



MIT REAP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Interested in MIT REAP but still have questions? On this page you'll find a list of the most common questions potential participants ask about MIT REAP. If you don't see the information you're looking for, reach out to reap@mit.edu.

REGION

REGION PROFILE: What is MIT REAP's definition of a region?

A MIT REAP region can be a country, an area of a country or even a city. MIT REAP is best suited for regions with populations between 1-10 million -- our goal is to have enough critical mass to drive measurable impact, but not have a region so big that the team gets bogged down in bureaucracy when trying to impact change. The region can be at different parts of the spectrum with regards to the stage of their innovation-driven entrepreneurial ecosystem's development, but it should have an innovation hub, likely a university with a STEM and innovation focus. Often, regions are major metropolitan areas.

TEAM

TEAM PROFILES: What are the ideal profiles for team members?

Please see "MIT REAP Team Assembly Guide" provided in the Dropbox folder.

TEAM SIZE: What is the maximum number of team members that can attend the onsite Workshops?

We expect regional teams to send up to 12 members to onsite workshops, ensuring coverage of stakeholders and key players while keeping to a size that maintains productivity. In order to ensure proper representation of the ecosystem, we aim to keep the teams small enough to optimize productive team conversations, helpful inter-regional exchange, and ability for our MIT Faculty to coach the teams as they develop and implement their regional strategies.

Opportunities exist to engage broader networks of ecosystem players to gather input and mobilize others to help support implementation - teams can utilize working group models or broader engagement to ensure that strategy development is well-informed and that the team is addressing the key challenges and opportunities in the ecosystem.



TEAM CONSISTENCY: Do the same team members have to commit for the entire two-year program?

Teams should maintain as much consistency as possible because the program builds over the course of two years: presenting foundational frameworks and assessment assignments at the beginning, building on this work to develop a strategy, and ultimately implementing that strategy by the team members and those they influence. A lot of turnover on a team can negatively impact the learning and momentum that occurs when a team completes all MIT REAP program activities together.

Careful attention should be paid to ensure that the Champion of the team is able to commit to the two-year leadership appointment to ensure maximum team leadership and regional impact. If members need to be added or replaced to support regional strategic direction or ensure that the team is as effective as it can be, flexibility exists for this case.

CHAMPION PROFILES: What is the ideal profile for a regional Team Champion?

An ideal MIT REAP Champion is the leader of his or her team and is deeply connected to the mission of inspiring innovation-driven entrepreneurial ecosystems. The individual works in this capacity on a daily basis, and will understand the local landscape and which key players to engage to create the greatest impact.

Although Champions may come from many places, our experience shows that successful Champions often have the following profile: energetic, once-practicing entrepreneurs now seated in a business-facing public policy, government, or economic development role, with deep connections across stakeholders and strong ties to regional and national government.

The person should have a current organizational mission aligned with that of MIT REAP and a job role related to accountability for creating or implementing a regional strategy to accelerate regional prosperity, economic growth, and development through innovation-driven entrepreneurship.

CHAMPION COMMITMENT: What are the terms of the Champion's commitment?

The Champion should expect to take on a leadership role and will be the direct point of contact with MIT REAP staff. He or she will sign the letter of agreement on behalf of the regional team, committing to securing and submitting tuition and to leading a team representing the core 5 stakeholder categories who will participate fully in the two-year MIT REAP program.

The Champion is expected to attend and participate fully in all on-site workshops, and ensure that the team is fully prepared, engaged, and driving towards progress against shared metrics.



The Champion takes responsibility for ensuring accountability for assignments and the team's efforts during the Action Phases (interim periods between workshops), ensuring that the team maximizes this opportunity and platform to drive change in the region.

TEAM COMMITMENT: What are the terms of the team members' commitment?

The Champion and full team must actively participate in all four workshops and meet periodically with their team during interim sessions to complete assignments designed to support their efforts to drive change in the region. Team members engaged in discussion of regional strategy and catalytic programs and policies will represent the viewpoints of themselves and those in their sector. As a result of workshop activities, each team member takes the lead on driving specific strategic initiatives once on-the-ground and back home in their regions.

OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENT: Can people beyond the core team get involved in supporting the regional MIT REAP strategies and initiatives?

