Sustainability Initiative at MIT Sloan
2014–2015 Annual Report
Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to report on the recent activities of the Sustainability Initiative at MIT Sloan, where we had another remarkably productive year. Twenty-four students from seven MIT programs graduated with the Sustainability Certificate—a record both in number of graduates and program diversity. We are launching a class on sustainability-oriented innovation, and wrote a concept paper on the same theme. We increased our visibility within the wider sustainability community through two major events: The New Metrics of Sustainable Business conference which we co-sponsored; and the seventh-annual MIT Sustainability Summit, which we hosted in collaboration with MIT’s new Abdul Latif Jameel World Water and Food Security Lab (J-WAFS). More than 250 business leaders, students, academics, and public officials attended this year’s summit, making it our most successful one yet.

Our collaboration with J-WAFS reflects an exciting moment at MIT, as sustainability issues become front and center on the Institute’s agenda. We have been active participants in the MIT-wide climate change conversation, including debates about divesting the MIT endowment from fossil fuels. John Sterman, the Faculty Director of the Sustainability Initiative, has joined the faculty council of the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative, which made its first seed grants this year. We also co-led events with MIT’s exciting new Office of Sustainability. To these conversations we bring our experience with deep integration of sustainability into the curriculum and life of MIT Sloan, and our fantastic network of scholars and practitioners who are embedding sustainability into the practice of management.

I delight in seeing these efforts come together. This year my five-year-old son discarded the training wheels on his bicycle, and my one-year-old daughter learned to climb both up and down the stairs. I can’t help but see a parallel in the maturation of our initiative, our school, and the wider Institute on these issues of global importance. I also know just how much hard work it has taken and how much there is to come.

Seizing this moment, we have big goals for the coming years. We aim to increase the diversity of participants in our events, classes, and certificate program. We can do this by enhancing our outreach to both MIT Sloan students from different professional backgrounds and to graduate students across the Institute. We strive to develop robust and empowered alumni networks. Finally, we are committed to bringing rigor and clarity to the process of sustainability-oriented innovation through a next generation of management tools. We have bold financial aspirations, too. Today the Sustainability Initiative receives support from the MIT Sloan School of Management via tuition and the Annual Fund, as well as contributions from alumni, corporate and institutional allies, and friends. We are now working to create an even stronger financial foundation by increasing the number of recurring and endowed gifts we receive to ensure a future of impact.

As the Sustainability Initiative enters its tenth year, I thank you—our students and alumni, faculty and research partners, and allies—for your enthusiasm, generosity, and service. Without you, none of this would be possible.

Jason Jay, Senior Lecturer MIT Sloan
Director, Sustainability Initiative at MIT Sloan
Our Mission

The mission of the Sustainability Initiative at MIT Sloan is to build a community of innovators for sustainability with MIT students and alumni, faculty and researchers, and allies in business, government, non-profit, and hybrid organizations. Together, we encourage innovation in products and services, management practices, business models, and supporting market infrastructures that make effective, sustainable use of natural resources and that advance human welfare.
About the Initiative

The Sustainability Initiative at MIT Sloan started in 2006 with the creation of the Laboratory for Sustainable Business action learning course (S-Lab). Today, the Initiative comprises a broad portfolio of people, programs, and research projects, with four strategic objectives:

- **Engage students** with rigorous courses and programming related to sustainability, and an in-depth Sustainability Certificate for those who wish to become leaders in the field.
- **Fuel alumni innovation** by offering professional development and lifelong learning opportunities, including networking, mentoring, and executive education.
- **Change the conversation** and influence industry and policy by demonstrating the impact of our faculty’s research on sustainability, and by promoting the cutting-edge tools they generate.
- **Build an institution** with an international reputation for bringing value to business and society across organizations, markets, and communities.

The Sustainability Initiative underscores MIT’s commitment to bring its knowledge to bear on the world’s great challenges. It advances MIT Sloan’s mission: to develop principled, innovative leaders who improve the world and to generate ideas that advance management practice.
Student Engagement

Sustainability is embedded in the MIT Sloan student experience—from courses that introduce new concepts, to clubs, conferences, and networking events that provide opportunities for deeper engagement, to a multidisciplinary certificate for those looking to make sustainability a core part of their careers. Our students come from diverse backgrounds and help drive experimentation both in the classroom and in the field.

### Sustainability Coursework

80% of MIT Sloan 2015 graduates took at least one MIT Sloan sustainability class.

