



Award Winner Profile: MIT

By Jess Myers, RPI

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was the 2016 recipient of RPI's Overall Best Practice Award for a simple reason: **MIT understands the value of recognition as a positive way to reinforce attitudes and behaviors that support a successful, dynamic organization.**

As detailed in a white paper recently released by the well-respected school, MIT has identified seven best practice standards for their recognition program. Here is an overview of how it works, with significant additional detail available in the full report:

Standard 1: Recognition Strategy

MIT's Rewards and Recognition (RR) program was designed to recognize exceptional work specifically from MIT staff. The program includes all levels of employment and all Departments, Labs, and Centers (DLCs).

Standard 2: Management Responsibility

To ensure that the recognition program would be adopted throughout all areas of MIT, the originating Committee worked collaboratively to build a program and consensus. With buy-in from senior leaders, the R+R Committee established a network of 24 RR Key Contacts across MIT.

Standard 3: Recognition Program Measurement

MIT measures the success of the RR program in multiple ways. One is by assessing outreach during key nomination periods to be sure that the programs are accessible to all staff. MIT's dedicated web pages on the recognition program contain critical information on nominating for the Excellence Awards + Collier Medal, and also for the other tiers of the recognition program.

Standard 4: Communication Plan

Communication and outreach for the MIT Excellence Awards + Collier Medal are handled by the RR Program Administrator. Calls for nominations, information about the process and award criteria are branded with the award-specific logo and linked to the RR website for ease of use

Standard 5: Recognition Training

From the start of their time at MIT, staff are acquainted with the recognition program. Staff at every level attend New Employee Orientation where the recognition program is explained. New staff are invited to attend department recognition events and/or participate in planning and implementation of those events.

Standard 6: Recognition Events and Celebrations

MIT believes that a critical component of recognition is a celebratory event where recipients are acknowledged formally with family, friends, and colleagues attending. The recognition program is structured to include the annual all-MIT Excellence awards ceremony, and the 24 department-centric Infinite Mile events.

Standard 7: Program Change and Flexibility

The RR Program Administrator is the point person for initiating changes, with input from senior leaders and RR Key Contacts. Award categories, the nomination, and selection process are under continuous review for the MIT Excellence Awards and the 24 Infinite Mile and Spot awards. As the administrators, RR Key Contacts act as change agents for their units, and an advisory board for the R&R program overall.

MIT is proud of the global diversity of its staff, and the recognition program is proud to honor that diversity. In 2012, with support from the Manager of Staff Diversity, a significant change was made to the Fostering Diversity Award to change to the Advancing Inclusion + Global Perspectives Excellence Award, better reflecting MIT's distinct culture.

