Open Making at MIT



Where *Mens et Manus* comes alive

Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Open Making

When students think of MIT, they think of making.

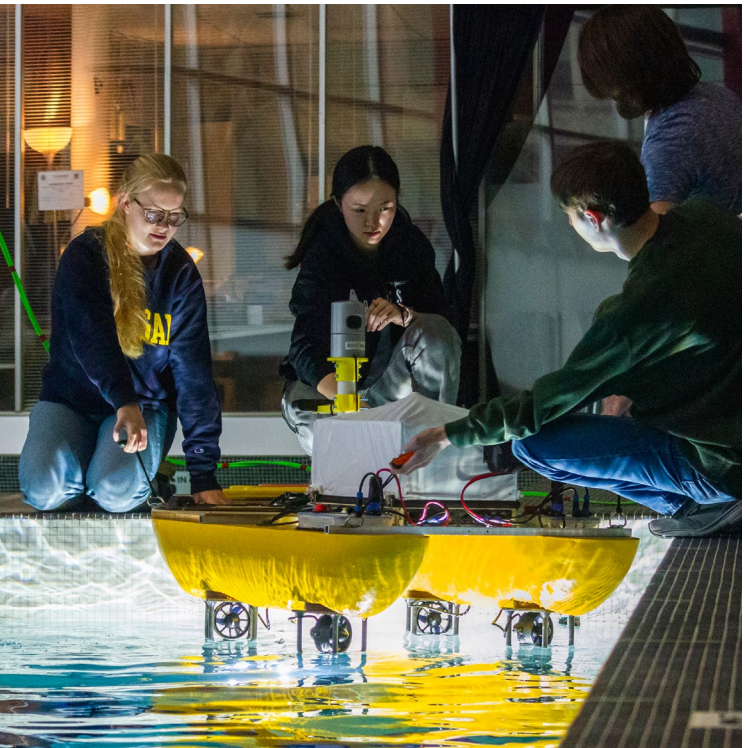
Nearly a third of students attending Campus Preview Weekend say they want to explore opportunities to “build stuff.” Seventy percent of incoming first-year students say they plan to use makerspaces. However, less than half of undergraduates have worked in a makerspace by the time they graduate.

That’s why our open-to-all makerspaces matter: They’re where self-directed learning, interdisciplinary teamwork, and passion projects flourish. The sky is *literally* the limit. Students build rockets and race cars, make coasters and quilts, craft research tools and musical instruments, and much, much more.

These lively spaces, equipped with expert technical staff and a range of machinery, help students tinker, test, and make their ideas a reality in a safe and supportive environment. Just as important, these open-to-all shops complement the Institute’s makerspaces that serve specific classes, departments, and residence halls.

In the era of AI, authentic hands-on learning matters more than ever.

Making should be ubiquitous at MIT, woven into the student experience rather than something students must seek out on their own.



MIT Open Makerspaces in 2025–2026:

625 students
participated in 20 Edgerton clubs and teams

2,100+ students
used 6 open-to-all makerspaces

Founded in 2021, the MIT Arcturus team specializes in creating autonomous surface vehicles (ASVs or “roboboats”).

A Hands-On Hub for Students

Since 1992, the Edgerton Center, founded in honor of pioneering MIT professor Harold “Doc” Edgerton (1903–1990), has been a hands-on hub for students across MIT. Thanks to its welcoming culture, cutting-edge equipment, and expert mentors, novices learn to fabricate pet projects with an assortment of materials ranging from cloth to metal, student teams design and build autonomous robots and vehicles, and budding researchers experiment and innovate.

Edgerton is the ideal place to strengthen participation, provide integrated support, and unify open making for students across MIT. Recently, Edgerton expanded to include the Hobby Shop in N51 and Metropolis, a newer space in the basement of 6c.

This ecosystem provides students with:

- **Open-access tools** and equipment for prototyping, machining, electronics, and fabrication
- **Training and mentorship** from experienced staff and peer leaders who safely guide students through technical challenges
- **A vibrant community** that brings students, clubs, and teams together across disciplines
- **Real-world project experience** that translates theory into tangible products and skills

Ultimately, makerspaces are where MIT students come to shape their own education.

> **“Your support enables our students to embrace challenges that at times may seem impossible. They learn from their failures, and we take great pleasure in celebrating their successes.”**

J. Kim Vandiver SM ’69, PhD ’75

Forbes Director of the MIT Edgerton Center

Breene M. Kerr (1951) Professor





The Hobby Shop, created in 1938 by Vannevar Bush PhD '16 at the urging of students, is thought to be one of the first open-to-all makerspaces on any campus.

Support Open Making

Philanthropy is essential for ensuring that open-to-all making thrives on campus. Giving opportunities include:

- **A new endowment for open making at MIT** to secure the long-term health of making and help create a future in which *all* MIT students can participate in this transformative experience.
- **Support for student clubs and teams** to spur collaboration and creativity by providing funding for essential equipment, materials, and student travel for testing and competitions.
- **Donor recognition opportunities** to acknowledge and honor donors' contributions to student making – enabling hands-on learning, prototyping, and creative problem-solving.

We invite you to join us in this effort. To learn more about supporting making at MIT, please contact:

Chris Toro
Associate Vice President, Leadership Giving
MIT Office of Institutional Advancement
contact-chris@mit.edu | 617.253.4107

MIT Edgerton Center

MIT Clubs and Teams Supported by the Edgerton Center

- Assistive Technology Club
- Chem-E Cube
- Combat Robotics Club
- CRAFT
- Design Build Fly
- Driverless
- FIRSTxMIT
- Geo@MIT
- Human Technology Integration Club
- MIT Arcturus
- MIT Spokes
- MIT Wind Team
- MITERS
- Motorsports
- Radio Society W1MX
- RoboTeam
- Rocket Team
- Satellite Team
- Solar Electric Vehicle Team
- Sustainable Engine Team

Cover images: Top left: Hayami Arakawa (center), director of the MIT Hobby Shop, says, "MIT's motto is 'mind and hand'; we add heart into that." Bottom right: The MIT Solar Electric Vehicle Team runs alongside Gemini, their first double occupancy solar car.

Learn More
Scan this QR code with your phone's camera
betterworld.mit.edu/open-making