- 1+ class: 554 students
- 3+ classes: 227 students
- 5+ classes: 58 students

Graduating students from MIT Sloan’s six full-time masters programs

### Sustainability Certificate

- 24 graduating students received the Sustainability Certificate—our largest and most diverse cohort yet.
  - MIT Sloan: 14 full-time MBA students, 2 Sloan Fellows
  - MIT Sloan and MIT School of Engineering:
    - Supply Chain Management: 1
    - System Design and Management: 4
    - Leaders for Global Operations: 1
  - Department of Urban Studies and Planning:
    - Masters in City Planning: 1
    - Environmental Policy and Planning: 1

### We Work Across Boundaries at MIT to Build a Vibrant Student Community

- **Department & Centers**
  - The Abdul Latif Jameel World Water and Food Security Lab
  - Climate CoLab
  - Department of Urban Studies and Planning
  - MIT Energy Initiative
  - MIT Innovation Initiative
  - The MIT Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Global Change
  - Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship

- **Administrative Offices**
  - MIT Office of Sustainability
  - MIT Sloan Program Offices including: MBA, Master of Science in Management Studies, Master of Finance, Executive MBA, Sloan Fellows, Leaders for Global Operations
  - MIT Sloan Admissions
  - MIT Sloan Career Development
  - MIT Sloan Educational Services
  - MIT Sloan External Relations
  - MIT Sloan Student Life

- **Student Groups**
  - FossilFree MIT
  - MIT Energy Club
  - MIT Waste Alliance
  - MIT Food and Agriculture Collaborative
  - MIT Water Club
  - Net Impact
  - Sloan Entrepreneurs for International Development
  - Sloan Women in Management
  - Sustainability@MIT

- **53 CLASSES AVAILABLE** as part of the Sustainability Certificate

*“MIT’s systems-thinking approach to sustainability complements my program and affords me the flexibility to pursue my specific area of interest: food and agriculture. The Sustainability Initiative also helped me identify and explore new ways to create a sustainable future through leadership, innovation, and collaboration.”*

*Sarah Nolet* System Design and Management Fellow ’16, Intern, Supply Chain Solutions, Frontier Co-op
About the Initiative  
Student Engagement  
Alumni Innovation  
Changing the Conversation  
Institution Building

Expanded enrollment in sustainability programs and courses. In 2015, a record number of students participated in S-Lab and 24 students completed the Sustainability Certificate, a 13 percent rise from last year.

Increased experiential learning opportunities through four sustainability-related internships that were funded by a gift from Alex Borschow MBA ’14. This included the creation of a three-day Sloan Innovation Period (SIP) workshop on the issue of reducing and redirecting food waste.

“I arrived at MIT Sloan with the goal of making a career in sustainability. Thanks to the faculty and staff of the Sustainability Initiative, I’ve had opportunities in and out of the classroom. I did research with a professor on the social and environmental costs of mineral extraction in Bolivia. I learned about sustainable supply chains through an internship in Panama City. And I honed my leadership skills as managing director of the Sustainability Summit. I feel ready to implement change in the professional world.”

Drew Morales  
MBA ’15, ESG Analyst, Wellington Management Company

Priorities for 2015–16

Diversify participation in sustainability electives and increase enrollment in the Certificate program by engaging Masters-level students across MIT. We will especially focus on students in the Technology and Policy Program, the System Design and Management program within the Engineering Systems Division, the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

Enrich curriculum by working with faculty to integrate sustainability-related content into the MBA core. We will also offer new classes including a sustainability-oriented innovation elective.

Forge alliances with companies and organizations that provide internships and professional opportunities for students interested in careers in sustainability.

Develop extracurricular programming and events related to impact investing. This includes supporting student participation in the Morgan Stanley Sustainable Investing Challenge, a competition aimed at developing investment opportunities that seek positive social impact and strong financial returns.
Alumni Innovation

The Sustainability Initiative forms a passionate and engaged alumni community, supported by regional networking events, interest groups, and peer coaching and mentoring opportunities around the world. Our goals are to showcase and promote alumni success, to learn from our alumni, and be helpful in their efforts to promote sustainability-oriented innovation.

Recent Alumni Jobs and Project Vignettes

Lily Russell MBA ’11
Founder, Explain the Chain; Adjunct Professor, Bard MBA in Sustainability

“My goal in starting Explain the Chain (an organization that promotes supply chain transparency) is to ignite curiosity in the next generation about where things come from and where they go. Through stories, toys, and games, we seek to engage our future leaders and consumers.”

Ryan Sheinbein MBA ’14
Energy and Location Strategy, Google

“MIT Sloan taught how to develop successful strategies in unfamiliar places. I put this knowledge to work every day at Google where I lead a team that creates and implements solutions in the area of renewable energy development. It’s a challenging problem—in many markets around the world, these projects lack critical regulatory frameworks.”

