CSAIL Fee Policy for Visitors  
(October 1, 2009)

This document outlines CSAIL’s policy concerning the charging of fees for “transient” CSAIL members – visiting engineers/scientists/scholars, visiting students, post-doctorals, research affiliates, extended stay research affiliates, and short-term visitors. For the definition of these categories of visitors and the approval process, please refer to the CSAIL Policy for Visitors and Affiliates distributed in November 2007.¹

CSAIL recognizes that visitors represent a vital part of our culture. However, visitors put a serious financial burden on the operation of the lab in the form of appointment/reappointment processing, visa application processing, space assignments, etc. They also consume other resources to varying degrees, such as space, software licenses, TiG support, food and drinks, supplies, machine rooms, and use of other facilities. The policy outlined below intends to strike a balance between enabling visiting colleagues and students to contribute to our research environments and the need to partially recover underlying costs.

1. Visitor fee consists of two parts: processing fees (which only apply in cases where visa applications are necessary) and consumption fees (which cover the visitor’s use of CSAIL resources while here).
2. These fees must be paid by the visitor or his/her parent organization directly, or by the PI through a discretionary account.²
3. No fees will be assessed for short-term visitors (<30 days), research affiliates, and extended-stay research affiliates, regardless of whether they are foreign or domestic.
4. No fees will be assessed for professors spending their sabbaticals with us, regardless of whether they are foreign or domestic.
5. No fees will be assessed for students participating in the MSRP–MIT Summer Research Project and RSI Research Science Institute.
6. For all other transients — visiting engineers/scientists/scholars, visiting students, and post-docs:
   a. Each visitor will be charged a processing fee of $500 if visa processing is required, plus a consumption fee of $100 per month, assessed at the granularity of three-month intervals, i.e. $300, $600, $900, or $1,200 depending on the length of stay.

¹ http://groups.csail.mit.edu/hq/wiki/bin/view/HQ/VisitorPolicy
² According to the OSP, visitor fees cannot be charged to sponsored research projects. Sponsored research expenses must show direct and relevant benefit to the project and be able to withstand federal audit compliance.
b. No fees will be assessed if the visitor or post-doc is receiving monthly stipend/salary through an allocation bearing CSAIL administered contracts of at least $1,000 for students, $2,000 for post-docs, and $3,000 for visiting engineers/scientists/scholars.

c. No fees will be assessed if the visit is in connection with lab-wide, ongoing research collaborations.

7. The Director will consider requests for waiving the visitor fees if a PI can demonstrate that he/she does not have the discretionary resources to cover the fee. Other requests for waivers based on the circumstances of the appointment will also be considered.

For clarification, here are same example scenarios:

- A collaborator is visiting for a couple of weeks to write a proposal with a CSAIL PI. Action: no fees will be charged, even if a visa application is necessary.
- A professor is spending part of his/her sabbatical with a CSAIL PI. Action: no fees will be charged, even if a visa application is necessary.
- An international Post-doc Associate coming for five months and paid through an EECS account for his/her stipend. Action: There will be a processing fee of $500 plus a consumption fee of $600.
- A domestic Post-doc Fellow who is bringing his/her own funds to stay for a year to work with a CSAIL PI. There will be no processing fee. But a consumption fee of $1,200 will be assessed.
- A foreign student is visiting a PI for four months as part of a research grant not administered by CSAIL. Action: There will be a processing fee of $500 plus a consumption fee of $600 (more than one quarter and less than two), for a total of $1,100.