

L. RAFAEL REIF Short Biography

Since July 2012, Rafael Reif has served as the 17th president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he leads MIT's pioneering efforts to help redefine the future of higher education. A champion for both fundamental science and MIT's signature style of interdisciplinary, problem-centered research, Dr. Reif is driving initiatives to accelerate high-impact solutions to the urgent challenges of climate change and pursuing an aggressive agenda to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

In education, Dr. Reif's central focus has been the development of online learning. The findings of his Institute-wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education spurred rapid adoption of blended learning models in MIT classrooms, inspired the creation of new forms of credentialing such as the the MicroMasters, expanded educational access for learners around the globe, and equipped MIT to respond to Covid-19 with a quick pivot to remote learning.

In May 2021, he and his leadership team mobilized MIT's strengths to address the climate crisis through "Fast Forward: MIT's Climate Action Plan for the Decade." Distinctive elements include MIT's Climate Grand Challenges, an ambitious initiative to accelerate breakthrough ideas for tackling and adapting to the impacts of global warming, and the MIT Climate and Sustainability Consortium, which unites leading companies in piloting and adopting climate solutions at scale and across industries.

Dr. Reif has made it a priority to equip the next generation of innovators with the tools to drive their ideas to impact. In October 2016, MIT launched The Engine, a venture firm specially geared to help new ventures turn "tough technologies" into innovations that address humanity's great challenges. Dr. Reif has led a suite of further activities to make MIT the most stimulating and supportive academic environment in the world for innovation, including extensive campus makerspaces, a new minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and the recently announced MIT Morningside Academy of Design. Under his leadership, MIT has also spearheaded the decade-long transformation of Kendall Square into a central force in Greater Boston's biotech and innovation economy.

To advance the frontier of human and machine intelligence, in February 2018, Dr. Reif announced the MIT Quest for Intelligence; that same month, understanding the responsibility of technologists to understand the societal impacts of automation, he launched the MIT Task Force on the Work of the Future. And in the fall of that year, in response to the ubiquity of computing and the rise of AI across disciplines, Dr. Reif announced the MIT Stephen A. Schwarzman College of Computing, the most significant reshaping of MIT since the 1950s. He also led the creation of MIT.nano, a world-class facility for nano-science and engineering research; these toolsets are central to the national strategy for reasserting US leadership in semiconductors and micro- and nanoelectronics.

A member of the MIT faculty since 1980 and the inventor or co-inventor on 13 patents, Dr. Reif has served as director of MIT's Microsystems Technology Laboratories, as head of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), and as provost. He serves each year as an advisor to first-year undergraduates.

