

2022



# ANNUAL REPORT

## Octet Collaborative



---

# Table of Contents

Letter from the Executive Director .....	1
Letter from Nathan Barczi .....	2
Mission, Vision, Board of Directors & Faculty Advisors .....	3
Impact .....	4
2022 Priorities .....	5
Community Centered on Wisdom .....	6
Engaging the Institute .....	9
Whole Life Formation .....	10
2022 Financials .....	11
Partners .....	12
Team Members .....	13



---

# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Octet Friends,

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement during FY2022. We are deeply grateful for your prayers, financial support, and gifts of time and talent that have enabled Octet to move into its next phase of campus engagement.

In Ecclesiastes 3:1, King Solomon wrote, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven....” Under Nathan Barczi’s leadership, Octet experienced a season of foundation building as it worked to identify and equip internal colleagues at MIT and catalyze community partnerships. This work was done with faculty, staff, and sibling organizations through regular prayer meetings, reading groups, Zoom presentations and panel discussions. This vital ground tilling has positioned Octet well to expand its strategic efforts in 2022-23, our first in-person year.

Since September 2022, Octet has been **engaging the Institute** by launching *Diálogos*, a series of intellectual hospitality events that encourage empathic listening and open dialogue. Quite providentially, these efforts coincided with MIT’s recent statement on the freedom of expression. Conversations on sensitive subjects such as race and identity politics, the overturning of Roe v. Wade, gender and sexuality, and mental health are part of this year’s intellectual hospitality lineup. Octet is dedicated to creating a safe space for the freedom of expression and will remain an enduring partner of the Institute through Gospel-centered practices that transcend differences.

Additionally, Octet’s goal to further **whole-life mentoring** is taking shape through IAP (Independent Activity Period) courses on empathic listening and science and ethics in industry. These courses address the need for formation practices in the classroom and at work that promote wisdom and communal flourishing.

Finally, our monthly newsletter, *A View from the Dome*, inspires the MIT Christian community through essays on topics of pressing concern and insights from faculty, staff, and alumni who are engaging Kingdom-building work on campus and around the world. It is part of a larger effort to encourage a **community centered on wisdom**.

This annual report summarizes the relationship-building practices Octet engaged in FY22 that have enabled these exciting engagements. May you enjoy reading about these rich experiences! The soil was tilled, seeds were planted, and now we prepare for growth. Thank you for partnering with us in this meaningful work for the blessing of many.



With fond regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mia Chung-Yee'.

Mia Chung-Yee  
Executive Director

---

# A Look Back at 2021-2022

Dear Octet Friends,

Early in 2021, just months after the invigorating public launch of the Octet Collaborative and with a return to in-person campus life at MIT still months away, a group of about thirty Octet partners gathered for two days of strategic planning that established three strategic pillars for its work. In 2021-22, we saw the seeds planted during those planning sessions begin to germinate.

A **community centered on wisdom** took two main forms over the course of the year. Christian faculty and staff met frequently for prayer and fellowship. The faculty patterned their gatherings after the “Inklings” of Tolkien and Lewis, sharing pieces of their own work to each other for critique and prayer. Octet also hosted several public events over the course of the year, online and in person, and frequently in partnership with friends like Chesterton House at Cornell, and Boston Fellows.

Octet cultivated its MIT partnerships in order to **engage the Institute**. Octet Faculty advisors played leadership roles in crafting a values statement for the Institute, envisioning the post-Covid future for MIT, and attending to the mental and emotional wellbeing of the MIT community. Octet also taught and led reading groups in partnership with faculty advisor Anne McCants’ Concourse program, which integrates the humanities into the first-year science core at MIT.

David Porteous, an economist who participated in our strategic planning, generously offered to help us develop our efforts toward **whole-life formation**. Two pilot groups of MIT alumni helped to refine patterns and structures for peer mentoring which will form the basis for upcoming interactions between alumni and the current community on campus during our January course on science and ethics in industry. Just as importantly, both groups reported that their members experienced a rekindling of their passion for Christian community within their vocation, something they had rarely experienced since leaving MIT as students.

