

MIT Initiative ON THE Digital Economy

Technology is racing ahead exponentially. People and organizations are not keeping pace. This dichotomy presents a set of grand challenges for our times.

The MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy (IDE) explores how people and businesses will work, interact, and prosper in an era of profound digital transformation.

The IDE is MIT Sloan's largest research consortium, where we create a solution space and a "can-do" approach to address these critical challenges. We provide the underlying research, experimentation, and thought leadership so important in identifying positive action for individuals, corporations, foundations, and governments.



Solution-Driven Research

Our work is grounded in first principles, with empirical research at its core. At any given time the IDE has more than 30 research projects underway, led by outstanding technology, business, and economics scholars. These projects are focused in six primary Research Groups:



Misinformation & Fake News.

Professor [Dave Rand](#) bridges the fields of behavioral economics and psychology to explore the perceived accuracy of false news, political preferences, and the dynamics and impact of social media.



Social Networks & Digital

Experimentation. Professor [Dean Eckles](#) uses new analytical methods and field experiments to understand causal inference in social networks and online experimentation. He is a former Scientist at Facebook and at Nokia and Yahoo!



AI, Labor Economics & Marketplaces.

Professor [John Horton](#) works at the intersection of labor economics, marketplace design, and information systems. He is former Chief Economist for oDesk, one of the leading online labor markets.



The Human/AI Interface.

Professor [Renée Richardson Gosline](#) is an expert on the connection between behavioral science and technology, with a focus on understanding how cognitive style predicts preference for AI versus human input.



Data-Driven Societies.

Professor [Sandy Pentland](#) is one of the most celebrated data scientists in the world. His work at the IDE focuses on the use of machine learning models for automated decision making and algorithmic fairness.



Tech for Good.

IDE Co-Director [Andrew McAfee](#) focuses on how digital technologies change the world, and in particular, how technology has increased human prosperity while treading more lightly on our planet.



Leadership For A Tech-Driven Age

IDE Director Sinan Aral's groundbreaking and highly relevant research into social networks, social media, and fake news have made him a leading and sought-after expert and thought leader in these unprecedented times. [Read Sinan's bio.](#)

Outreach & Convenings

We communicate the results of our research through our web presence, events, research briefs, social media, and dedicated interactions with our Stakeholders. In 2022, the IDE hosted 27 events with more than 25,000 attendees. These events are not just an opportunity to share our research, but important for a diverse set of participants to share, discuss, and debate how we can and must embrace technology to drive dynamic and meaningful business outcomes, economic policy, and social change. Visit ide.mit.edu/events to view current and past events.

Social Media Summit @ MIT

On April 22, 2021, the IDE hosted the inaugural MIT Social Media Summit, which attracted more than 20,000 virtual attendees. The event brought together business, policy, and academic experts to discuss social media trends and solutions that—as moderator Sinan Aral pointed out—can help “steer us toward the promise of digital technologies and away from the perils.” Featured speakers included Nobel Peace Prize Winner Maria Ressler, and Facebook’s VP of Global Affairs and Communications, Nick Clegg.

2022 Calendar of Events

MIT IDE Seminar Series

February–May

Social Media Summit @ MIT

March 31

CMO Summit @ MIT

April 28

MIT IDE Annual Conference

May 19

Platform Strategy Summit

July 13-14

Action Learning Student Projects

June–December

MIT IDE Fall Seminar Series

September–December

Conference on Digital Experimentation

November 11 - 12



Community

The IDE engages a diverse group of stakeholders, including corporations, foundations, non-profit organizations, and government. By fostering cross-sector connection and dialogue, we aim to accelerate the conversation about the digital economy and some of the tough challenges we face. We provide a solution space and an action-oriented approach for our stakeholders. Together we remain dedicated to crafting a new playbook for thriving in the digital era.



Education

We play an important educational role at the MIT Sloan School. Our faculty are prominent in Sloan's Executive Education programming—from Digital Business Strategy to IOT; from Platform Economics to AI; and from Digital Experimentation to the Impact of Social Media. The IDE also runs the fall Analytics Lab (A-Lab), an MBA course using business cases (and data) from our Stakeholders. In this Action Learning program, student teams solve analytics-based business problems and deliver actionable insights.