Yes, absolutely. The MIT REAP team is seen as a core, mobilizing force to drive change in the region. In order to create lasting impact, teams have implemented a variety of successful models to engage broader networks beyond the core team. For example, the MIT REAP team from Scotland schedules a working group session every other month in each of their sectors to share information from MIT REAP lessons learned and gather input from key players across the ecosystem that will inform strategic direction and spin-out activities in support of the regional strategy. Some regions have tried a less formal approach, reaching out as needed to individuals in their networks based on the targeted strategic initiatives they are undertaking.

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSIONS PROCESS: What does the admissions process look like?

- The full application can be found online:
<https://reap.mit.edu/get-involved/regions-apply/>
- Teams must first complete the application to be considered for any given Cohort
- For the initial application, the team must have identified its team Champion and funding
- Early Decision Applications are due March 29, 2024
- Regular Decision Applications are due June, 28, 2024
- Applications are reviewed and accepted by the MIT REAP Admissions Committee until the incoming Cohort is fully formed
- Applicants will receive admissions decisions in July



- Champion will submit signed Letter of Agreement to reserve a spot in the next Cohort upon acceptance in August
- Teams will submit the first tuition payment before Workshop 1
- Teams will hold initial local team meetings and complete preliminary work prior to attending the first Workshop

ADMISSIONS PROCESS: What is the difference between Early Decision and Regular Decision?

Typically, a higher percentage of applicants are accepted during the Early Decision period than during the Regular Decision period.

Additionally, Early Decision applicants have the opportunity to receive feedback on their applications from the Admissions Committee, and be re-considered during the Regular Decisions period if they are not accepted during the Early Decision round.

TIMELINE AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE

NEXT COHORT: What is the timeline for the start of the next MIT REAP Cohort?

Teams are encouraged to start meeting locally after acceptance into the program. The first workshop launches in November at MIT, and the tentative schedule for the remaining workshops is: Workshop 2 in June, Workshop 3 in February (in-region), and Workshop 4 in June of the final year. Teams are expected to schedule local meetings and calls in between workshops and determine the timeline as necessary to meet their needs. Each team has three virtual check-ins with MIT REAP faculty to ensure continued momentum.

CURRICULUM: What is the curriculum structure for the two years?

All workshops include:

- Faculty lectures
- Faculty coaching
- Facilitated activities designed for regional team discussion across stakeholder groups
- Time for regional team discussion to build upon the regional strategy and apply MIT frameworks and research to real-world challenges
- Team progress presentations
- Lively exchange across regions to discuss global best practice
- Critique sessions to use others' lessons learned to improve each regional strategy
- Social events that inspire candid conversation among Cohort members
- Evening events to engage with the host's broader ecosystem
- Ecosystem tours of host regions



Action Phase 0:

Before the first workshop, each region will focus on finalizing its team and building a presentation of the landscape of its regional ecosystem, including strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

Workshop 1:

At the first workshop, teams will collaborate with their team members, Cohort, MIT REAP faculty and staff to:

- Examine MIT REAP foundational framework including innovative capacity, entrepreneurial capacity, and cluster focus and linkages
- Discuss the MIT advantage, innovation-driven entrepreneurship, and lessons learned from our ecosystem
- Discuss entrepreneurial culture
- Attend an ecosystem tour at MIT
- Conduct a deep ecosystem assessment of their own region with MIT REAP tools and frameworks
- Apply MIT REAP frameworks and research to each region, facilitating conversation across stakeholder groups to paint a clear picture of opportunities that exist and the foundation for building a regional strategy
- Benchmark with other regions
- Deep-dive on prizes and competitions

Action Phase 1:

Between the first two workshops, regions will spend time:

- Assessing their ecosystems
- Validating initial assumptions with broader group
- Establishing broader ecosystem engagement model
- Designing/redesigning prizes and/or competitions
- Refining their teams
- Beginning experimentation

Workshop 2:

At the second workshop, teams will collaborate with their team members, Cohort, and MIT REAP faculty to:

- Build a custom regional strategy for acceleration with input from the full team and support from faculty coaching
- Explore how linkages can help your ecosystem connect innovators and entrepreneurs and the efforts of the public and private sector



- Deep-dive on accelerators

Action Phase 2:

Between the second and third workshops, regions will spend time:

- Assessing and designing/redesigning accelerators
- Building and refining their regional strategy
- Validating assumptions
- Engaging a broader network of people relevant to newly developed strategy
- Continuing experimentation
- Decide on strategic interventions to implement

Workshop 3:

At the third workshop, teams will collaborate with their regional team, Cohort, and MIT REAP faculty to:

- Focus on collective action: shared metrics, common agenda, backbone organization that drives action, and implementation
- Critique team presentations on regional strategies to help further iterate strategy
- Spend time as a team building an implementation plan for the regional MIT REAP strategy, driving towards shared metrics for progress, identifying must-win battles and initiatives that can be led in the near-term and longer-term
- Attend an ecosystem tour of member host region

Action Phase 3:

Between the third and fourth workshops, regions will spend time:

- Outlining MIT REAP impact and detailing their journey during the course of the program
- Developing a regional MIT REAP Dashboard to share qualitative and quantitative metrics used to measure success
- Implementing and experimenting with regional strategy through strategic interventions
- Refining the team and broader ecosystem engagement model

Workshop 4:

At the fourth workshop, teams will collaborate with their regional teams, Cohort, and MIT REAP faculty to:

- Connect with the next MIT REAP cohort to broaden the community of practice
- Present final outcomes
- Plan for establishment of an enduring organization and next steps

MIT REAP Global Network (RGN):

Following the four workshops, MIT REAP teams will remain engaged through:



- Ongoing implementation of a MIT REAP strategy
- Annual MIT REAP conferences with broader community of practice
- Engagement with regional MIT REAP team to continue progress on initiatives begun during the two-year program phase

ACTION PHASES: What happens between workshops?

The periods between workshops are called Action Phases. During these Action Phases, regional teams work on deliverables and other spin-out initiatives that they deem important to support their regional MIT REAP strategy development and implementation. Some examples of such deliverables are: full ecosystem assessments, prize or competition design or redesign, MIT REAP progress reports, building or refining an enduring organization that will accelerate the ecosystem during and beyond their time at MIT REAP.

Very often, teams refine additional projects started before or during their time with MIT REAP that are related to their overall strategy. For example, launching accelerators built upon a stronger foundation learned through their work with MIT REAP, iterating on an Innovation District design that was conceived prior to the program and applying key lessons learned from MIT REAP, or facilitating partnerships between key partners and organizations.

With a strong in-region presence and commitment, team members often meet with key players across their regions, build working groups, facilitate workshops and generally gather input and extend the impact of the core team. Teams have even taken it upon themselves to collaborate with each other on specific opportunities across regions and have organized visits to each other's regions as a result.

HOSTING WORKSHOPS: Will each MIT REAP team have the opportunity to host a workshop in its own region?

Three workshops take place at MIT, and one is hosted by a region represented in the Cohort. Regions can lobby for the opportunity to host the third workshop, if desired. Host regions facilitate tours of their local ecosystems and have the benefit of engaging the cohort with their broader entrepreneurial community.

TUITION

COST AND COVERAGE: What is the cost of tuition and what does tuition cover?

For more information on cost and coverage, as well as invoicing or payment schedules, please contact kavan@mit.edu



Tuition covers:

- Attendance for a regional team of up to 12 at four workshops.
- Faculty lectures with rigorous frameworks, tools, and research.
- Supplemental readings and deep-dives on ecosystem tools including competitions, accelerators, etc.
- Hands-on coaching from faculty and staff (both on-site and virtual) at and between workshops while the team is working through strategy, program development, and completing deliverables.
- Opportunities to work as a team towards a regional MIT REAP strategy - assess, analyze, vet, implement strategy. Design and implement policies and programs that support that strategy. Build relationships across stakeholder groups in your region. Stimulate partnerships, spin out initiatives, etc. built upon these new collaborative relationships.
- Opportunities to collaborate with other regions - benchmark your region against others, get realistic critiques and helpful advice and information that helps your region iterate your own strategy and implementation plans, programs, and policies given lessons learned from their efforts.
- Opportunities to network with high-ranking decision makers from around the world during workshops and social events such as dinners and networking receptions.
- Ecosystem tours of host regions which include company visits and networking with key players in the region.
- Visit by MIT REAP faculty member.

Tuition does not cover:

Tuition does not cover flights to four workshops (three at MIT and one in a member region to be determined by the cohort), hotels, or other incidental travel expenses. Sometimes these costs are covered by the individual or organizations represented, but most often these are covered by the funding organization who is funding the tuition.

Additional budget put aside for the implementation of programs and initiatives inspired by MIT REAP work and interactions with cohort members and faculty. Most regions influence future implementation budgets after developing their MIT REAP strategy at the beginning of the program.

