Dialogues of Postdoc Life

Hosted by MIT PDA

11/14/2023
The MIT PDA is a postdoc-led organization with the goal of providing support for all postdoctoral scholars appointed at MIT. All postdoctoral scholars at MIT (associates and fellows) are automatically members of the PDA.

https://pda.mit.edu/
PDA Advocacy with Vice President of Research

- The executive board of the PDA meets the VPR twice a year.
- Through advocacy, the PDA has achieved, recently:
  - A raise of the minimum postdoc salary
  - Offer letter to have longer visa duration to save the trouble of having to travel to home country for visa renewal

And in addition, *an institute-wide added benefit*

- Portable child-care benefit
PDA Advocacy with Vice President of Research

This year’s 1st meeting in October:

- The MIT PDA executive board advocated 4 main issues:
  - Housing affordability and MIT housing accessibility
  - Housing challenges example responses:
    - “I couldn’t access MIT housing boards until I had an MIT ID#, but I needed housing before I received my MIT ID”
    - “I managed to stay a semester in MIT-housing but only because I read very well all websites, at the beginning my HR did not even know that it was possible.”
PDA Advocacy with Vice President of Research

This year’s 1st meeting in October:

- The MIT PDA executive board advocated 4 main issues:
  - Salary increase relative to the inflation

There were discussions from MIT postdocs who voiced reservations about the recent salary raise, relative to the inflation rate in recent years and the cost of living in Boston/Cambridge area.
PDA Advocacy with Vice President of Research

This year’s 1st meeting in October:

- The MIT PDA executive board advocated 4 main issues:
  - Improvement in postdoc career development
    - More staff support in the CAPD
    - The need for an established structure for professional development
PDA Advocacy with Vice President of Research

This year’s 1st meeting in October:

- The MIT PDA executive board advocated 4 main issues:
  - Financial assurance for the continuity of the Buddy Program
Dialogues of Postdoc Life: results from the questionnaire

Benefits: Associates vs Fellows

Career Development:
* Teaching opportunities
* Postdoc-focused career events

Salary raise vs Inflation and living cost

Housing:
* Affordability vs Income level
* MIT housing accessibility

Relocating cost
The Panelists

Colleen Leslie
Asst. Provost for Research Administration

Ann Skoczenski
Director of Postdoctoral Services

Lloyd Munjanja
Senior Community Engagement Officer
The CAPD has helped me tremendously with refining my resume and helping me plot my career path.

After one year of working on (and finishing) my PI's project, I suggested a research project and agreed to work with me on it.

Banana lounge!!!

PIs and lab culture make a huge difference in the work environment.

Good vibes - from fellow MIT postdocs.