VPF STATEMENT

News from the Office of the Vice President for Finance (VPF) | PDF version

Good Things Come in Threes

As part of VPF's continuing efforts to create and support a more seamless administrative experience for the MIT community, I am pleased to announce that we launched the new **B2P (buy-to-pay) system** with a group of pilot departments.

On August 29, we began processing purchases and payments through the B2P system with this first pilot group and also opened the B2P Contact Center, a new service center staffed to provide assistance with the new system and general questions about buying and paying. We gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration for the opening of the Contact Center on the 3rd floor of NE49 (see photo above and the B2P story below).

I want to thank and recognize the extraordinary effort of the B2P project team, led by VPF's Gerry O'Toole and Karon McCollin and IS&T's Doug Walsh. Under their leadership, dozens of staff from across VPF and IS&T have begun to usher in a new era for buying and paying at MIT that prioritizes simplicity and savings.

We are also deeply grateful to the B2P User Advisory Group, and to the eleven DLCs who are participating in what will be two pilot phases, for their engagement in this project. Their experiences and feedback are helping us prepare for a successful go-live with the rest of MIT's campus in late 2016 into early 2017.

Coupled with the B2P project, we provided two additional resources for our community this summer: **Supplier Search** (replacing SmartBuy), a one-stop portal to find MIT's preferred suppliers, and the new **VPF website**. This suite of new online tools and services aims at making it easier for MIT to conduct business efficiently and effectively.

So we welcome everyone back from their summer travels and adventures, with three new tools to support you in your work. As always, we encourage your feedback.

Best,

Glen Shor
Vice President for Finance

VPF Launches Buy-to-Pay (B2P) Pilot

After more than a year of collaboration with a 38-member User Advisory Group, VPF and IS&T have launched the pilot phase of the B2P system to the following DLCs:

- Alumni Association
- Resource Development
- MIT Sloan Finance
- Information Systems & Technology
- Office of the Vice President for Finance

On August 29, 2016, these DLCs began using the new B2P system for catalog purchases, external requisitions, and invoices. Featuring fully electronic workflow, the B2P system is a central portal for buying and paying that allows community members to:

- **Shop** – Browse for items, services, and suppliers

New Supplier Database

Concurrent with the launch of the VPF website in July, VPF introduced Supplier Search, a new online database to replace the SmartBuy supplier directory.

Supplier Search provides an easy way to search through MIT's preferred suppliers and internal providers. The site features:

- **Key suppliers** – Look for preferred suppliers and internal providers used often and trusted by the MIT community
- **Search criteria** – Use a variety of criteria to search (commodity, supplier type, supplier name, sustainable suppliers)
- **Business classifications** – View key classifications for each supplier (small business, woman owned, veteran owned, and more)
- **Quick contacts** – Find contact information for the supplier representative and VPF specialist
- **Details at your fingertips** – Drill down to each supplier's profile for additional information
- **Downloadable results** – Download and save search results (or the entire supplier list) as an Excel or CSV file

New Preferred Suppliers

Two new preferred suppliers have been added to the **Supplier Search** database.

We welcome **Sage Sustainable Electronics** as MIT's new Preferred supplier for IT asset disposition (ITAD) services. Sage offers a variety of services including securely collecting surplus electronics, eradicating data, reselling equipment, and recycling electronics that have aged beyond their useful life.

Milk Street Café is now a Preferred caterer for MIT, joining the list of preferred caterers announced in May. Milk Street will discount all MIT orders by 5% and charge a reduced delivery fee of $15.00 per order.

VPF How-to: Checking on Payments from Sponsors

- **Request** – Create and submit requisitions, with new options to save and copy drafts
- **Approve** – Sign off on requisitions and invoices online, by email, or by mobile app
- **Track** – See where requests or invoices are at any point in the process
- **Report** – View and report on past purchases using a variety of search and filter options
- **Learn** – Access training and policy information directly from the system

The inaugural group is also piloting these new and improved features:

- **Customer service** – A central B2P Contact Center dedicated to answering buying- and paying-related questions
- **Processes** – Simplified procedures, including a streamlined process for new supplier registration

B2P will be rolling out to six additional DLCs in October 2016, and to the entire MIT community in late 2016 into early 2017. The project team will work closely with DLCs to prepare for the transition and offer training opportunities. The team welcomes questions to the project email address, b2p@mit.edu.

