

L. RAFAEL REIF Short Biography

Since July 2012, Rafael Reif has served as the 17th president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He leads MIT's pioneering efforts to help redefine the future of higher education in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its economic consequences, with a commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion. Dr. Reif has launched major climate change initiatives to foster breakthrough research and pilot high-impact solutions. A champion for both fundamental science and MIT's signature style of interdisciplinary, problem-centered research, he is also pursuing an aggressive agenda to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

In education, his central focus has been the development of MITx and edX, which he spearheaded in his previous role as MIT's provost. While fostering the rapid growth of the open online learning platform edX, he charged the Institute-wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education, which spurred rapid adoption of blended learning models in MIT classrooms and the introduction of the MicroMasters credential from MITx, the Institute's portfolio of massive open online courses.

In keeping with MIT's mission to "bring knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges," in May 2014, Dr. Reif launched the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative, and in October 2015, he and his leadership team issued MIT's Plan for Action on Climate Change, centered on research, education, campus sustainability and a strategy of industry engagement. In July 2020, Dr. Reif announced the Climate Grand Challenges, an ambitious initiative to accelerate breakthrough research on climate science, innovations and policy. He introduced a complementary effort, the MIT Climate and Sustainability Consortium (MCSC), in January 2021, to spur the adoption of climate solutions at scale and across industries.



To enhance MIT's innovation ecosystem and equip the next generation of innovators to drive their ideas to impact, in October 2016 Dr. Reif launched The Engine, a venture firm specially geared to help "tough tech" ventures deliver innovations that address humanity's great challenges. Additional efforts include the MIT Innovation Initiative, the MIT Hong Kong Innovation Node, a new minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and the MIT Sandbox Innovation Fund Program.

To stimulate research and innovation at the nanoscale, MIT constructed MIT.nano, a major new facility at the heart of campus. And because MIT's entrepreneurial ecosystem extends well beyond the campus, Dr. Reif is leading an ambitious, decade-long redevelopment initiative in Kendall Square.

To advance the frontier of human and machine intelligence and to accelerate the invention of artificial intelligence tools for every discipline, in February 2018, Dr. Reif announced the MIT Quest for Intelligence. That same month saw the start of the MIT Task Force on the Work of the Future, which released its final report in November 2020. And in October 2018, in response to the ubiquity of computing and the rise of AI across disciplines, he announced the MIT Stephen A. Schwarzman College of Computing, the most significant reshaping of MIT since the 1950s.

A member of the MIT faculty since 1980, Dr. Reif has served as director of MIT's Microsystems Technology Laboratories, as associate department head for Electrical Engineering, as head of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), and as provost. An elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the Chinese Academy of Engineering, he is the inventor or co-inventor on 13 patents, has edited or co-edited five books and has supervised 38 doctoral theses. He received the degree of Ingeniero Eléctrico from Universidad de Carabobo, Valencia, Venezuela, and his doctorate in electrical engineering from Stanford University.