



# RURAL REIMAGINED & THE TN RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

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# Today...

- Cetner for Rural Innovation & Rural Reimagined Overview
- No cost services for faculty
  - Measuring and quantifying impact
  - Data aggregation
  - Messaging your impact
- Funding opportunities
  - TN Grants
    - IRIS Opportunity
    - How to find NOFOs
    - How do appropriations work?



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# Background

- Acting Vice President for Research and Economic Development
- (Almost) 20 years at TN Tech University
- Passionate about rural transformation and the intersection of research <> economic development
- Research interests
  - Mixed methods surveys
  - Business development
  - Economic impact
  - Program planning and evaluation
  - Broadband, critical infrastructure, distributed energy resources, EV, quantum networking, smart mobility
- Founding director (2017) Center for Rural Innovation (TCRI)



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# TCRI/Rural Reimagined Key Points

- Rural Reimagined
  - Opportunity for ALL students, faculty, and community to collaboratively examine and address rural-facing challenges
  - Tech Tomorrow Strategic Plan 2018
  - Launched Spring 2019
  - Grown exponentially!
  - Why? It's the right thing to do
- Center for Rural Innovation
  - Research and economic development center established 2017
  - Operationalizes Rural Reimagined
  - No cost services (“technical assistance”) for faculty and community
  - Applied research



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# OUR VISION

**TRANSFORM RURAL LIVING THROUGH  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

# OUR MISSION

**LEVERAGE THE UNIQUE STRENGTHS OF TN TECH UNIVERSITY TO  
EXAMINE AND ADDRESS RURAL CHALLENGES IN WAYS THAT ARE  
REPLICABLE AND SCALABLE THROUGHOUT THE STATE, NATION,  
AND WORLD**

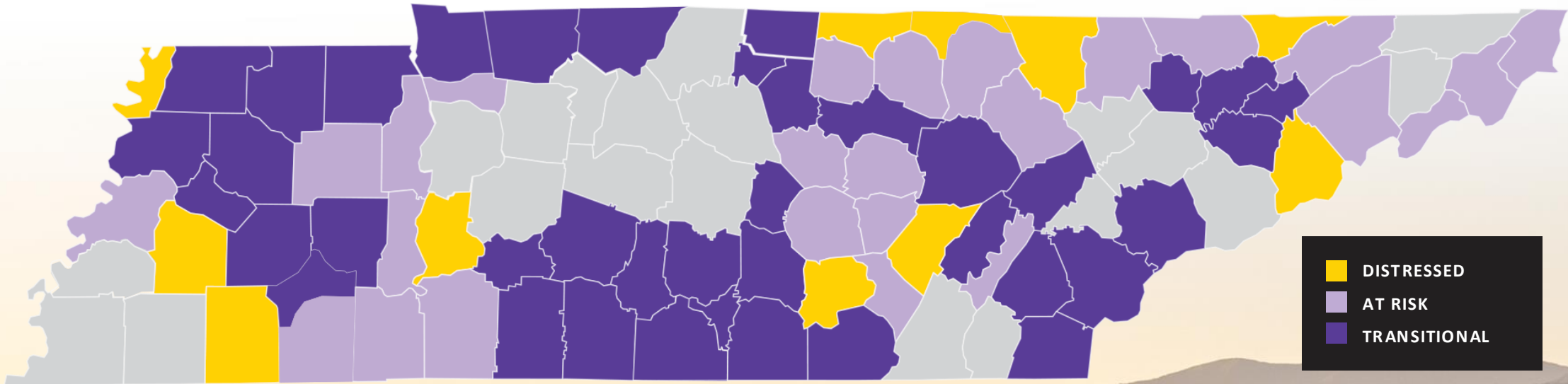


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# OUR GOAL

SERVE ALL **78 RURAL COUNTIES** IN TENNESSEE WITH AN  
ENHANCED FOCUS ON DISTRESSED AND AT-RISK  
COMMUNITIES



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# OUR IMPACT

BY THE NUMBERS

76

RURAL TN  
COUNTIES

1,500

BUSINESSES  
HELPED

2,000

RURAL  
PROJECTS

5,000

PARTICIPANTS  
INVOLVED

113,000

VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

\$45M

RESEARCH  
AWARDS



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# No Cost Services for Faculty

- Measuring/quantifying/projecting the economic impact of your research and/or proposals
- Data aggregation
- Location intelligence
- Messaging your impact

