Objective
To provide financial support to initiatives undertaken by postdocs that enrich the overall postdoc experience at MIT. More specifically, the purpose of the MIT Postdoc Initiative Grant is to encourage groups and individuals to take a more active and visible role in the postdoctoral community and create opportunities for community participation. The MIT Postdoc Initiative Grant endeavors to financially support a range of activities, events, and projects that touch and enrich the lives of the postdoctoral community within MIT. This includes but is not limited to:

- Social gatherings
- Recreational activities
- Arts and cultural programs
- Mental health and stress support groups
- Professional development seminars and workshops

Framework & Committee
The MIT Postdoc Initiative Grant is a new pilot program for 2015, formed under the auspices of the MIT Postdoctoral Association (PDA). The MIT Postdoc Initiative Grant Committee will be formed under and report to the PDA. The committee will consist of at least three volunteers from the postdoctoral community at MIT.

The responsibilities of the committee will include:

- Manage a website and online application form
- Call for online proposals
- Convene committee to review and fund proposals
- Collect information to determine grant’s success
- Process reimbursements for completed projects

The amount of funding awarded to an approved project will be assessed at the discretion of the PInG Committee, evaluated against the decision guidelines detailed later in this document.

A report is required to be submitted within the first three weeks of the project’s completion. Reimbursements for project expenses will not be processed without one. The report should also contain the reimbursement form and receipts in a single file. Failure to submit the report within three weeks may result in forfeiture of reimbursements due to a 30 day requirement on all expense reporting by the Office of the Vice President for Finance.
Proposal Guidelines

Application:
The application consists of two parts:
1. A summary of the proposal (200 word max) describing the project or group to be funded and how it serves the MIT postdoc community. The summary is reviewed by the committee, to ensure that the proposal fits with PInG’s objective and funding guidelines.
2. A budget detailing the expected cost breakdown.

Follow up questions and comments may be returned to the applicant by the PInG committee prior to decision.

Eligibility:
All current MIT postdoctoral associates or fellows are eligible to submit a proposal, either individually or on behalf of an organization that they represent.

Exemplary proposals:
- Social gatherings
- Recreational activities
- Arts and cultural programs
- Mental health and stress support groups
- Professional development seminars and workshops

Prohibited proposals:
- Research projects
- Travel expenses (see PDA Professional Development Committee Travel Grants)
- Alcohol expenses
- Groups affiliated with other organizations*

* There may be exceptions to this on a case-by-case basis, i.e. local/department-specific postdoctoral associations or organizations that seek funding for events open and advertised to all MIT postdocs.

Reimbursements:
A report is expected to be submitted within the first three weeks of the project’s completion. Reimbursements for project expenses will not be processed without one. The report should also contain the reimbursement form and receipts in a single file. Failure to submit the report within three weeks may result in forfeiture of reimbursements due to a 30 day requirement on all expense reporting by the Office of the Vice President for Finance.

Decision guidelines
Judging criteria:
- The proposal identifies and fills a need or gap in the MIT postdoctoral experience.
• The proposal is advertised to and attracts participation from the general MIT postdoctoral population.
• The proposal is technically feasible (legally, economically, technologically and with respect to scheduling and other factors that arise)
• The proposal fits within the PInG budget.
• The proposal is supplied with a detailed and reasonable budget.
• The proposal identifies means by which the event or program will be adequately advertised to ensure maximum participation.

Judging process:
• Committee members will be asked to outline their opinion of the strengths and weaknesses of the initiative for the benefit of the committee.
• Comments and/or questions from committee members can be returned to applicants during review and should be taken into account prior to the decision.
• Final recommendation from each committee member can be one of: Accept, Revise and Resubmit, or Reject.
• Other comments and/or questions from committee members can be submitted during review and should be taken into account prior to the decision.

Conflicts of Interest
Committee members are required to make known all potential conflicts of interest when evaluating proposals.

Budget
The PInG budget is a yearly line item in the MIT PDA budget. The amount is determined during the PDA budgeting exercise, and communicated to the PInG chair. The PInG treasurer is responsible for tracking funding allocations and expenditures in close collaboration with the PDA treasurer.

Reporting
PInG is expected to report annually to the PDA in writing. As a general guideline, the annual report should outline at least:
• Any major changes to PInG practices or guidelines
• Committee membership
• Funding applications
• Funded projects
• Feedback from funded groups
• Budget
• Possible recommendations for future PInG practices