MIT Hiring and Salary Policies for FY21

President Reif issued the following statement on hiring in an email of 4/13:

“To conserve resources to support existing employees, we are pausing hiring except for essential personnel. Provost Marty Schmidt will work with Vice President for Research Maria Zuber regarding hiring for sponsored research and with the deans on faculty hiring for existing searches and plans for FY21.”

What does this mean for MKI?

The goal of this measure is to minimize MIT’s downstream financial exposure for hirings requiring internal Institute financial support, especially if the new position would compete for resources with a current employee.

It is not a hiring freeze, but rather an announcement of a much more rigorous review process reflecting MIT’s more conservative financial stance during this time. New hires are possible, but they will need to move forward through MKI’s HR office and we anticipate careful reading by upper administration and, in some cases, pushback on the request.

Most employees at MKI, outside of our administrative group, are either faculty or supported by grants or fellowships. Many in our administrative group are also supported through sponsored research, via the Lab Allocation that appears in your grant budgets. The Astrophysics faculty hiring process underway since February is proceeding. Likewise all our searches that were already underway for grant-supported research have been approved to continue.

If you have been awarded a grant and the funds are already held at MIT, and you wish to advertise a new position for a limited-term appointment (e.g. a postdoc), then we believe there is a strong case for proceeding with the search. Please let Amanda Holley know as soon as you are ready to begin, but you should anticipate a hiring cycle of several months and extra scrutiny by administration above Kavli.

If you wish to advertise a new position supported by MIT discretionary funds, please let Amanda know and we will coordinate with the proper department that manages your discretionary account.

In addition to this hiring change, MIT has temporarily frozen annual salary increases (apart from pre-approved academic promotions) until our financial picture comes into better focus. Again, this was done to prioritize retaining employees at risk of termination. The duration of the salary freeze is not yet determined.