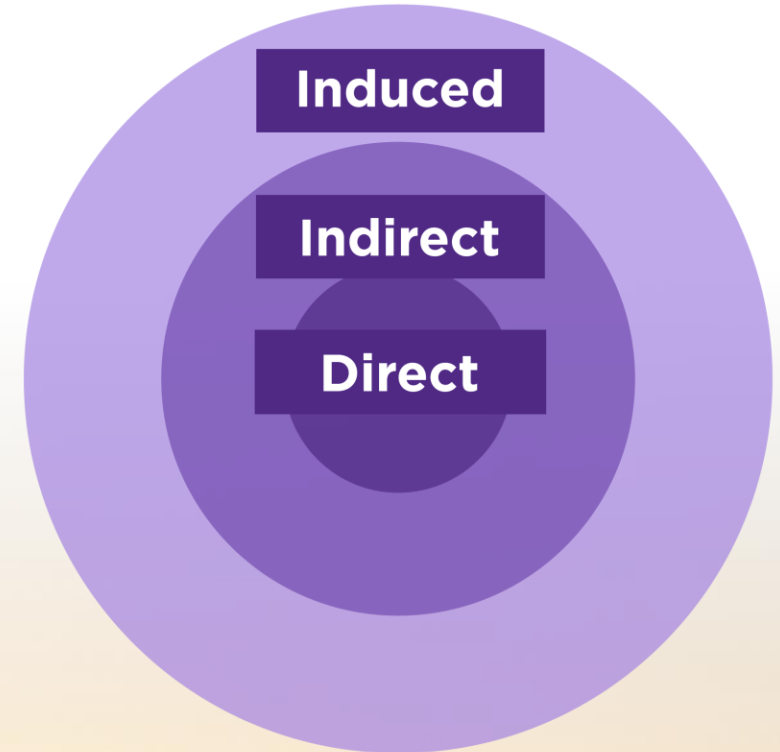


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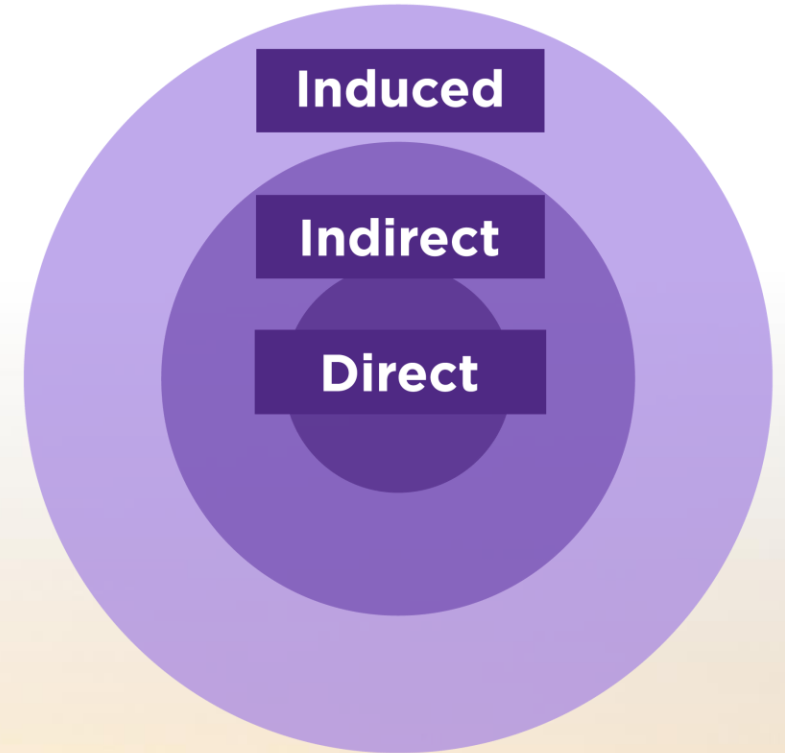
# Measuring/Quantifying/Projecting Impact (cont.)

- Research output creates rippling effects within economies
- Direct effects
  - Immediate economic activity generated by the intervention, (grant funding, hiring staff/students, release time, etc.)
- Indirect effects
  - Purchasing within the supply chain (lab equipment, subcontracting, vendor services, etc.)
- Induced Effects
  - Broader household spending (employees and suppliers spend their wages on housing, food, entertainment, and other goods)



# Measuring/Quantifying/Projecting Impact (cont. 2)

- Jobs supported
- Labor income
- GDP
- Industry output
- City, county, state, federal taxes
- Industries impacted
- Environmental impacts
- Much, much more!



