportunities are eligible to apply.
- This program is currently structured as an independent study project with multiple options for engagement. Each option assumes completion of the previous option:
 - Option 1 (0 units, 1 month): Utilize MIT Innovation Ecosystem frameworks to gain a contextual understanding of the as-is state of the region.
 - Option 2 (6 units total, 2 months): Connect meaningfully with stakeholders in the regional ecosystem, and capture, reflect, and share the information gathered.
 - Option 3 (9 units total, 3+ months): Deep dive into a particular stakeholder's impact on their regional ecosystem and provide meaningful recommendations for that stakeholder group.

Submit your application at <http://goo.gl/forms/ubVa0qFEp9>.

Important Dates

- March 11th, 12-1pm: Information Session
 April 2nd, 12-1pm: Information Session
 April 20th: Application Deadline
 April 28th, 12-1pm: Innovation Ecosystem Frameworks Session (mandatory for participants)
 May 5th, 12-1pm: Think Like a Diplomat Session (mandatory for participants)
 May 12th, 12-1pm: Regional Ecosystem Deep Dive (mandatory for participants)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I still apply if I do not have a confirmed assignment abroad yet?

A: Yes, but participation is contingent upon enrollment in such an assignment.

Q: Can I still apply if I have sourced my own assignment abroad?

A: Yes, the assignment does not have to be sponsored by MIT.

Q: What if I do not speak the language of my host country?

A: We encourage students to do their best to learn the basics of the language before the assignment, utilizing language exchange groups and meet ups.

Q: How much time will I allocate to visits, analysis, and stakeholder interviews while abroad?

A: Approximately 5 hours a week.

Q: What happens to the data I collect?

A: Your work will be reviewed by MIT faculty and may be selected to be showcased on the [MIT REAP website](#).

Q: Whom can I contact for more information?

A: Contact idiplomats@mit.edu.

"The most rewarding component of the experience was knowing that I was contributing to a project that is making a real and transformative impact on innovation in the region."

– MISTI Intern, PhD '16 (Mechanical Engineering)

