



UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm

2730 Cherokee Farm Way
Suite #203 Knoxville, TN 37920

www.tnresearchpark.org/spark/accelerator

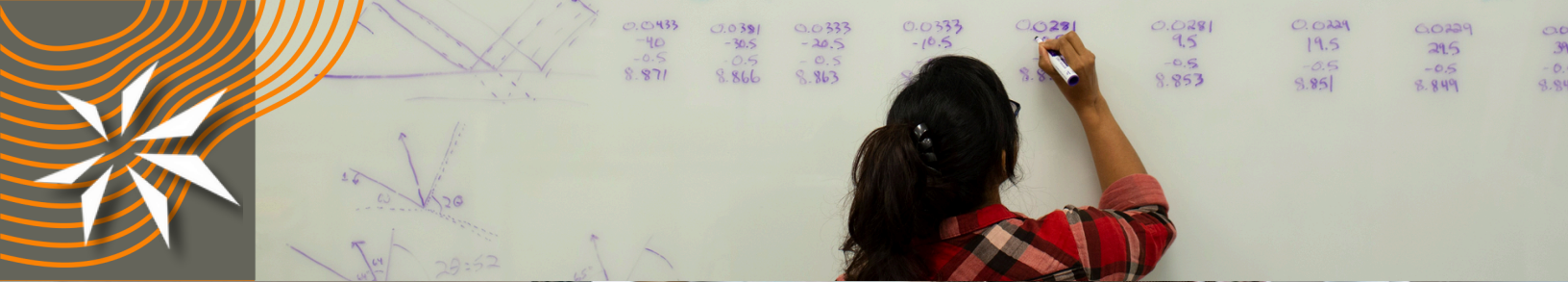
sparkcta@tnresearchpark.org

The Spark Innovation Center is an early-stage business incubator and accelerator that offers a comprehensive set of services to support promising technology companies



RESEARCH PARK AT
CHEROKEE FARM





WHAT WE OFFER

The Spark Innovation Center leverages the unique science and technology resources of the region to help high-tech, high-impact startups grow, succeed, and stay in East Tennessee. Located at the University of Tennessee Research Park, Spark offers promising energy technology companies access to top-quality lab space, expert mentoring, strategic connections and support services from partner organizations in the region.

01

Lab Space

Top quality laboratory and co-working space, and shared equipment.

02

Mentorship

Experienced industry mentors and Entrepreneurs-in-Residence to support you in business strategy, fundraising, and more.

03

Connections

Strategic connections with entities across the region, such as the University of Tennessee, Oak Ridge National Lab, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

04

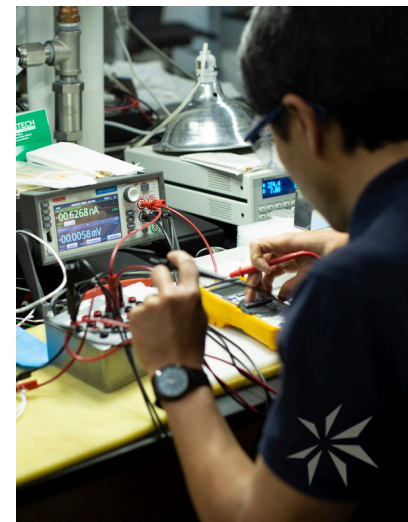
Support

Access to subsidized interns and prototyping microgrants.

05

A Community of Deeptech Innovators

Connections to a community of entrepreneurs and innovators working to bring deeptech solutions to life.