Hilary Fischer-Groban MBA ’14
Operations Manager, ABC Carpet & Home

“Making a positive social and environmental impact is in the DNA of ABC Carpet & Home. As manager of internal operations, I am grateful every day that MIT Sloan provided me with the skills and mindset to help shift the retail paradigm to a more sustainable model.”

Number of Cities and Attendees at Alumni-focused Events

10 Locations Visited 227 Alumni Engaged

Highlights from 2014–15

• Raised the profile of sustainability careers through our new online quarterly newsletter and through 16 alumni interviews published on our website.
• Strengthened our alumni network through events and engagement in cities including Boston, London, Minneapolis, Newport Beach, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, São Paulo, Washington, DC, and the island of Kauai.
• Carried out research to identify and target areas of alumni interest.

Priorities for 2015–16

• Foster alumni interest groups in the areas of renewable energy finance, and real estate/place-based sustainability.
• Cultivate regional alumni networks by expanding sustainability-related events to additional cities including Seattle and Portland.
• Partner with the Office of External Relations to stimulate alumni engagement through small format dinners, happy hours, and topic-based presentations.
• Conduct interviews with Sustainability Certificate alumni on their careers and continue to celebrate their professional successes on our website.

Media mentions of student and alumni innovators

Bilikiss Adebiyi MBA ’12 CEO, Wecyclers
How One Local Entrepreneur Taught Lagos, Nigeria to Embrace Recycling
(Fast Company, January 2015)

Robin Chase SM ’86 Co-founder and former CEO, Zipcar
Disrupted Transport Will Work Better For Us in the End
(Financial Times, March 2015)

Omar Mitchell MBA ’12, Director of Sustainability, National Hockey League
A First-ever Report from the NHL Assesses its Carbon Footprint
(US News & World Report, July 2014)

Bijal Shah MBA ’13, Founder and Chief Sari Collector, Lalitara
How One Entrepreneur Started Her Eco-Conscious Clothing Line
(Huffington Post, June 2015)
As one of the world’s preeminent research universities, MIT and its five schools—science, engineering, architecture and planning, humanities and social science, and management—are in a unique position to bring business and societal leaders together with academic researchers and students to address challenges in sustainability. We promote this process at our annual Sustainability Summit and through our research in two main areas:

- **Hardwiring sustainability:** We are designing and deploying a platform of interactive, science-based management tools focused on sustainability.

- **Sustainability-oriented innovation:** We are theorizing, documenting, and accelerating commercially-relevant innovations that lead to an increase in sustainability-based profits and corporate and social change.

### Highlights from 2014–15

- **Raised the profile** of quantitative assessments of corporate sustainability strategies by co-sponsoring the New Metrics of Sustainable Business conference in Cambridge. More than 280 practitioners attended the conference, which included MIT Sloan student and faculty research.

- **Designed a platform**—Sustainability Information, Frameworks, and Tools (SIFT)—to help make measuring sustainability efforts within organizations both rigorous and simple. We raised $25,000 from companies to fund this effort and we continue to seek additional sponsorship for development and deployment.

- **Supported research** collaborations across the Institute within the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and Computer Science, and the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory.

- **Wrote a concept paper** on sustainability-oriented innovation with input from a global team of scholars and practitioners.

- **Developed leading-edge courses** including a bootstrap class for Sustainability Oriented Innovation. This class, which leveraged sponsored research money, led to the development of sustainability-related case studies and tools.
Priorities for 2015-16

Integrate sustainability into organizations through the new SIFT platform which will launch in beta test mode. We will continue to develop the platform with MIT Sloan-generated tools and content, including system dynamics simulations, while building inventories and reviews of third party tools.

Launch a research study on how organizations around the world can incubate and implement sustainability-oriented innovation. We will continue our push to make MIT a “center of excellence” in this area.

Galvanize action on finding solutions to the world’s greatest challenges by supporting MIT’s Solve conference, which convenes technologists, philanthropists, business leaders, and policymakers.

Have an impact on sustainability practices by partnering with the Sloan Management Review to create reviews, analysis, and articles focused on sustainability.

Junior Faculty Spotlights

Matt Amengual
Assistant Professor of Work and Organization Studies
Recently led a research project on labor and environmental regulations in Argentina. His findings, which revealed that regulations are often enforced by unconventional partnerships, lay the groundwork for strategies to better reward businesses that contribute to sustainable development.

Valerie Karplus
Director of the Tsinghua-MIT Energy Program and Assistant Professor of Global Economics and Management
Conducts research on energy and climate policy. She recently carried out a joint analysis with Tsinghua University on the social and environmental implications of the US-China bilateral climate change deal.

