



# Envisioning the Future of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Executive Summary of the Strategic Visioning Ad Hoc Committee White Paper  
February 5, 2020

[The ad hoc committee white paper](#) analyzes the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's current circumstances and future opportunities for the purpose of preparing the university community for a new strategic visioning process in spring 2020. The strengths identified are aspects of the university on which we can build, and the opportunities identified below seek to leverage these assets. The bold aspirations, in turn, build on our opportunities in pursuit of results that improve the university for the benefit of students and society.

UT Knoxville's strengths include our status as Tennessee's flagship land-grant university. Our access and affordability are vital strengths, as is our presence in all 95 counties across Tennessee through our extension offices. The university's intellectual legacy of thinking big is also foundational to our culture. Other key strengths include the Volunteer spirit of our alumni, our location, and our new leadership.

Our opportunities include heightening our impact on Tennessee through our research and enhancing learning by adapting our curricula to meet students' emerging needs. Extending our thought leadership and harnessing our capacity for discovery and creativity in the service of societal problem solving are also opportunities. Transforming our campus culture is also a crucial opportunity we must leverage to make our university more welcoming, inclusive, transparent, and supportive of wellness.

Our aspirations for UT Knoxville form the heart of our analysis. This report envisions a bold future for the university which we put forward for consideration by the entire UT community. We aspire to a university where

- Every Tennessean is part of UT Knoxville. We could be the first university to launch 100 percent admission from the moment one is born in Tennessee.
- Every Tennessean clearly understands the value UT brings to their lives. If people widely viewed us as the institution of opportunity and inspiration for Tennessee, our role would be transformed.
- We deliver degrees, certifications, and marketable skill sets to learners whenever and wherever the need arises. We envision a broad range of options including full degree programs, micro-credentials, boot camps, and other targeted learning opportunities delivered throughout the state.
- We innovate a subscription-based model of enrollment to transform access and create a more fluid academic environment with fewer boundaries between the university and other aspects of learners' lives.
- Our campus culture is optimistic, inspirational, transparent, diverse, inclusive, and outward looking.
- Our research, scholarship, and creativity are renowned for offering solutions to society's intractable problems.
- Our university is a gateway to the world for all of our students. Whether through experience overseas, on campus, or online, global engagement should be a vital part of the Volunteer experience.

If we build on our strengths, leverage our opportunities, and fulfill our aspirations, we envision a bright future for UT Knoxville where

- We achieve new levels of societal leadership through our innovative research and teaching
- Boundless learning is a hallmark of UT Knoxville
- Our vibrant culture attracts, welcomes, values, and nurtures everyone in our community

These and other strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (referred to herein as a SOAR analysis) are discussed in detail within [the white paper](#).