Steps to Complete an Agreement

Initiation
International activities are initiated continuously across the institute, through a range of channels, and by DLCs and Principal Investigators (PIs). Many of these are already routed via a member of the ICC (e.g. Research Administration Services (RAS), Resource Development (RD), Office of the General Counsel (OGC), Office of the Associate Provost for International Activities (OIA), etc.) through existing processes. If the activity falls outside an established process, however, or you are uncertain about how to proceed, please contact the ICC at the earliest stages of a project so that we can help answer questions and assist as needed in project development and negotiation.

Review
ICC members assist PIs and DLCs by reviewing proposed international activities and project plans to identify issues, answer questions, and suggest appropriate adjustments, in order to address and resolve challenges (e.g. related to finance, export control, tax, legal, safety, etc.) that are common to global projects. PIs may also be asked to present their project for review by the International Advisory Committee (IAC), and/or the Senior Risk Group (SRG) if it meets the elevated-risk criteria.

Negotiation
A negotiation team that includes DLC and ICC members (e.g. from RAS, RD, OGC, and OIA, as needed), will work with PIs to draft and negotiate an agreement with the external collaborator/sponsor. The negotiation team will work directly with the sponsor’s business and legal staff to facilitate the process, which is expected to be iterative, generate new information, and potentially entail project revisions.

Approval
If issues are raised during the negotiation process, they will be resolved through a risk mitigation approach and/or brought to the Associate Provost for International Activities. Once the issues are resolved, in the case of sponsored projects, the final scope of work and agreement will be routed for approval to the departments and deans in accordance with MIT’s usual practice. Other international activities (e.g. gift proposals, etc.) follow their own established internal approval mechanisms. If the project meets the elevated-risk criteria, the SRG (Senior Risk Group) will also review for approval.

Implementation
Especially during the transition period between the project development/negotiation phase and project implementation, ICC members can help identify and resolve issues often encountered by PIs and departments. In addition, ICC members can provide continuity and support on the range of compliance and management issues that are common to international projects and programs (see Manage section) over their life-cycle.