SUBMISSION: How is tuition submitted?

MIT will issue an invoice for payment – in yearly installments or in full as requested. There can be one or multiple funders, but this will be agreed to with MIT and organized by the Champion who commits to coordinating the total funding. The Champion will provide all necessary information required for invoicing. The first payment is due after the contract is signed.



IMPACT

PARTICIPANT BENEFITS: What are the benefits for the team members?

The concepts, tools, and frameworks covered in this program will enable participants to:

- **LEAD** the transformation of your ecosystem by contributing your knowledge of the landscape and utilizing your leadership position within your community
- **CONNECT** with diverse stakeholders and key players in your regional ecosystem as you develop a regional MIT REAP strategy together
- **NETWORK** with entrepreneurial ecosystem leaders from across the globe as you participate in engaged discussions to understand different viewpoints on key issues, and work alongside each other to drive impact
- **ENGAGE** and build sustainable relationships with MIT Faculty, who will apply their deep expertise in entrepreneurial ecosystem acceleration to guide your region's growth
- **LEVERAGE** the MIT REAP program as a platform for visibility and change
- **JOIN** the rapidly expanding MIT REAP alumni network and an elite group of MIT REAP members

MIT REAP participants who attend **all** workshops and action phases over the program's 2-year period receive a completion certificate. This also designates them as an MIT Sloan Affiliate Alumni, which grants them inclusion and access to the MIT Sloan alumni directory, an MIT Sloan email-forwarding-for-life address, as well as a subscription to the MIT Sloan alumni newsletter.

REGIONAL BENEFITS: What are the benefits for the regions?

- **IDENTIFY** regional challenges for economic growth and prosperity using MIT REAP frameworks and faculty-driven activities
- **DEVELOP** custom metrics and MIT REAP strategy to propel your region using innovation-driven entrepreneurship (IDE)
- **COLLABORATE** with public and private stakeholders across the globe to inform strategy and drive sustainable impact
- **IMPLEMENT** key programs and policies to support regional strategy, informed by MIT research and global best practice
- **DEPLOY** MIT rigor and frameworks to deepen analysis and evaluate current regional entrepreneurial ecosystems
- **LEARN** how to use accelerators, prizes, diaspora, and risk capital to catalyze regional economic growth



- **MEASURE** your regional performance by utilizing a data-driven region-specific dashboard containing a combination of standardized and custom metrics associated with regional entrepreneurship capacity, innovation capacity and cluster growth
- **COMPARE** with and learn from other regions globally, fostering international relationships and collaboration opportunities within and outside of MIT REAP
- **CONTINUE** progress on the initiatives begun during the program by remaining invested in their projects through engagement with their regional MIT REAP teams and faculty after the end of the two-year program

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE: What will you do?

- **Workshops**
 - Participants attend highly interactive two-and-a-half-day educational workshops twice a year for two years. All regions attend workshops together, where they have time to interact with faculty, work together as a team, and collaborate with other regions.
 - Workshop activities are designed to share global best practices as well as to critique and iterate on their regional strategy and innovative design.
- **Action Phases**
 - Action phases are active time between workshops for teams to complete specific projects designed to deepen analysis, validate assumptions with a broader network, and implement new programs and policies.
 - Teams will leverage faculty coaching and the community of their cohort peers to enable regions to more effectively impact their ecosystems.
- **Networks**
 - The MIT REAP alumni community of practice, MIT REAP Global Network (RGN), the MIT REAP website (reap.mit.edu), and the MIT REAP alumni portal keep regions connected to each other and MIT faculty during and after the program.
- **Dashboard**
 - The regional dashboard is an especially exciting new offering which emphasizes MIT REAP's data-driven approach to accelerating IDE entrepreneurial growth. With faculty support, regions will develop a unique set of metrics to track regional growth of entrepreneurial and innovation capacity. Dashboard metrics capture many sources of growth including innovative capacity, entrepreneurial capacity, cluster location quotients, and IDE catalysts.



EXAMPLES: How can I learn more about the specific direct impact MIT REAP is having on current member regions?

All REAP member regions are developing team pages to share more information about the ecosystem challenges they're tackling as a team, ongoing during the program and how they're progressing towards shared metrics for the region.

You can find examples of initiatives that MIT REAP teams have launched on our website (<https://reap.mit.edu/community-2/>) or contact Kavan OConnor, kavan@mit.edu for impact stories of specific regions of interest.