

MIT Industrial Liaison Program Faculty Knowledgebase Report

Smart Cities and Urban Development

February 13, 2025 9:20 am - 11:20
am

9:20 AM

Welcome and Introduction
Graham Rong
Program Director, [MIT Industrial Liaison Program](#)



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Dr. Rong is a Program Director of Corporate Relations at MIT. He currently supervises a group of ILP program directors who promote and manage the interactions and relationships between the research at MIT and companies worldwide to help them stay abreast of the latest developments in technology and business practices.

Previously, Dr. Rong founded IKA, LLC. He has led corporate development and product innovation and provided strategic advice to companies in corporate strategy, IT leadership, digital transformation, AI, enterprise content management, and customer relationships. He held senior roles in Harte-Hanks and Vignette Corporation. He held an EU postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland where he started global collaborative research.

Dr. Rong is on the board of multiple organizations, including the MIT Sloan Alumni Association of Boston from 2009 to 2012. He chaired MIT Sloan CIO Symposium from 2009-2011. He is a senior expert invited by international organizations.

Dr. Rong holds an M.B.A. in global and innovation leadership from the MIT Sloan School of Management and a Ph.D in numerical computing from the University of Guelph in Canada.

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9:25 AM

Opening Remarks
Christopher Zegras

Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning,
Department Head, [Department of Urban Studies and Planning \(DUSP\)](#)



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Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning,
Department Head, [Department of Urban Studies and Planning \(DUSP\)](#)

Zegras is Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning and the current Department Head of DUSP. He has taught planning methods and techniques, integrated land use-transportation planning, quantitative methods, and transportation finance. He has also co-taught urban planning and design studios in Beijing, Boston, Cartagena (Colombia), Guadalajara (Mexico), Mexico City, and Santiago de Chile. He serves on the Executive Board of the [BRT+ Centre of Excellence](#) and the International Scientific Committee for the Center for Sustainable Urban Development (Centro de Desarrollo Urbano Sustentable, [CEDEUS](#)). At MIT he serves on the [Climate Nucleus](#). From 2015-2020 he was the Lead Principal Investigator for the [Future Urban Mobility](#) interdisciplinary research group, sponsored by the [Singapore MIT Alliance for Research and Technology](#). From 2007 to 2016 he was Transportation Systems Focus Area Lead for the [MIT Portugal Program](#).

His research spans inter-related areas critical to tackling metropolitan mobility challenges: human behavior, digital transformation, and strategic planning techniques and technologies. He has consulted widely for a diverse range of governments, inter-governmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Prior to becoming a Professor, he worked for the [International Institute for Energy Conservation](#) in Washington, DC and Santiago de Chile and for MIT's Laboratory for Energy and the Environment. Zegras holds a BA in Economics and Spanish from Tufts University, a Master in City Planning and a Master of Science in Transportation from MIT and a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning, also from MIT.

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Senseable City Labs
Umberto Fugiglando
Research Manager & Partnerships Lead, [MIT Senseable City Lab](#)



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Research Manager & Partnerships Lead
[MIT Senseable City Lab](#)

Umberto Fugiglando is a Research Manager at the Senseable City Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a multidisciplinary research group that studies the interface between cities, people, and technologies. He has been leading and managing multi-stakeholder research projects on data science applied to urban technology initiatives, and he is in charge of developing and maintaining partnerships between cities, companies, and foundations that support the group's research agenda. Additionally, Umberto is co-founder of ReFuse, a social enterprise that aims at improving the well-being of communities exposed to waste hazards. Umberto's background is in Applied Mathematics and Engineering, and he has studied in Italy, Sweden, Canada, and the US.

Digital technologies are radically changing the way we understand, design, and ultimately live in cities. This is having an impact at different scales – from the single building to the scale of the metropolis. Spanning from urban mobility to biodiversity, from environmental quality to community wellbeing, we will address these issues from a critical point of view through some of the latest projects by the Senseable City Lab, a multi-disciplinary research group at MIT that is developing research in many cities across the globe.

10:10 AM

The Green Mobility City: Tools for Modeling Built Environments at the Pedestrian Scale

Andres Sevtsuk

The global climate-change crisis, along with public health and economic competitiveness challenges faced by cities worldwide, underscores the urgent need for analytical tools and models to explore the relationship between city design and sustainable mobility. In this presentation, Andres Sevtsuk will introduce the Urban Network Analysis framework, a tool for modeling land-use and transportation interactions at the pedestrian scale. This framework enables planners and policymakers to assess pedestrian access to urban destinations and evaluate the effects of land-use and infrastructure changes on pedestrian mobility. Such analyses empower planners, designers, and policymakers to prioritize projects that enhance sustainable mobility outcomes.

10:45 AM

MIT Startup Exchange
Tricia Dinkel
Manager of Partnerships & Engagement, [MIT Startup Exchange](#)



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Manager of Partnerships & Engagement
[MIT Startup Exchange](#)

Tricia Dinkel comes to Corporate Relations with several years of experience in the innovation ecosystem and managing relationships with startups and corporates. Tricia previously worked as Director of Navigate (NECEC's flagship innovation program) at the Northeast Clean Energy Council (NECEC) in Boston where she led all operations and partnership development for 400+ startups, 65+ innovation partners, and 200+ investors & corporates in North America and Europe. Prior to that role, Tricia held positions with increasing responsibility in program management at NECEC. Before that, her experience included Director of Data Analytics and Sustainability Reporting Manager at WegoWise Inc. in Boston, Associate Director at the Committee on Capital Markets Regulation in Cambridge, Senior Sustainability Coordinator at A Better City in Boston, and Assistant Director at The Green Alliance in Portsmouth, NH.

Tricia earned her B.A., in Environmental Studies/Natural Resource Policy at the University of Colorado, and her M.A., in Environmental Science Education at the University of New Hampshire. She served on the NECEC Diversity & Inclusion Committee and as a member of the USGBC (U.S. Green Building Council), Massachusetts Chapter.

Andrew Surwilo
CEO & Co-Founder
[Cytex](#)

John Devine
Founder & CEO
[Civic Atlas](#)

Honghao Deng
Co-Founder and CEO
[Butlr](#)

11:15 AM

Closing Remarks
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Adjournment