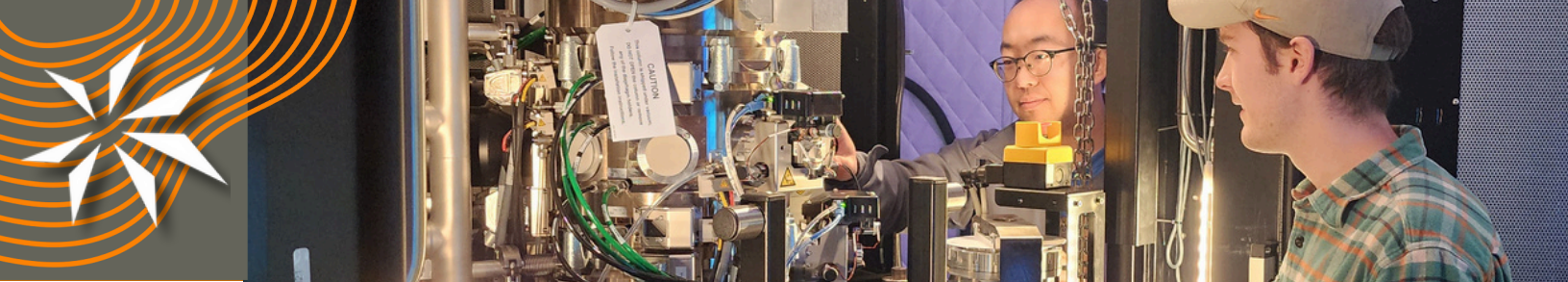


INNOVATION SOUTH

The Innovation South building serves as the headquarters for The Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI), and is home to other tenants such as Trimble, and the U.S. Forest Service. The Spark Innovation Center spaces include two BSL1 wet labs (dedicated or shared) within this space equipped with:

- **854 sqft and 856 sqft lab spaces**
- **72 linear feet of bench**
- **Sink**
- **Hazardous waste disposal upon request**
- **Fume hoods with acid- and flame-resistant storage**
- **Eye wash and safety shower**
- **Hazardous waste disposal upon request**

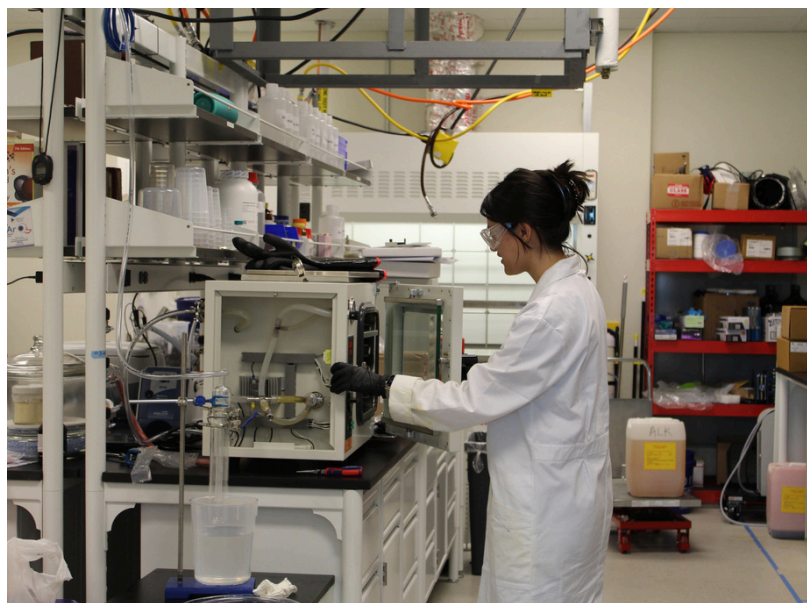


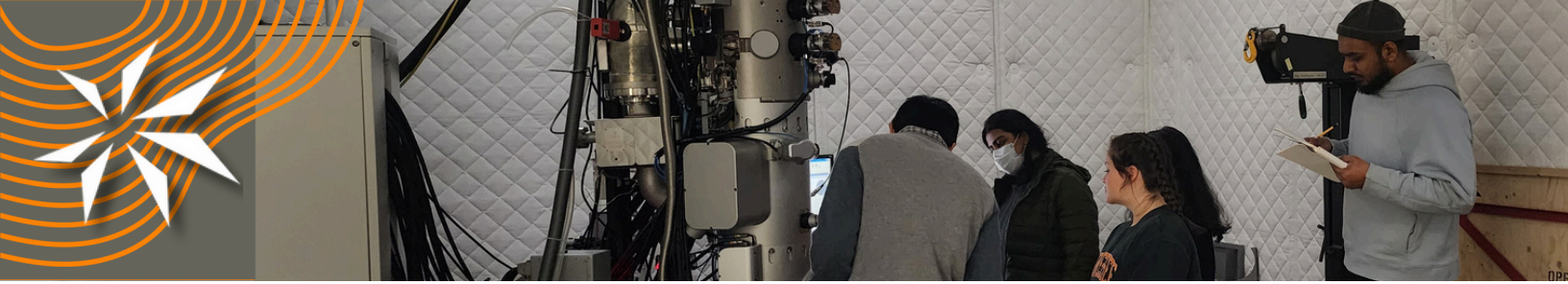


UT INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED MATERIALS AND MANUFACTURING

