IN A NEW INITIATIVE FOCUSED ON
technology and the economy, Erik Brynjolfsson,
Schussel Family Professor of Management at MIT
Sloan, and Andrew McAfee, Principal Research
Scientist at the MIT Center for Digital Business
(CDB), are exploring the sharp contrasts between
the digital revolution’s impact on productivity,
employment, and economic growth. Brynjolfsson
and McAfee call themselves digital optimists,
noting that even as Americans listed ‘jobs and
unemployment’ as the country’s most pressing
problem, corporate investments in software
and equipment have reached a historic peak as
innovation is accelerating. The past decade has had
the strongest productivity growth since the 1960s.

With this Initiative, Brynjolfsson and McAfee will
bring MIT Sloan thought leadership to address
the workplace transformations and prospects
for growth brought by digital technology. Digital
advancement, Brynjolfsson says, is “creating
trillions of dollars of wealth as it increases
productivity, and that’s good news.” However,
Brynjolfsson continues, “Our skills, and our
organizations are not adapting fast enough –
and so must MIT Sloan.” The new Initiative on the
Digital Economy will focus its resources on these
opportunities and pressures, with the generous
support of individual, foundation, and corporate
philanthropy.

Embracing the MIT mission, to bring knowledge to
bear on the world’s great problems, and the MIT
Sloan mission, to develop principled, innovative
leaders who improve the world and to generate
ideas that advance management practice, this
Initiative has three main goals:

• To engage students and faculty in educational
  programs around the relationship of digital
  revolution to productivity.
• To analyze the impact of IT on business practice.
• To make critical recommendations to
government and business about the digital
economy and job growth.
Drawing upon MIT Sloan’s strengths in technology and innovation, its internationally recognized faculty, and over a decade of CDB research and partnership, the new Initiative will analyze the broad sociological changes brought about by digital technology. Brynjolfsson sees “a five to ten year agenda, tackling some of the grand challenges that are affecting our society. The challenges we face require fundamentally new thinking.”

The questions the new initiative will address include:
1. How can we accelerate the transformation of our institutions, organizations and skills to keep up with the quickening pace of digital innovation?
2. What new business models are made possible by digitization and how can entrepreneurs more quickly implement them in ways that create widespread benefits?
3. How can we harness the remarkably fine-grained, real-time data now available to answer age-old questions and identify new opportunities?

Education and research activities will forge a cohort of strategic decision makers who are equipped to manage technological change in the workplace and the accelerated innovation it produces. MIT Sloan, with its tradition of combining rigor and relevance, is not only uniquely qualified to lead intellectually in this area, but also has a responsibility to do so.

Partnership with MIT Sloan alumni and friends will be critical to the success of this Initiative. Funding for the Initiative will enable new faculty hires, PhD fellowships, curriculum development, visiting fellows programs, and broader research programs. Philanthropic support by individuals, corporations and foundations will allow the Initiative’s full autonomy, long-range vision and responsiveness to change, in order to craft the solutions that the workforce needs.

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“**The most important technology of our generation is information technology. It’s affecting virtually every industry from health care to finance, from media to manufacturing. And in each case it’s having a transformative effect on the way work is being done.**”

Erik Brynjolfsson, Schussel Family Professor of Management Science, Director of the MIT Center for Digital Business

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**GIVING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Endowed Funds**
- Professorship – $5 million (incremental slot)
- Presidential Fellowship – $1.5 million
- Full Fellowship – $1 million
- Term Fellowship – $500,000
- Named-recipient Graduate Student Financial Support – $250,000 - $499,999
- Graduate Student Financial Support – $100,000 - $249,999

**Expendable Funds**
- Named Fellowship (9 month) – $65,000
- Graduate Student Financial Support – <$65,000