Several of our strategic planning partners commented on how rare and refreshing it was to gather faculty, students, staff, alumni, and campus ministers in one place. God has given many gifts, all essential, distributed across his people in every corner of MIT. We walked away with three strategic pillars, but perhaps more importantly, we walked away with a sense of gratitude and expectation that God will provide what He needs, and whom He needs, to do His work, at the Institute and beyond. That sense has infused Octet’s work with courage, hope, and wonder.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "N. Barczi".

Nathan Barczi, PhD '07, MIT Chaplain  
Associate Director & Senior Theologian

# Mission

The Octet Collaborative is a community of students, faculty, and staff at MIT, dedicated to human flourishing, formed by the historic Christian faith. It is a hub for Christian learning that embodies a holistic vision of what it means to be human within the academic vocation.

# Vision

The Octet Collaborative envisions MIT as a place where Christ-centered wisdom and practices equip faculty, staff, and alumni to:

- Promote a holistic view of self and other
- Exercise intellectual hospitality
- Engage science and ethics
- Pursue sabbath rest

# Board of Directors

**Mia Chung-Yee**, *Board Chair*

**Ruth Chang**, *Vice Chair & Treasurer*

**Nathan Barczy**

**Paul Burke**

**David Chan**

**Ehi Nosakhare**

**David Williamson**

# Faculty Advisors

**Glen Comiso**

*Senior Director for Institute Affairs in the Office of the President*

**Daniel Hastings**

*Department Head of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Department of Engineering*

*Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

**Ian Hutchinson**

*Professor of Nuclear Science and Engineering*

**Anne McCants**

*Professor of History, Margaret MacVicar Faculty Fellow*

**Rosalind Picard**

*Founder and Director of the Affective Computing Research Group at the MIT Media*

*Laboratory, Co-founder of Affectiva, Co-founder and Chief Scientist of Empatica*

**Troy Van Voorhis**

*Robert T. Haslam and Bradley Dewey Professor, Department Head of Chemistry*

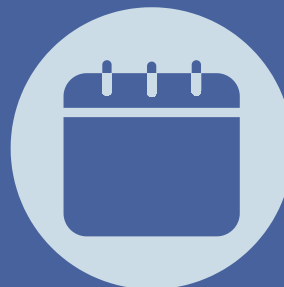
# Impact



Supports **80+** Christian Faculty & Staff at MIT



Connected with **65+** alumni located across the world



More than **250+** attendees at events in 2022



**35 events** hosted for the MIT community



**5 events** hosted for the greater community

---

# 2022 Priorities

## Community Centered on Wisdom

The Octet Collaborative champions an awareness of who we are as individuals created in God's image, fully integrated in mind, hand, heart, and soul. Thus, Octet strives to place the intellect within an integrated understanding of self and the self in the context of a thriving community that champions this.

## Engaging the Institute

As MIT wrestles with the many social and ethical consequences that technological advancements inevitably produce, the Octet Collaborative is engaging with the Institute and its many initiatives to offer a Christian perspective.

## Whole-Life Formation

Discipleship is a lifelong journey and periods of growth and flourishing can be followed by periods of disruption, with consequences on mental health, spiritual growth, relationships, and faith. A true and biblical commitment to human flourishing must attend to the whole of life, not only one particular area.

---

# Community Centered on Wisdom

## Faculty Fellowship Group

The Octet Collaborative is acquainted with 40+ Christian faculty at MIT. In addition to spending time getting to know them one on one, Octet has consistently participated in bi-weekly faculty fellowship, alongside of other campus ministers. This group has modeled itself after the Inklings, with faculty taking turns reading their own work for critique and prayer.



Left to Right: Ken Churchill, Anne McCants, Kevin Ford, Rosalind Picard, Ian Hutchinson, Nathan Barczi, Mia Chung-Yee

“

*Reading a book together this summer has been wonderful; not only did it get me to read something I probably wouldn't have read, it led me to think on things that are important but for which I rarely make time. The best part was deeply discussing ideas with my brilliant colleagues and strengthening our community."*

**-Rosalind Picard, Faculty Advisor**



---

# Community Centered on Wisdom

## Concourse

Anne McCants, Octet Collaborative Faculty Adviser, is an economic historian who serves as director of MIT Concourse, a program for first-year students that integrates the study of the humanities into the first-year science and math core. Concourse and Octet share a common vision for the importance of asking “the big questions” in the midst of a rigorous MIT education, and doing so in community, over shared meals. Octet has partnered twice with Concourse to offer a reading group in the history of science and religion that satisfies a student distribution requirement, and are actively exploring other potential collaborations.

