John Roberts has been Executive Director of MIT Corporate Relations (Interim) since February 2022. He obtained his Ph.D. in organic chemistry at MIT and returned to the university after a 20-year career in the pharmaceutical industry, joining the MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP) in 2013. Prior to his return, John worked at small, medium, and large companies, holding positions that allowed him to exploit his passions in synthetic chemistry, project leadership, and alliance management while growing his responsibilities for managing others, ultimately as a department head. As a program director at MIT, John built a portfolio of ILP member companies, mostly in the pharmaceutical industry and headquartered in Japan, connecting them to engagement opportunities in the MIT community. Soon after returning to MIT, John began to lead a group of program directors with a combined portfolio of 60-80 global companies. In his current role, John oversees MIT Corporate Relations which houses ILP and MIT Startup Exchange.
Blade is an innovation and user-experience expert, Sr. Lecturer at MIT on Design-Thinking and Innovation, and provides consulting service in Design-Thinking (www.bladekotelly.com). Blade’s consulting services helps top brands to innovate radically on their product and services, and teaches corporate teams how to create solutions that customers love.

Prior to that, Blade led the Advanced Concept Lab at Sonos where he defined the future experience that will fill your home with music. Prior to joining Sonos, Blade was the VP Design & Consumer Experience at Jibo, Inc. where he was in charge of the industrial-design, human-factors, user-interface, brand, packaging, web experience supporting Jibo, the world’s first social robot for the home. Blade has also designed a variety of technologies including ones at Rapid7, an enterprise security-software company, StorytellingMachines, a software firm enabling anyone to make high-impact movies, Endeca Technologies, a search and information access software technology company, Edify and SpeechWorks, companies that provided speech-recognition solutions to the Fortune 1000.

Blade wrote the book on speech-recognition interface design (Addison Wesley, 2003), The Art and Business of Speech Recognition: Creating the Noble Voice and his work and thoughts have been featured in publications including The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and on media including TechTV, NPR, and the BBC.

Since 2003, Blade has taught courses on design-thinking. He’s a frequent guest lecturer at Stanford University and Harvard University, and holds a Bachelors of Science in Human-Factors Engineering from Tufts University and a Master of Science in Engineering and Management from MIT.
3:05 PM  MIT Startup Exchange Lightning Talks - Part 1

Patrick Teyssonneyre  
Co-Founder & CEO  
**Xinterra**

Catherine Havasi  
Chief Product Officer  
**Basis Technology**

Kota Weaver  
Co-Founder and CTO  
**Skylla Technologies**

Alberto Moel  
VP, Partnerships and Strategy  
**Veo Robotics**

Vishal Punwani  
CEO  
**SoWork**

Ali Merchant  
Founder & CEO  
**iQ3Connect**

Sean Mihm  
Director of Mechanical Engineering  
**CATALOG**

3:55 PM  Networking Break

4:10 PM  MIT Startup Exchange Lightning Talks - Part 2

Adam Briggs  
Chief Commercial Officer  
**Ambri**

Trevor Best  
CEO and Co-Founder  
**Syzygy Plasmonics**

Shoji Nishiura  
Sr. Business Development Executive  
**Zapata Computing**

Joel Jean  
CEO and Co-Founder  
**Swift Solar**

S. Roy Kimura  
Co-Founder & CEO  
**Modulus Discovery**

Andrew A. Radin  
CEO & Co-Founder  
**Aria Pharmaceuticals**

Kerin Perez Harwood  
Director of Business Development  
**Nano-C**

5:00 PM  Networking with Startup Exhibit

6:00 PM  Adjournment