David Keith
Assistant Professor of System Dynamics
Researches the impact of alternative fuels in the transportation industry. He studies decision-making around hybrid vehicle purchases, and, this year, co-developed a management flight simulator that provides members of the automotive industry with an opportunity to think collectively and strategically about alternative fuel vehicles.

Selected Publications on Sustainability at MIT Sloan

Amengual, Matthew 2014
Pathways to Enforcement: Labor Inspectors Leveraging Linkages with Society in Argentina
ILR REVIEW 67(3)

Blanc, Élodie, Kenneth Strzepek, Adam Schlosser, Henry Jacoby, Arthur Gueneau, Charles Fant, Sebastian Rausch, and John Reilly 2014
Modeling US Water Resources Under Climate Change
EARTH’S FUTURE 2(4)

Lee, Matthew and Jason Jay 2015
Strategic Responses to Hybrid Social Ventures
CALIFORNIA MANAGEMENT REVIEW 57(3)

Knittel, Christopher 2014
The Consequences of U.S. Fuel Performance Standards
NBER REPORTER 2014 (3)

Kochan, Thomas et al. 2015
Labor Relations in a Globalizing World
CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

Schmalensee, Richard et al. 2015
The Future of Solar Energy
THE MIT ENERGY INITIATIVE

Ton, Zeynep 2014
The Good Jobs Strategy: How the Smartest Companies Invest in Employees to Lower Costs and Boost Profits
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT
Institution Building

Achieving a sustainable future requires long-term commitment and investment. The Sustainability Initiative is hard at work creating that future and we are fortunate to have you—generous alumni, corporate and institutional allies, and friends—in our corner. Your contributions touch the lives of our students, support the unmatched quality of programming we offer, fund pioneering research, and increase the visibility of our brand as an Institute that’s making a positive impact in the world.

**Why I Give: John Mazzarino**

“My career has been built around real estate, private equity, and venture capital investments in the environmental and sustainability fields. When we began investing in these areas in the late 1980s, many institutional investors saw us as dreamy idealists. Today, most of these same investors recognize the need for and benefits of sustainability strategies and practices.

“With its leading positions in science, engineering, urban planning, and architecture, coupled with the resources of MIT’s Real Estate Center and Sloan School, MIT is becoming the go-to place for sustainability theory and practice. As an MIT alumnus, it’s incredibly exciting for me to support and encourage this critically important, multi-disciplinary work.”

John Mazzarino is an MIT alumnus (SM ’77) and co-founder and Managing Principal of Cherokee Investment Partners, an investment company that seeks to provide superior financial, Environmental, and social returns.
Highlights from 2014–15

**Increased external support** by 96 percent from last year. In the past fiscal year, the Sustainability Initiative received more than $342,000, which helped us maintain and expand our programming.

**Extended our influence** on social and environmental issues outside MIT through our participation in national events and workshops including: Museum of Natural History Living in the Anthropocene symposium; Global Sustainability Summit; Sustainable Brands Conference; Climate Teach-In at University of Massachusetts Lowell; and the Academy of Management. In addition, we created new alliances with the 3M Sustainability Network, Environmental Defense Climate Corps Network, and Network for Business Sustainability.

**Deepened ties within MIT** by sponsoring and facilitating campus-wide symposia including the Climate Co-Lab Conference and MIT Energy Conference. In addition, John Sterman participated in a dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at an MIT climate change event.

Priorities for 2015–16

**Strengthen fundraising** to further develop our programming. Currently, our programming is supported by the MIT Sloan Annual Fund, a general pool that helps pay for new programs and courses. As we transition from receiving support from the Annual Fund, endowed gifts are increasingly important to us. We seek more recurring and one-time gifts to ensure that our growth continues.

**Engage industry** and the public sector by encouraging the use of our tools, raising the profile of our educational programming, and promoting our students and alumni in professional settings.

**Enhance visibility** of our ongoing efforts with key constituencies: prospective students and applicants, alumni with the capability to support each other and our efforts, and faculty and staff across the MIT community.

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**Web Stats**

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<th>July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26,300+ website visitors</td>
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<td>64,800+ page views</td>
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**Impressions = 719.9K**

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<th>July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015</th>
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<td>80.6K LinkedIn</td>
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<td>17.7K Facebook</td>
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“The thoughtfulness of the Sloan professors, the level of expertise of the visiting practitioners, and the dedication of the students in the Sustainability Initiative exceeded my expectations.”

Lea Rutledge
MS Environmental Policy and Planning ’15
Sustainability Initiative

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