## The Table

One of Octet's faculty advisers, Glen Comiso, is a liaison to MIT's staff. A senior director in the Office of the President, Glen and two of his colleagues founded The Table, a monthly prayer meeting for MIT's 40+ Christian staff. Octet has participated and helped to lead the group and has spent time engaging Christian MIT staff in one-on-one meetings.

“

*A group of us launched The Table, an informal community of staff at MIT who are believers in Jesus Christ or are interested in the Christian faith. We meet once a month over lunch to share, pray and fellowship with each other, and have also found ways to encourage each other in between meetings — and during the pandemic, via Zoom. Dozens of staff from various units and parts of campus participate in The Table, and I have found it encouraging and emboldening to pray with these dear brothers and sisters in Christ, discuss issues around faith and work, and hear how God is working in their lives and work at MIT.*

**-Glen Comiso, Senior Director for Institute Affairs**

---

# Community Centered on Wisdom

## Events & Roundtable Discussions

- Felicia Wu Song, Michael Sacasas & Nick Kim: **Redeeming Social Media**
- N.T. Wright: **Jesus Christ & the Importance of History**, in partnership with CCSC
- Mia Chung-Yee (Board Chair): **The Artist Under Threat**, in partnership with Boston Fellows
- Ehi Nosakhare (Board Member) & Justin Hawkins: **AI & the Reach of Data**, in partnership with Boston Fellows
- David Lodge & Praveen Sendupathy: **Science & Authority-Covid & Climate Change**, in partnership with Chesterton House
- Rosalind Picard & Nathan Matias: **AI & the Common Good**, in partnership with Chesterton House



Left: Nathan Barczi moderates the **Redeeming Social Media** event with (clockwise from top right) Felicia Wu Song, Nick Kim and Michael Sacasas.

Right: Mia Chung-Yee presents at **The Artist Under Threat** event, in partnership with Boston Fellows.



---

# Engaging the Institute

## **Task Force 2021 and Beyond**

One of the primary ways that the Octet Collaborative seeks to engage the Institute is by equipping Christian faculty and staff, placed in positions of influence within MIT, to bring their whole selves, faith included, to their work in ways that promote flourishing. Glen Comiso played a major role in leading Task Force 2021 and Beyond, which was created early in the pandemic and charged with crafting the post-covid future for MIT.

## **MIT Values Statement Committee**

Another way Octet has engaged the Institute is through the MIT Values Statement Committee. Daniel Hastings served as co-chair of a committee that wrote a values statement for MIT; Octet provided input and joined in a discussion of the document with other Christian faculty. Future opportunities include partnerships with service-oriented groups on campus, such as the PKG Service Center and the D-Lab.

---

# Whole Life Formation

## **Alumni Mentoring**

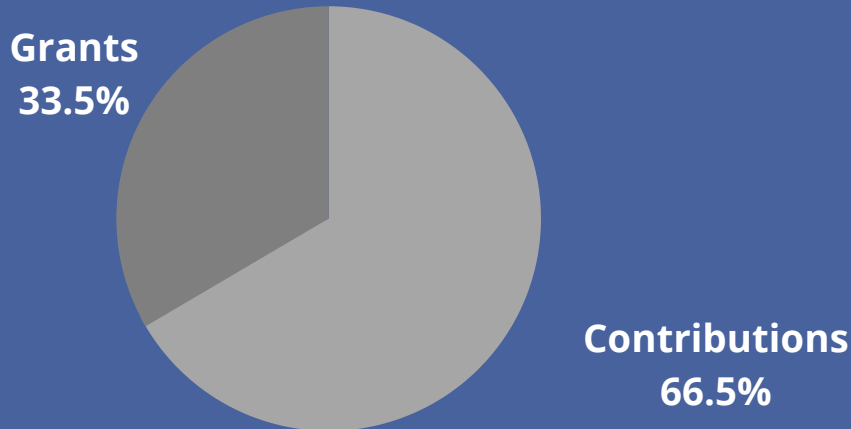
Over the course of the Octet Collaborative's first two years, many MIT alumni shared a common story: MIT had prepared them extremely well for the technical aspects of their career, but hardly at all for the human side. This goes beyond business ethics: alumni expressed a lack of preparedness for working in teams, managing people, resolving conflicts, and even firing someone with dignity.

