

## MIT Guidelines for Free Expression at Institute Events, Vigils, Protests, and Demonstrations

### Introduction

MIT recognizes that freedom of expression is essential to the Institute's mission as long as it does not unreasonably interfere with or disrupt Institute events, programs, activities, academics, research, or operations (collectively, "Institute Activities").

These guidelines set forth MIT's expectations for the safe expression of differing viewpoints – focusing on events on the MIT campus including vigils, protests, or demonstrations – and are consistent with historic and current practice.

These guidelines apply to MIT students, faculty, and staff, as well as visitors. They are intended to promote the responsible exercise of free expression; to allow free expression that does not violate MIT policies; to ensure the smooth and continued operation of Institute Activities; and to protect the safety and security of all members of the MIT community.

Nothing in these guidelines should be interpreted, applied or enforced to interfere with, restrain or coerce MIT employees in the exercise of their rights to engage in protected, concerted activity under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

### General Guidelines

Exercising free expression on the MIT campus is subject to the following general conditions:

1. Such expression must not be used for purposes of [harassment](#), [discrimination](#), [retaliation](#), invasion of personal privacy, defamation, [threats or violence](#), targeting of groups or individuals, or infringing the intellectual property rights of others. MIT encourages members of the community to be respectful of others, even those with whom they disagree, and to consider the impact of their actions on others when exercising free expression.
2. Individuals and groups must comply with the law and all MIT policies, including [policies for MIT student groups](#), [Institute Events procedures](#), MIT's [use of facilities policy](#), and MIT's [postering policy](#).
3. Institute Activities may not be unreasonably interfered with or disrupted, and access to an Institute event or facility, including any means of egress, may not be blocked or obstructed.
4. Invited speakers are also generally free to express their views, even if controversial. Dissenting members of the community may protest and express disagreement, but they may not unreasonably interfere with or disrupt a speaker's ability to speak or attendees' ability to attend or hear the speaker.
5. Institute groups who wish to organize vigils, protests, or demonstrations (including counterprotests) are required to meet with Institute officials in advance and must honor

reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions dictated by the Institute, including restrictions on sound amplification.

6. Safety and security of the MIT community at such events is paramount.

In the event that conduct interferes with or disrupts an Institute Activity, a representative of the Institute may request the conduct to stop or ask the person or group to leave the area or relocate to a more suitable area. If the conduct continues despite a request to stop, MIT reserves the right to take appropriate action, including but not limited to postponing the event, taking disciplinary action, or, where the safety of the community is threatened, taking steps to remove the person or group from campus.

**Guidelines for Use of Campus Locations for Vigils, Protests, and Demonstrations**

MIT has preferred locations for vigils, protests, and demonstrations (including counterprotests) (collectively referred to as “demonstrations”). These locations include the Stratton Student Center, the steps of the Dertouzos (Stata) Amphitheater, Kresge Oval, McDermott Court, and Hockfield Court.

Demonstrations on the MIT campus may only be organized by Institute groups such as academic departments, administrative offices, and recognized student, faculty, staff, and employee organizations. Those groups must reserve space at least three business days in advance of their demonstrations through [Institute Events](#) or [Campus Activities Complex](#). Demonstrations are not permitted to be conducted in faculty or administrative offices, classrooms, libraries, study rooms, or similar locations that would disrupt Institute Activities.

Demonstrations must not unreasonably interfere with or disrupt an Institute Activity. Groups organizing demonstrations are required to meet with Institute officials at least three business days in advance of the demonstration, must follow instructions from Institute officials before and during the demonstration, and must honor reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, including restrictions on sound amplification. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in MIT requiring individuals or groups to relocate or alter or cease their conduct, and may also lead to disciplinary action.

**Event Management Team**

MIT has established a dedicated [Event Management Team](#) to assist in preparing for events or demonstrations that may lead to disruption on campus. In addition to being required to reserve space and meet with Institute officials in advance, organizers of events or demonstrations are urged to engage in careful planning for contingencies, including through advance communication and coordination with the Event Management Team and the MIT Police, who can offer support and resources.