The University of Tennessee Institute for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing (IAMM) helps advance the understanding of materials through its research areas in advanced manufacturing, advanced materials, materials for extreme environments, polymer science, and quantum materials. The Spark Innovation Center spaces include 1 office, and 3 BSL1 wet labs (dedicated or shared) within this space equipped with:

- **Eye wash, safety shower, and sink**
- **House provided nitrogen and argon gas**
- **Fume hoods with acid- and flame-resistant storage**
- **600+ sqft per lab**
- **DI water access**
- **Liquid nitrogen (paid access)**
- **Processed chilled water**

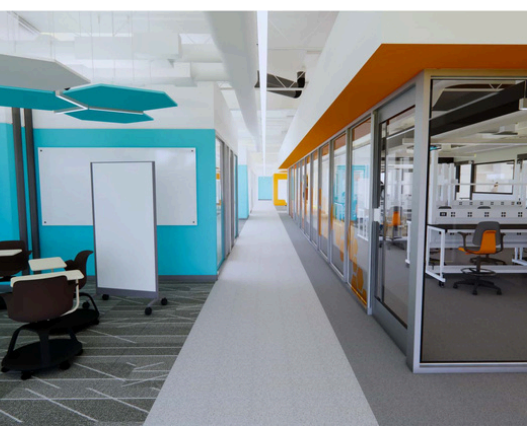
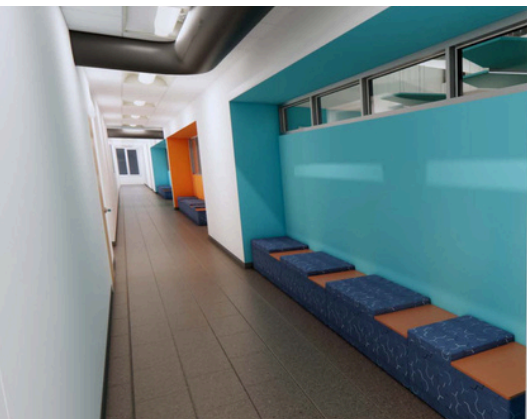


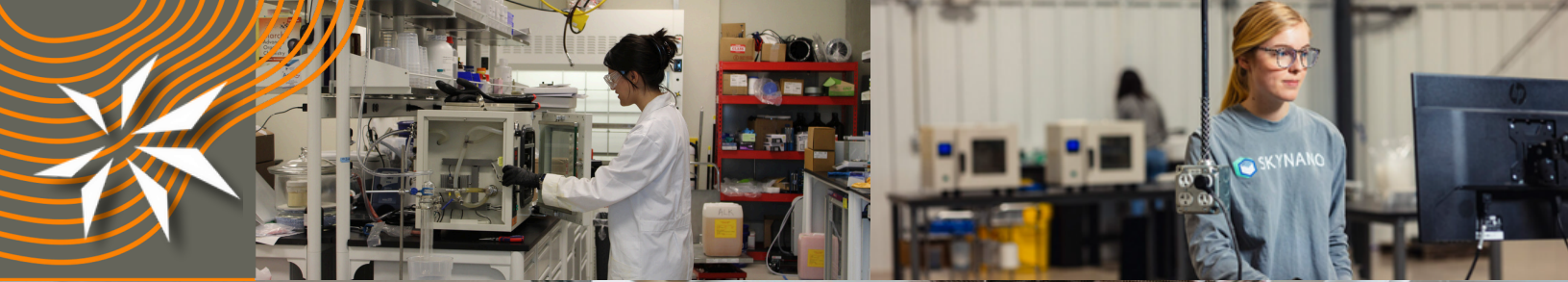


UT CENTER FOR PRECISION HEALTH

The CPH building is a transdisciplinary research hub within the Human Health and Wellness Innovation Gateway. The Orthopaedic Institute is housed within CPH and is in partnership with UT Medical Center, OrthoTennessee, and University Orthopaedic Surgeons. The Spark Innovation Center spaces include one shared BSL1 wet lab within this space equipped with:

- **Eye wash and safety shower**
- **4 fume hoods with flame-resistant storage**
- **96 linear feet of bench**
- **DI Water in lab**
- **Sinks**
- **1,684 sqft (shared lab)**
- **Storage room with O2 sensor**
- **4 adjustable-height work tables**





OTHER PERKS OF SPARK INCUBATOR MEMBERSHIP

Being a part of the Spark Incubator opens up many networking, research, and economic development opportunities. Along with the access to lab space, entrepreneurs that participate in the Incubator have access to the following resources:

SparkShop

SparkShop provides startups with the tools, resources, and mentorship needed to accelerate their growth and impact through product development. Sparkshop provides product development training and mentorship, connections to facilities, equipment and student support, as well as prototyping microgrants



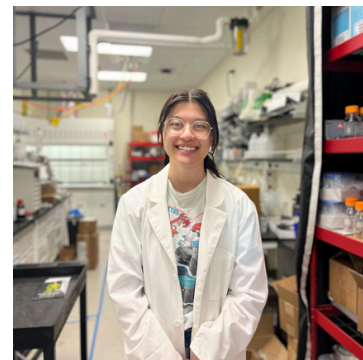
UT Core Facilities

UT Core Facilities can be accessed by Spark companies through a pay-per-use model. Resources that are a part of the UT Core Facilities include:

1. Advanced Microscopy and Imaging Center;
2. Advanced Photoelectronic Spectrometer Lab;
3. Biological and Small Molecule Mass Spectrometry Core;
4. Electromagnetic Properties Lab;
5. Electron Microscopy Center;
6. Genomics Core;
7. Tennessee Ion Beam Materials Lab;
8. Environmental Archaeology Lab;
9. Manufacturing Core at UT;
10. Micro-Processing Research Facility;
11. Molecular Beam Epitaxy;
12. NMR Facilities;
13. Polymer Characterization Laboratory;
14. X-Ray Diffraction.

Spark Scholars

The Spark Scholar Program is designed to match Spark startups with UTK engineering students for jointly sponsored internships related to materials processing research and product development. Spark Scholars provides students with exposure to cutting edge startups and technologies, and provides startups with skilled student support at an accessible rate. The UT Center for Material Processing will contribute 50% of the intern's hourly wage, capped at two interns per company at any one time. Matching support limited to a maximum of 40 hours per week when school is not in session, and 20 hours per week during the academic school year.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Refer below to the most commonly asked questions. Should you have questions in excess of those provided, please reach out to us!

Email: SparkCTA@tnresearchpark.org

Webpage: <https://www.tnresearchpark.org/spark/incubator/>

Application: <https://www.tnresearchpark.org/apply-spark-innovation-center/>

What is the Spark Innovation Center?

The Spark Innovation Center was founded in 2020 as the entrepreneurial initiative of the UT Research Park in Knoxville, TN. It currently runs an accelerator program and an incubator program that provides advanced tech startups laboratory and office space in the UT Research Park.

Do I have to sign a lease?

We currently provide shared access to laboratory space at the Institute for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing (IAMM), Innovation South, and the Center for Precision Health, all located in the UT Research Park. Spark Incubator members enter into a Facilities Use Agreement with the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

How long can I stay in the Spark Incubator?

Facility Use Agreements are for one year, and are reviewed annually by both parties for renewal.

How large are the labs? What about office space?

Lab spaces vary from 600 sq ft to 2,439 sqft. Depending upon needs and availability, labs can either be shared among multiple startup companies, or dedicated to one company. There is currently one designated office space that is 343 sq ft. Co-working and collaboration space is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.





What other services are available to Spark Incubator clients?

Spark clients meet together monthly to share progress and to learn of new program offerings. Through the Spark Scholars program, a partnership with the Center for Materials Processing, and SparkShop, Spark companies are provided with access to student interns and prototyping services at discounted rates. There are also regular workshops for Spark startups on topics such as Being a CEO or Hiring One, Funding Strategies for Early-Stage Companies, Business Engagement etc.