In response to this felt need, Octet piloted two alumni peer mentoring groups in 2021: one met virtually, while the other was physically located in Silicon Valley. Octet expects to build on this program based on the positive feedback from these groups, expanding to additional vocations, locations, and eventually incorporating student mentoring so that MIT students are exposed to the wisdom alumni have to offer, and are introduced to a community into which they can graduate.

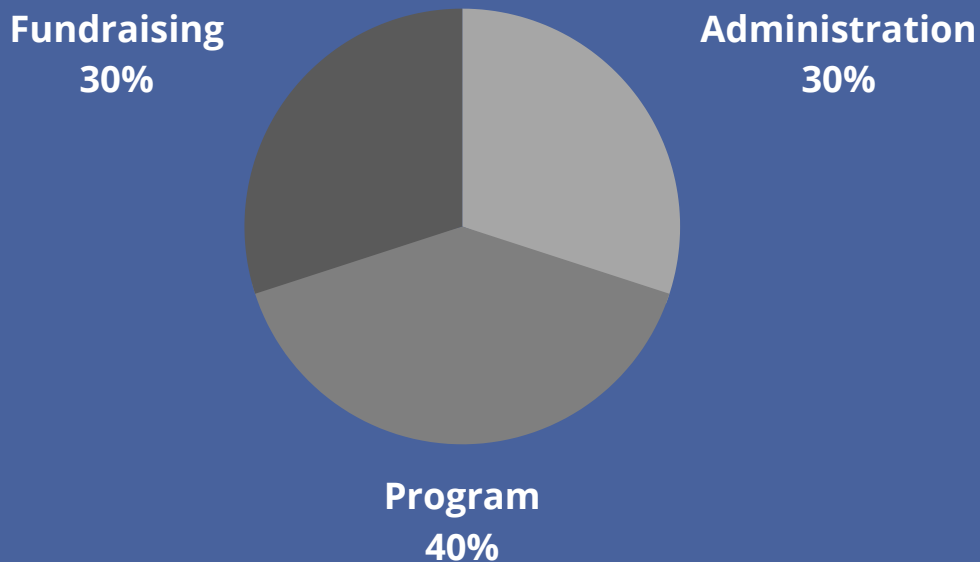


# 2022 Financials

**Total Income\*: \$93,535**



**Total Expenses: \$78,798**



**Total Assets at end of Fiscal Year 2022: \$66,242**

\*Income does not include \$48,600 pledged gifts at end of FY2022

# Our Partners

*We are humbled to recognize Octet's supporters who gave \$1,000 or more in 2021-22.*

John & Elli Bai • Kenneth & Joanne Barczy • Paul Burke • Ruth Chang • Sharon Chang • Tim & Janis Dietz • Daniel & Lois Frasier • Ken Grant • Phil & Victoria Jackson • Young M. Chung & June Kwon-Chung • Kurt & Laura Leafstrand • Travis & Katie Lee • Anne Ling • Ryan & Beth Olmsted • Isabel Park • Rosalind & Len Picard • Kris & Paula Sachsenmeier • Herman & Ruth Stuntz Smith • Andrew & Emily Stuntz • James Taylor • Kyle & Amanda Whipple • David Williamson • Jason Wong • Deborah Chung & Lan Wong



# Thank You



## Team Members

### **Mia Chung-Yee**

*Executive Director, Board Chair  
& Founder*

### **Nathan Barczi**

*Associate Director, Senior  
Theologian & MIT Chaplain*

### **Kim Glass**

*Communications Specialist*

### **Cam Jones**

*Research & Content  
Development Intern*

octet  
COLLABORATIVE

[www.octetcollaborative.org](http://www.octetcollaborative.org)

EIN: 84-4881059

37 Avon Street Somerville,  
MA 02143

### **MIT Fund Account:**

[www.giving.mit.edu](http://www.giving.mit.edu)  
Acct. No. 3876980

oetel

COLLABORATIVE