Learning in Action

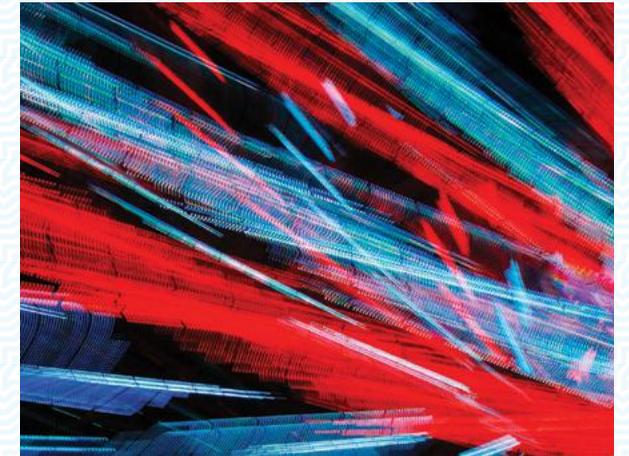
The IDE's Analytics Lab (A-Lab) is one of the most sought after Action Learning courses at MIT Sloan. During the past eight years, this flagship offering of the IDE has enrolled 600+ students from more than a dozen departments to work on 160+ projects. Projects have ranged from identifying a correlation between healthy food and cost savings to improving corporate marketing strategy with a customizable, image recognition tool to measure in-store brand presence.





IDE & the Pandemic

When the global pandemic hit in early 2020, our research team quickly sprang into action to provide timely, accurate, and data-driven analysis of COVID-19 and its effects. IDE researchers engaged with Facebook, Safegraph, Praekelt, Graphika, and other companies to analyze millions of data points with the goal of advising global leaders on the most effective ways of lowering the infection curve and reopening the economy. The result of this tremendous effort was the COVID-19 Rapid Response Hub, an open-source repository for timely, fact-based, and actionable information that includes more than 60 papers and citations to date. This resource provides information and solutions for policymakers, business leaders, and citizens alike. Visit our [Covid-19 Response Hub](#).



Support

During this unprecedented time of change, the IDE remains committed to crafting a new playbook that will enable society, organizations, and workers to successfully navigate and thrive in the digital era. The IDE operates with a mindfully optimistic worldview, and is guided by the belief that the challenges posed by the digital economy are solvable. Support for the IDE comes from the generosity of corporations, foundations, and individual donors. We invite you to connect, engage, and share ideas with other visionaries who are shaping the digital economy. Visit ide.mit.edu/support to see our full list of supporting organizations and individuals.

A Visionary Academic Team

Our world-renowned team of faculty and research scientists generate findings that equip businesses and society to adapt as digital technology race ahead. While our research is academic in its approach, our charter is to understand, inform, and pragmatically solve real-world challenges based on facts and causality. Our mission is rooted in positive action.



IDE Corporate Membership

Join the MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy.

The mission of the IDE is rooted in positive action. While our research is academic in its approach, our charter is to understand, inform, and pragmatically solve real-world challenges based on facts and causality. We achieve this through our Corporate Membership program.

Corporate Membership is an IDE cornerstone that helps us to diversify our work and foster a knowledgeable and impactful community of stakeholders. We invite you to connect, engage, and share ideas with other visionaries who are shaping the conversation about the digital economy.

What Are the Benefits of Membership



Strategic Advantage

- Access IDE research findings ahead of public release and other members-only content
- Explore collaborative, sponsored research opportunities



Active Engagement

- Attend all IDE events gratis*
- Communicate directly and personally with IDE leadership to amplify value of membership



Actionable Insights

- Engage graduate student teams to deliver a data analytics project and actionable insights for your organization
- Obtain 15% discount on Sloan Executive Education open enrollment courses for your



Visible Affiliation

- Align your organization with the MIT ecosystem and brand
- Access potential speaking opportunities for your leadership

* Unlimited seats at virtual events; 10 seats [or more, space permitting] at in-person events

Who Benefits From Membership

Everyone at your organizations—from the C-suite to the front line—can access the benefits of IDE Corporate Membership.

Join Us Today. Impact Tomorrow.



By joining the IDE, you fuel our research engine and enable IDE scholars to generate world-changing insights that address the grand challenges of our time. You are seeding the work and intellectual development of PhD and Post-Doctoral Associates, the next generation of academic scholars. Our digital future thanks you.

Corporate Membership

\$50,000/year for 3 or 5 years

Founding Membership

A customized engagement developed in partnership with IDE leadership. Contact us for details.

Want to Learn More or Join?

Contact IDE Associate Director Devin Cook (devinc@mit.edu).

Visit ide.mit.edu/support to see our full list of IDE Corporate Members.