Who are some of the other companies in the Incubator?

Holocene offers next-generation direct air capture (DAC) technology to remove CO2 from the atmosphere and lock it away to combat global warming.

Holocene's DAC is supported by a \$100M offset agreement with Google. The Holocene team and HQ is located in Knoxville, TN.

Safire's patented Li-ion advanced battery safety technology prevents explosion/fire through an instantaneous liquid-to-solid transformation upon mechanical impact, and imparts ballistic protection -- all inherent in the electrolyte chemistry.

Orion Therapeutics is a delivery platform-enabled RNA therapeutics company. Through their innovative GENESYS™ delivery platform, they advance RNA therapies internally and in partnership to target and treat a wide range of diseases with precision and efficacy. Orion is the first recipient of the University of Tennessee Research Foundation's investment fund to support startups that bring research from the university's labs to the market.

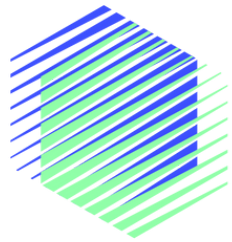
Is there space currently available? How do I apply?

Yes! [You can apply here.](#)





SPARK INCUBATOR MEMBERS AND GRADUATES



SkyNano



RENEW

EONIX



HOLOCENE



QUBIT
ENGINEERING



SHIFT
THERMAL



Safire





Program partners



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

INSTITUTE FOR
ADVANCED MATERIALS
AND MANUFACTURING



TICKLE
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

CENTER FOR MATERIALS
PROCESSING



Appalachian
Regional
Commission



**RESEARCH
FOUNDATION**



TAEBBC



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY



**SPARK
SCHOLARS**



SPARKSHOP





Meet the Spark Innovation Center Team

Brett Malone

President and CEO, Cherokee Farms Development Corporation

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/brettmalone>

✉ brett@tnresearchpark.org

Before joining CFDC, Dr. Malone served as President and CEO of the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, where his visionary leadership transformed a 200-acre campus into a thriving research ecosystem. His leadership at the UT Research Park helps guide research innovations, key collaboration between academia and industry, and commercial tenants in the park.



Lilly Tench

Director of the Spark Innovation Center

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lillytench>

✉ lilly@tnresearchpark.org

Over the past ten years Lilly has supported entrepreneurs working to develop solutions in key global industries from energy to agriculture. Lilly has a BA in Peace and Social Justice from Berea College, an MBA, and an MS in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from the University of Tennessee.

Carol Seamons

Spark Expert-in-Residence

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/carol-seamons-01bbab15>

✉ carol@tnresearchpark.org

Previously a private banker with FirstBank in both Knoxville and Memphis. Carol is a former investment banker whose financial work over the last 25 years has included capital markets origination and strategic consulting to non-profit organizations with Consilience Group.



Bill Malkes

Spark Expert-in-Residence

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/malkes>

✉ bill@tnresearchpark.org

Bill is a serial entrepreneur who has founded companies in industries such as integrated circuit design, mobility innovation and biotech, with several successful exits. He is currently the CEO of NellOne Therapeutics.





Rickey McCallum

VP of Business Development, UT Research Park

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✉ rickey@tnresearchpark.org

Rickey has been working with the UT Research Park since 2019, and focuses on developing new public-private partnerships, as well as cultivating new university-industry research opportunities, and fostering his relationships with leadership, faculty and staff at the University of Tennessee.



Lillian Lovingood

Spark Program Manager, UT Research Park

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lillianlovingood>

✉ lillian@tnresearchpark.org

With a BS in Environmental Science, an MA in Environmental Sociology, and 7+ years in non-profit work, Lillian brings expertise in project management and strategic planning. She currently supports Spark programming, focused on advancing clean tech startups, by managing events and program delivery to drive regional innovation and growth.



Aaron Stone

Marketing and Admin. Coordinator, UT Research Park

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/riedester>

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Aaron joined the UT Research Park in February of 2024. He is currently the main handler of all UTRP social media accounts, and a marketing creative in support of Spark projects. Any administrative and logistical needs are facilitated through him.