Up and Running

The new VPF website, which launched in July, is designed to provide users with step-by-step instructions for carrying out financial tasks at MIT. While financial transactions are performed on Atlas, MIT's self-service and administrative systems hub, the VPF website provides information on how to complete financial tasks, downloads of related forms and resources, finance policies, and contact information for staff experts at VPF.

The site is organized around six main topics: Buying and Paying; Travel Planning and Expensing; Payroll; Budget Management; Property, Tax and Accounting; and Payments to MIT. A quick hover over these main topics will display a menu of tasks and links to instructions. You can find the entire Task Menu in the footer on every page.

Visit the Contact Us page to find our street and mailing address, key contact email addresses and phone numbers, and a form for questions to VPF.

Please use the form to send any feedback on the site itself or email the VPF Communications team. We look forward to your comments and suggestions.
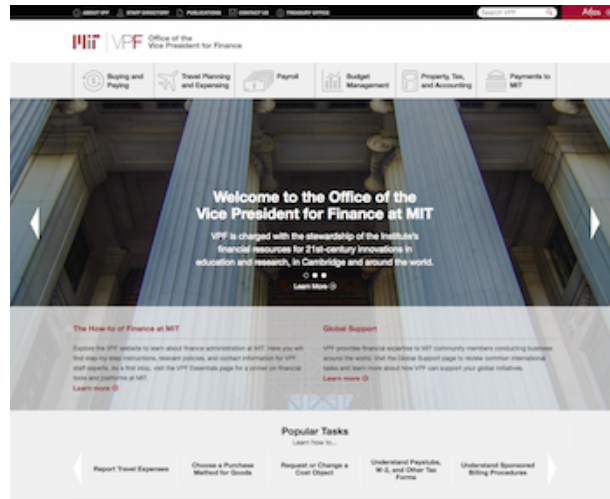
Reimbursing Travel Expenses for Visitors in Concur

MIT has many out-of-town visitors, both domestic and foreign, who visit the Institute for a day, a week, or several months. These visitors—speakers at public lecture events, conference attendees, or scholars engaged in research collaborations—often have travel expenses related to their visit.

In many cases MIT reimburses visitors for travel expenses. If you need to reimburse a visitor for travel, you must use your DLC's Guest Profile in Concur, MIT's online expense reporting tool. If your DLC does not have a Guest Profile set up in Concur, the VPF Travel team can create one for you. Please note that the expense report in a Guest Profile includes additional fields in the report header for the guest traveler's name and address. It is essential to fill out these fields completely and accurately if you want the check mailed to the visitor directly, since checks for visitors are processed and mailed by a third party, and not mailed by MIT.

Sending the check to your department for mailing

Some DLCs prefer to have the visitor's travel expense check sent to their department so they can mail it to their guests with other correspondence, including thank-yous. If the check is being mailed outside the U.S., DLCs often FedEx it to the recipient for faster and more dependable delivery. Therefore, if you want the check mailed directly to your department, you must put in **MIT's mailing address** (77 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02139) **and your department's building and room number** in the address field, and write

Wondering if a sponsor has made a payment due to MIT for a sponsored award? The VPF website provides a summary of sponsored billing procedures, as well as a PDF on MIT's Invoice Collections Process. Contact the Sponsored Accounting team if you have additional questions.

Got a Gift-in-Kind?

When your DLC receives a gift-in-kind of goods such as equipment, art, or historical items, it is now easier than ever to report that donation. VPF has created a new process for tracking gifts-in-kind, in partnership with the Office of the Recording Secretary (RSO).

Instead of creating a requisition for a $0 purchase order, you can now fill out a simple online form that allows you to record details of the donation and upload supporting attachments. RSO and the Property Office will receive joint notifications, so there's no longer a need to coordinate with different groups — submitting this form is the only step you need to complete.

To report a gift-in-kind, follow the instructions for the task Accept a Gift-in-Kind on the VPF website.

Whose Money Is It? Help Us Solve a Mystery and Win $25 in TechCash!

VPF sometimes receives wires and ACH payments missing sufficient information to determine the rightful owner. We do our best to track down where the payment belongs, but sometimes we're stumped.

Please help us figure out whose money we have! Check out our list of unidentified payments and contact us if you can help. If you assist in solving a mystery payment, you will be entered in a drawing for $25 TechCash.

