

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
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# Spectrum

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# Open for Innovation

**2020 marks the unveiling of two new MIT buildings in Kendall Square**

Two of Kendall Square's newest and most prominent buildings will open in 2020, marking the first official building openings in MIT's Kendall Square Initiative. The structures, E37 and E38, will house the MIT Admissions Office, a more extensive innovation network, and hundreds of MIT graduate students and their families.

Both buildings are centrally located next to the inbound MBTA Red Line station, which draws thousands of commuters each day. Frequently referred to as "the most innovative square mile in America," Kendall Square is evolving in multiple ways. New retail spaces, including a grocery store that opened in 2019, and housing aim to make the square more livable as a destination beyond work. The opening of E37 and E38 marks a significant milestone for MIT, which has been playing a central role in the area's development.

## **E38: MIT Admissions, the MIT Forum, and the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub**

"Welcoming visitors in the heart of Kendall Square will allow us to display the incredible vibrancy of MIT," says Stuart Schmill '86, dean of admissions and student financial services. The modernized MIT Admissions Office in E38 will be central to that effort as the new face of the Institute for more than 40,000 admissions visitors annually. Additionally, E38 will house the new 200-seat MIT Forum, a flexible event space that will serve the admissions office, other groups across MIT, and the broader Cambridge community—providing much-needed convening space on the east side of campus. It will also include retail spaces on the first floor that are separate from MIT and open to the public.

Schmill stresses that relocating the admissions office from Massachusetts Avenue to Kendall Square not only strengthens MIT's visibility but also highlights the critical connection the Institute has with the innovative high-tech enterprises that now flourish within the square. "With our new front door in Kendall Square, visitors will really get a feel for our focus on the future," he says. "But perhaps most importantly, this new location will allow us to more effectively showcase MIT's values and community."

The top-five floors of E38 will house the MIT Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub (I&E Hub), an anchor for the campus-wide ecosystem that moves ideas to marketplaces. The I&E Hub will create spaces for students, researchers, and staff to gather, train, work, and build prototypes. "With the I&E Hub, we have a great opportunity to push MIT's innovation programming to the forefront," says Gene

The view down Main Street showcases the transformation of Kendall Square. Building E37, a new 29-story graduate residence, is at center.







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center, providing the MIT community with programs for both toddlers and preschoolers. The center will include a dedicated drop-off area, classrooms, a gross-motor-skills playroom, an art room, and an outdoor play space.

Keselman MBA '17, executive director of the MIT Innovation Initiative. "We're also looking forward to hosting new activities that bring students, alumni, and professionals together as well as programs around diversity and inclusion."

The MIT Innovation Initiative will call the new I&E Hub home, as will cornerstones of the MIT innovation landscape such as the MIT Deshpande Center, MIT Venture Mentoring Services, MIT Sandbox, and the Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship at MIT. MIT Proto Ventures, an ambitious effort launched by the MIT Innovation Initiative in 2019, will make dynamic use of the new space in its mission to bring domain experts to campus, exploring transformational technologies and pursuing business opportunities with members of the community. Three key sustainability-focused groups will also move to the facility: the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative, the Abdul Latif Jameel Water and Food Systems Lab, and the MIT Office of Sustainability.

Keselman points out that the hub's location will influence the perception of innovation as a core value of MIT and a catalyst for groundbreaking work. "Many people have an idea that gathering spaces are going virtual, but I think the opposite is true," he says. "To have a physical place where everything comes together multiplies the strength and potential of everything that happens inside of it. That's the most exciting thing about the I&E Hub to me: seeing what happens when you put MIT's innovation programming together."

#### **E37: Graduate residence and childcare center**

With nearly 7,000 graduate students enrolled, MIT has seen an increasing need for housing both individual students and those with families. The fall 2020 semester will mark the first wave of graduate residents in new MIT housing in Kendall Square. The 29-story graduate residence will not only embed graduate students more fully in the Cambridge innovation landscape but place them in close proximity to their MIT labs and classrooms.

"MIT graduate students come from all over the world to conduct their research here, and it is critical that the Institute provide an array of housing options for them," says Cynthia Barnhart SM '85, PhD '88, MIT chancellor. "Building graduate housing in the heart of Kendall Square, where education and industry unite to form one of the most innovative districts in the country, will enhance MIT students' experience and add to the vitality of the area."

The new residence for graduate students and their families will have approximately 450 living units, including studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units. The building will also house a new childcare

#### **Looking ahead**

In the coming years, two more vibrant spaces will open at the same east campus "gateway to MIT": the MIT Museum and the Kendall Square Open Spaces. While the MIT Museum is still operating in its longtime home at 265 Massachusetts Avenue, it will move in early 2022 to occupy its first purpose-designed facility. The new museum will feature galleries, classrooms, hands-on activity spaces, and public meeting areas—all of which will highlight MIT's impact for a broad audience.

The two-acre Open Spaces will incorporate outdoor seating areas, green space, a stage, and a lawn for film screenings. These open spaces are designed to enhance the streetscape while featuring dynamic programming by MIT that is welcoming to all.

"Every element of the Kendall Square Initiative promises to benefit the MIT community as well as the area's innovation ecosystem," says Martin Schmidt SM '83, PhD '88, MIT provost and the Ray and Maria Stata Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. "The opening of E37 and E38 is just the beginning. We are looking forward to a future where Kendall Square engages, educates, and informs, and advances our work to make a better world." —Joelle Carson



Above, the new MIT Admissions Office is taking shape inside Building E38.



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