

Technology and Equipment

How to work effectively with a virtual component, and guidance on technology and equipment.



What's Included in this Section?

1

Overview of Technology and Equipment Available to DLCs

A summary of the items and resources available to MIT employees who utilize some portion of remote work, recognizing that processes will differ by DLC

2

Common Guidance on Technology and Equipment

Questions and answers about technology and equipment, including ADA* compliance – and links to resources

3

Best Practices for Using Technology

Guidance on how you can effectively use technology in a flexible environment to promote efficient collaboration

**ADA” refers to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*

Understand What Technology and Equipment Is Available

The following reflects the items and resources available to administrative and support staff members.¹ The purchase of these items must be approved in advance by the DLC.



Technology

Typically provided by DLC

- Computer (with standard software)
- Keyboard and mouse
- Cables
- Headset (phone or computer)

Provided at DLC discretion when required by the role

- Printer
- Extra monitor
- Docking Station
- Whiteboard
- Noise-cancelling headphones

Not typically provided by DLC

- Home Internet connection
- Upgraded cell phone; cell phone costs
- Increased utility expenses
- Air conditioner



Office Supplies

Office supplies are usually not provided by the DLC, but DLCs may choose to provide:

- Printer supplies such as paper and cartridges
- Paper, pens, stickies, etc.



Technical Support

DLC and/or IS&T provides technical support for MIT-owned technology.

MIT does not generally provide support for personally owned equipment, even if used for MIT work.



Furniture/Equipment

Generally, MIT does not provide office furniture for remote work.

Exceptions made by some DLCs include office chairs, laptop stands, or standing desk converters for employees working remotely, for ergonomic concerns.

¹The availability of and process to obtain technology and equipment differs across DLCs.

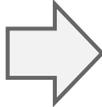
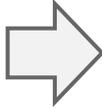
Reference Common Guidance for Technology and Equipment

Human Resources and other areas at MIT have provided guidance for DLCs to provide technology and equipment to their remote employees.

Frequently Asked Questions	MIT Guidance
Are employee technology and equipment paid for by the DLC, regardless of work model?	 <p>Yes, technology and equipment are paid for by each DLC's budget. Administrators should use their departmental spending guidelines when reviewing/approving purchases. For research funded areas, DLCs may not purchase equipment for remote work using grant/contract funds unless such purchases are explicitly budgeted and approved in the award agreement.</p>
What is the correct process to log/document technology and equipment with MIT?	 <p>Certain MIT-owned equipment must be tagged by the Property Office and logged in its database, whether that equipment is on-site or remote. Vice President for Finance (VPF) provides guidance for this and offers for department administrators and staff on purchasing work-related items that are shipped to an employee's home. See Guidance for Purchasing and Tracking Items Shipped to Employee Homes for Remote Work on the VPF website.</p>
Is there guidance for employee ergonomic concerns?	 <p>EHS has an Ergonomics page with many helpful materials, including a self-assessment tool and some tips that do not require the purchase of equipment. EHS also provides group training for DLCs by request. A remote home workstation ergonomic review and assessment may be requested through the Ergonomic Evaluation website.</p>
Where can I find general guidance on providing my team equipment for working remotely?	 <p>Find guidance from Human Resources and other areas in handling requests for equipment and supplies from employees who are working remotely on this Human Resources webpage.</p>

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Frequently Asked Questions	MIT Guidance
Does IS&T provide any guidance on the resources that MIT staff and affiliates can use to work remotely?	 IS&T provides MIT staff and affiliates with a selection of IT resources that can be leveraged to prepare for and facilitate remote working at MIT on their webpage on working remotely .
Does every DLC have the same budget and process for employee technology and equipment?	 Every DLC should follow similar high-level processes, but each DLC is different and has nuances. Follow the guidelines that your specific DLC has shared. When having technology and equipment conversations with your employees, be fair and consistent. When in doubt, reach out to your manager and/or leader of your DLC.
Where can I find information on MIT's disability policies/services (e.g., an ADA request)?	 MIT HR has guidelines available. If you have any questions on this process after reading the guidelines, please contact the Disabilities Services and Medical Leaves Office .

Use Best Practices for Virtual Presentations

Whether in a hybrid or fully remote environment, ways to improve the effectiveness of meetings and presentations



Turn Off Notifications

Prevent distracting pop-ups on open applications by turning off notifications or setting them to “Do not disturb.”

- Make sure you mute your mobile phone to prevent any calls or messages from interrupting your meeting



Limit Open Programs

Minimize unrelated open windows and applications on your desktop to ensure confidential information and/or contact details are not visible to participants.

- Make sure your desktop is uncluttered, and that there are no confidential files visible
- This will make it easier for you to toggle between content that you’re planning to share and lower the likelihood of distractions during your meeting



Turn on Video

Have everyone’s video automatically on at login. It improves concentration and participation.

- Find the setting in your meeting application where you can set video on for all participants
- Communicate that it will be a video call beforehand



Mute All Participants

Have everyone automatically on mute as they join the meeting. This will avoid feedback or loud background noises.



Use Additional Features

Where it makes sense, use the features that your virtual meeting technology has to maximize collaboration and interaction during the meeting.

- Consider features like polling, breakout rooms, and annotations that programs like Zoom or Teams can offer

Use Your Equipment Wisely

Be aware of best practices for using technology and related equipment and apply them in your day-to-day work environment.

Test your technology

- Reduce the likelihood of technical surprises by testing your video conferencing and internet/wireless connection
- Conduct an internet speed test on [speedtest.net](https://www.speedtest.net) to ensure that your network can handle the requirements of your meeting (Zoom requires 1.2MB-1.8MB speeds for HD video)
- Free up bandwidth by removing non-essential devices from your wireless network for the duration of your calls

Use a laptop, not a mobile phone, for video

- Whenever possible, join a virtual call on a laptop or desktop computer to ensure a stable image
- Avoid moving around your house during video calls. If you must change locations, turn your video off first

Use a headset or external microphone

- Stay muted when not speaking to avoid external noise
- Use a headset or external microphone for the best audio quality. If using a wireless headset, make sure it's fully charged
- If you have issues with using your laptop for audio, dial in with your cell phone and place your computer on mute
- If using your laptop's speaker and microphone, be careful about ambient sounds such as typing on your keyboard

Password-protect your meetings

- Keep your meeting safe from unwanted visitors
- Use a password to protect your meeting so that others cannot gain access or hijack your presentation

Position the camera

- Position your camera so it's just above eye level. Prop it up to reach that level if necessary
- Treat the camera's lens as if it were your audience