

**Deshpande Grant Eligibility and Criteria**

**Grants are open only to MIT faculty and students. Applications must be submitted by MIT employees with Principal Investigator (PI) status.**

* Funding must be for research done in MIT laboratories
* Outside and cross-disciplinary collaborations are welcome

Initial grants are intended for the first year of funding and awarded in an amount up to $100,000. This includes F&A. Each proposed project’s period of performance should not exceed one year. All awarded projects get the full assistance of the Deshpande Center. ***The funding request total must include standard*** [***institute Facilities & Administrative (F&A) for sponsored research***](https://ras.mit.edu/facilities-and-administrative-fa-rates)***.***

**Selection Criteria for Initial Grants**

Pre-proposals will be evaluated for both technology readiness and fit with the center’s mission. We look for ideas and teams with qualities that meet most or all the following criteria:

* Transformative ideas that 1) change the paradigm of how things are done to solve a known problem; and 2) will have long-term impact
* Already generated data (technology derisking underway) and/or a proof of principle
* Clear potential the project will result in a commercial transaction, such as licensing or a spinout.
* One to three years away from a commercialization transaction
* There is reason to believe the idea is protectable and free of any commitments to other companies. We recommend disclosing the intellectual property to the Technology Licensing Office to validate the protectability. (To submit to the TLO, please visit [tlo.mit.edu](https://tlo.mit.edu/))
* Team has researched competitive companies and technologies and can elucidate the competitive advantage of this new technology over each

The promise of an idea’s impact potential is a combination of a unique, valuable solution and the passion and commitment of the team to behind it. To that end, we also look for researchers committed to seeing the technology become a viable product. These team members may include:

* A PI who either has spun out a company before, or demonstrates interest in being a scientific founder\*
* A postdoc or doctoral student willing to be the agent for a spinout\*
	+ \* Both may be waived for a clear licensing opportunity
* Someone on the team (advisor is fine) who represents the target industry
* Demonstrated passion and commitment to commercialization by satisfying at least one of the following:
	+ Attending another MIT (or other university) entrepreneurial program (e.g., I-Corps™ Spark, Engine’s Blueprint, Engine’s Whiteboard, Sandbox, Faculty Founders)
	+ Met with potential customers to understand a market need the technology can solve