VPF Training Opportunities

Register for VPF training classes by visiting the MIT Learning Center on Atlas. These classes provide valuable information and guidance concerning VPF policies, procedures, and services.

Fundamentals of Financial Management	September 21 and 22, 9 am-noon NE49-3100
Fundamentals of Accounting	October 18, 8 am-noon NW23-43

the guest's name, followed by "c/o" (in care of) and the MIT expense submitter's name. This step will ensure that the check will be sent to the host department. Please note that the MIT recipient's name and MIT address will also show on the visitor's check under her/his name, so you might want to ask the visitor if this will cause any issues when they cash the check. If so, call VPF Travel and Card Services to discuss other options.

A note on foreign addresses

Many names and addresses of our visitors from outside the U.S. contain foreign characters, such as é or ñ. While we use the appropriate foreign characters in personal correspondence, our financial systems are not as accommodating. When the expense report goes from Concur to SAP for payment, these characters are not recognized and are replaced with question marks. As a result, the visitor's check may not get delivered or their bank won't accept the check with a misspelled name. When this happens, the expense report has to be resubmitted in Concur *without* foreign characters in the visitor's name and address. To avoid this extra step and delay, please do *not* use foreign characters in your visitor's expense reports in Concur.

If you have any questions, please contact a travel representative at VPF Travel and Card Services. You can find a complete staff listing on the new VPF website.

VPF Point Person: Janice Spinetto, Senior Travel Accountant

Janice Spinetto, Senior Travel Accountant, joined the VPF Travel and Card Services team in March 2016 and is learning the travel and card business from the inside out. A 20-year veteran of MIT's IS&T department, Janice works closely with Kim Harmon, VPF's card services expert, to troubleshoot issues that arise with MIT's two employee-based credit cards, the MIT Travel Card and the Procurement Card (ProCard). With more than 8,000 Travel and Procurement Cards in use by the MIT community, Janice brings her quick thinking and problem-solving skills to the task, adding depth and experience to the busy Travel and Card Services team's customer service bench.

Janice came to MIT in 1995 as a temp, filling in on the MIT switchboard. After one year she joined the IS&T Telecommunications team as a Front End Customer Service Representative, supporting the MIT community with rental pagers and assisting faculty and staff sending and receiving faxes. From there she quickly moved over to telephone customer service, working with the MIT community supporting their telephone and voice mail needs. During this time, she became a valuable asset to the IS&T team responsible for new building and renovation projects assisting in maintaining databases that held huge volumes of infrastructure information.

When MIT made the switch from landlines to the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phones and email service, Janice was there working with the team responsible for this huge Institute-wide transition. With Janice's willingness to learn new things she was called upon to conduct training sessions on the new system and the web interface throughout the MIT community.

Throughout her career, Janice has been known for being a quick learner, capable of taking on complex assignments. These skills, coupled with her adaptability and flexibility, make Janice a welcome addition to the growing Travel and Card Services team at VPF. Now six months into her new job, Janice and Assistant Director of Travel and Procurement Operations Kathy McGrath will soon begin an outreach and education

campaign to encourage DLCs to reduce the number of unverified ProCard transactions, and transfer the charges to the appropriate cost objects within the allowable 21-day posting period.

Janice grew up in a large family in Arlington—she has seven siblings, including a twin sister—and today lives in Woburn with her husband. She likes to travel and especially loved taking a cruise to Alaska and exploring wildlife there. Destinations on her list of places to visit include Italy, Ireland, and Iceland. When asked what she likes best about working at MIT, Janice reflects on the people and the strong sense of community. "I have met so many great people during my years at MIT. I am enjoying reconnecting and supporting them in my new role and am excited to join a different administrative area of MIT and learn something new."

— *Laurie Everett*

Financial and Administrative Service Areas Within VPF

Accounts Payable — 253-2750 | Email
Accounts Receivable — 253-2758 | Email
Budget & Financial Analysis — 253-2766 | Email
Cashier Services — 253-5426 | Email
Financial Accounting and Reporting — 253-2760
HR/Payroll Services— 253-4255 | Email
Journal Vouchers — 253-4035 | Email

Merchant Services— 253-2758 | Email
Property Office — 253-2776 | Email
Sourcing & Procurement — 253-7241 | Email
Sponsored Accounting — 258-8483 | Email
Tax and Global Operations — 452-4532 | Email
Travel and Card Services— 253-8366 | Email

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