# Measuring/Quantifying/Projecting Impact

- IMPLAN Cloud
  - Gold standard in economic impact measurement
  - Quantify how your research translates into value for stakeholders (community, government, agencies, etc.)
  - Write better proposals
  - Enhance reporting capabilities
- Measures (or projects) the rippling effects of economic interventions (grant output) in local/regional/state economies
  - Policy changes
  - Jobs created/supported
  - Growth/decline of new business/industry
  - Infrastructure investments
  - Commercialization
  - Environmental effects
  - Energy implications
  - Healthcare initiatives



# Examples

- Proposal to create Masters of Social Work
  - 400 expected graduates employed statewide over 10 years
  - 576 total jobs supported
  - \$32.3 million labor income
  - \$41.4 million increase in state GDP
  - \$2.96 million in city/county/state taxes
- Measuring economic impact of installed EV chargers
- Projecting cost savings of energy grid modelling
- Reporting impact of business growth within rural Appalachian
- Measuring contribution of student interns within Upper Cumberland region



# Data Aggregation – IMPLAN Explorer

- IMPLAN State Explorer
- 32 trillion lines in database spanning back to 1972
- Validated sources such as BLS, state data, etc.
- Access to: TN, VA, WV, PA, GA



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# Data Aggregation – IMPLAN Explorer (cont.)

- Commodities
- Occupation competencies
- Deflators
- Demographics
- Education statistics
- Employment & Wages by NAICS code
- Environmental
- Industry comparisons
- Taxes
- Trade flows



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# Location Intelligence – Placer.AI

- Location Intelligence Platform
  - Mobile data to analyze foot traffic and consumer behavior
- Tracks Visits & Movement
  - Understand where people go, how long they stay, and their travel patterns
- Demographic & Behavioral Insights
  - Provides data on visitor demographics, income levels, and shopping habits
- Competitive & Market Analysis
  - Compares foot traffic trends across locations and industries
- Real-Time & Historical Data
  - Analyzes both current and past movement patterns for trend insights
- ***NOT a surveillance tool: K-anonymity 50***



# Location Intelligence – Placer.AI (cont.)

- Measure Economic & Social Impact
  - Track how local businesses, events, or policy changes influence foot traffic and spending
- Rural & Regional Planning
  - Study how people interact with spaces, helping with zoning, infrastructure, and transportation planning
- Public Health & Safety
  - Analyze mobility patterns related to health interventions or emergency response planning
- Tourism & Event Analysis
  - Assess the economic impact of festivals, sporting events, or cultural attractions
- And...much more



# Messaging Your Impact

- Messaging is critical for proposal development, reporting, and communicating value to stakeholders, agencies, communities
- Rural Reimagined can help you develop sections for your proposals, reports, and internal/external relations
- Likewise, we can assist with reporting impact of existing grants



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# Funding Sources & No-cost Resources

- Rural Reimagined Faculty Grant Program
  - Annual, Fall
  - **Deadline TODAY!**
- ORED Internal Faculty Grant Program
  - Annual, late Fall
- TTAC (IP/Tech Transfer/Commercialization)
  - Proof of concept grant
  - TreMonti reports
  - Disclosure development
  - Commercialization assistance
  - Legal assistance and patent filing
  - Equipment grant (proposed)



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# Funding Sources & No-cost Resources (cont.)

- Proposal development
  - Impact analyses
  - Data aggregation
  - Messaging solutions
- Community immersion
- Cornerstone grants list



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# Funding Sources – State Grants

- Department of Innovation
  - IRIS Program (\$25M)
  - Connects industry to research institutions
  - Goal to grow R&D in the state
  - <https://www.tn.gov/ecd/grants/additional-grants/iris-grant-program.html>
- Department of Environment and Conservation
  - <https://www.tn.gov/environment/about-tdec/grants.html>
- Notes
  - 15% (max) IDC
  - Must do a bit more digging
  - Explore state websites
  - Sign up for mailing lists



# Funding Sources – Appropriations

- A much larger conversation, but the basics
  - Typically for centers or similar strategic initiatives
  - One time
  - Recurring
  - Not something you apply for
  - Demonstrate tangible returns to the state
- Discuss with myself and Terry Saltsman (Government Affairs)
- Process begins in August
- Likely will take more than one year depending on state priorities, budget source, and more...



# QUESTIONS

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