On the UT campus, the Office of Research and Engagement drives the university’s research enterprise by providing technical expertise that makes seeking research funding easier and improves faculty members’ ability to compete.
Scholarly Activity & Research Incentive Funds (SARIF)
The Office of Research and Engagement administers almost $1 million to support research and creative activities through seven programs available to principal investigators and faculty for:

- Acquiring equipment and improving infrastructure
- Supporting exhibits, performances, and publications
- Assisting with foreign travel
- Pilot studies, conferences, and similar opportunities
- Support for summer graduate assistantships
- Supplemental funding for in-residence fellowships
- Travel to engage program officers at funding agencies.

Targeted Opportunities and Limited Submissions
We constantly monitor strategic opportunities, provide access to databases of funding opportunities, and operate listservs that target researchers who have specific interests. Special attention is paid to limited-submission solicitations and coordinating internal competitions when necessary.

Foundations/Targeted Agencies
Our staff members have special assignments to coordinate contacts between UT faculty and selected corporations, foundations, and military agencies.

Undergraduate Research
We proactively support undergraduate research experiences and faculty-student mentoring relationships.
Joshua Fu is taking the guesswork out of predicting climate change. By harnessing the supercomputing power of UT’s Kraken and ORNL’s Titan, Fu and his research team used ten million hours of climate and chemistry model simulations to develop precise models of scale that predict America’s cities will be much hotter and wetter fifty years from now.

Fu’s simulations hold potential solutions for health, emergency, economic, water use, and energy policymakers who can use the data to proactively mitigate the risks of climate change. For example, by predicting that certain cities will experience a lot more rain, they can build levees and save money and lives.

Fu is a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the Bredesen Center.

Carol Tenopir studies how the digital age affects our information retrieval and processing, leading to her recognition as a thought leader in the online information industry. Through her work as co-principal investigator for the LibValue study on academic libraries, Tenopir and her team found that e-collections receive heavy use, contributing directly to the research productivity and success of faculty and students.

Tenopir is research director for the College of Communication and Information, and also leads the Center for Information and Communication Studies, which provides educational materials and research expertise across a broad range of information- and communication-related projects.

Tenopir is a Chancellor’s Professor of information science.

Bill Fox helps bridge academia and practice as director of the UT Center for Business and Economic Research. Fox, a leading national expert on Internet taxation, has expertise in state tax policy, public finance, and fiscal federalism.

Fox has traveled to more than forty countries to advise governments on tax policy. Stateside, he’s consulted with US governors, legislatures, tax commissions, and big business.

He has received nearly $36 million in funding, and has devoted significant research to an exhaustive analysis of Tennessee’s Families First welfare program, exploring the effects of time limits on benefits. His work earned him UT’s highest faculty honor, the Macebearer, in 2013.

Fox is the William B. Stokely Distinguished Professor of business.

Asafa Jalata is a leading social scientist in the fields of Africana studies and global studies, with a focus on human rights and indigenous issues on the global level.

A world-renowned scholar on the politics and society of Oromia and its interactions with Ethiopia and the modern world system, Jalata is now shifting his research focus toward examining the relationship between globalization, human rights violations, and the impact of terrorism. He is investigating the groups and countries perpetrating terrorism, as well as responses to it.

Jalata received UT’s Senior Faculty Research/Creativity Achievement Award of the College of Arts and Sciences in 2011.

Jalata is a professor of sociology and global and Africana studies.

Suzanne Lenhart often combines wildlife and math in the same equation. Her research, aided by National Science Foundation funding, infuses ecological and natural resource issues with applied mathematics to model populations and diseases in such species as wild hogs and feral cats.

In the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Lenhart’s “optimal control” model suggests long-term strategies to protect native species and manage non-native populations.

As the NIMBioS associate director for education, outreach, and diversity, Lenhart organizes summer research programs and conferences for undergraduates and summer camps for female students.

Lenhart is a Chancellor’s Professor of mathematics.

Charles Glisson researches how to cut red tape and allow social and mental health services to effectively treat troubled children. He is the founder and director of the Children’s Mental Health Services Research Center, which has conducted studies throughout the US focused on improving services for children and families. These studies have addressed abuse, neglect, delinquency, substance abuse, mental health problems, and related issues.

Glisson has served as principal investigator on multiple major research projects concerned with children’s services funded by the National Institutes of Health. He was named a 2012 fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Glisson is a Chancellor’s Professor and Distinguished Professor of social work.