I3: A Cyberinfrastructure and Communication-Based Model to Support a Synergistic Environment for Integrating and Institutionalizing Proven Practices

Anchor: CREST Cyber-ShARE Center of Excellence
The University of Texas at El Paso
J. Gonzales (PI), A. Gates, B. Flores, P. Witherspoon
(jjxgonzales, agates, bflores, pwitherspoon)@utep.edu

Vision: To transform UTEP into a university in which faculty are committed to sharing resources, collaboration is supported through recognition and rewards, effective EHR initiatives are extended across the university, discussion among diverse faculty members and administrators stimulates new ways of student preparation and advancement in STEM areas, and proactive strategies are employed to identify effective avenues for sustainability.

Challenge: Collecting and publishing research expertise at a university and keeping it current is crucial for building collaborations and promoting expertise. The challenge is in the integration of information about education and research efforts that can be maintained at multiple sites or databases: websites of faculty, departments, and colleges; personal computers; university databases; and specialized systems such as Digital Measures and Digital Commons.

Methodology: We address data integration by using Semantic Web technologies to harvest, expose, and disseminate UTEP's expertise that can then be used to identify expertise on campus, establish collaborations, and match potential grant opportunities. The project focuses on: i) capturing profiles and faculty- and staff-initiated communities of practice; ii) developing a set of aligned ontologies describing research and education disciplines, UTEP's priority areas and sub-discipline (research interest keywords) created by researchers, and iii) integrating research news stories from UTEP's Office of University Communications.

UTEP EXPERTISE CONNECTOR
CONNECTING EXPERTISE, RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY

WHAT IS EXPERTISE CONNECTOR?
A publicly accessible portal to find and connect with people, centers, communities, research stories, and events at UTEP. It is the face of research and creative activities and is supported through a partnership with the Office of the Provost, Office of Research and Sponsored Projects and the NSF I3 program. People who are part of Expertise Connector move UTEP.

HOW MIGHT I USE EXPERTISE CONNECTOR?

- **Discover** people, communities, stories, centers, research, creative activities, expertise, events
- **Promote** people, communities, stories, centers, expertise
- **Share** communities, stories, centers, research, events

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN EXPERTISE CONNECTOR?

- By completing and certifying the marked fields in the Personal & Contact Information section in Digital Measures.
- By joining an I3 Move Community or by creating a new one.
- By attending events that connect people, communities and centers.

DISCOVER. SHARE. CONNECT.
expertise.utep.edu

FACULTY
PROFESSIONAL STAFF
CENTERS
RESEARCH STORIES
I3 MOVE COMMUNITIES
EXPERTISE CONNECTOR

WHY EXPERTISE CONNECTOR?
The breadth of research and creative activities is expansive at UTEP. This portal is a central place that provides people, centers, and communities an opportunity to discover the expertise on campus and be discovered.
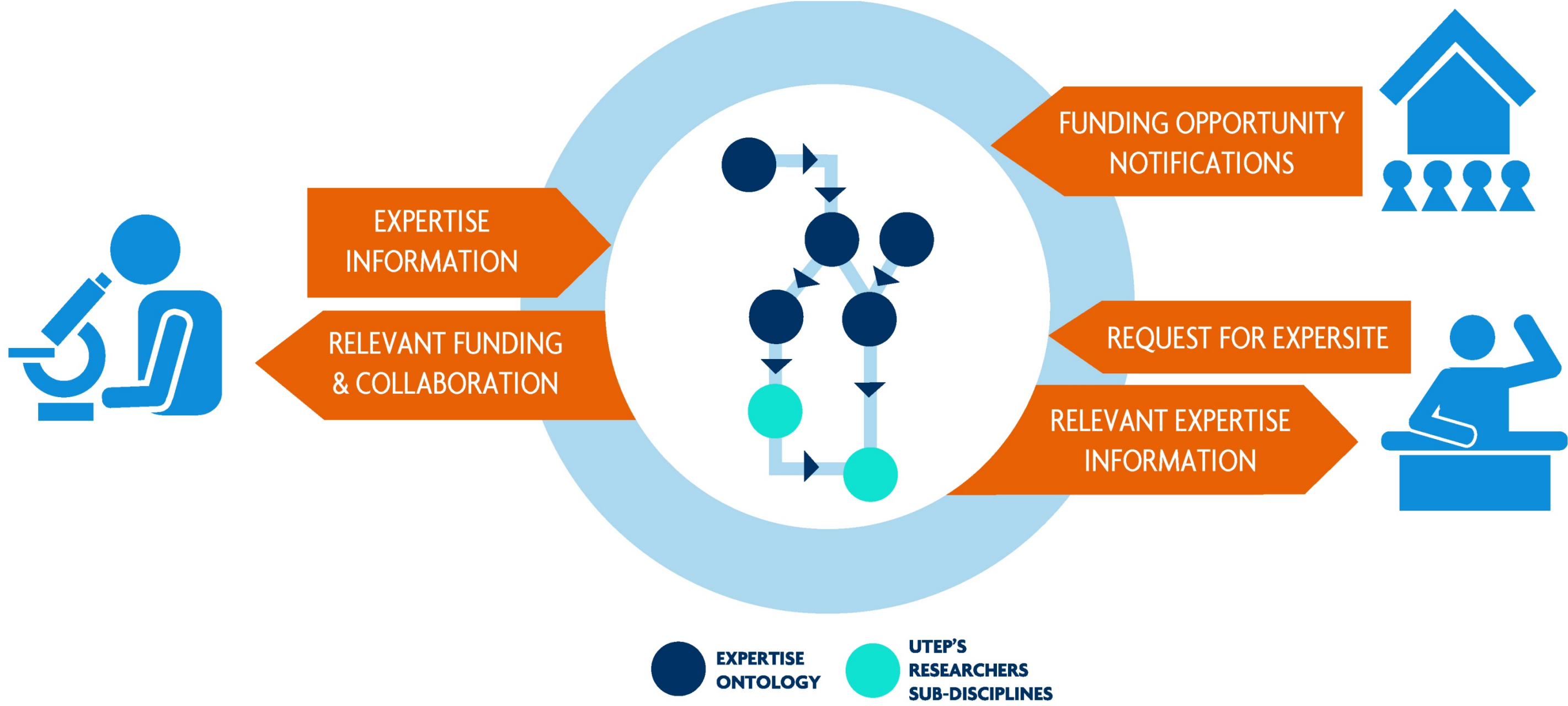
WHAT IS AN I3 MOVE COMMUNITY?
A group of individuals who hold an interest, concern, or passion and who interact regularly to **share** and **motivate** action. These communities connect people with people, people with experts, and people with information [e.g., resources on campus, related initiatives, and effective practices]. How will you move UTEP?

For more information visit
i3.cybershare.utep.edu/news
or email econnect@utep.edu

Expertise Connector has been made possible by:
Office of the Provost

Office of Research and Sponsored Projects

The National Science Foundation I3 program
DUE-0963648
HRD-0734825

DISCOVER. SHARE. CONNECT.
expertise.utep.edu

Overview of UTEP's Expertise Connector System

EXPERTISE INFORMATION
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NOTIFICATIONS
RELEVANT FUNDING & COLLABORATION
REQUEST FOR EXPERSITE
RELEVANT EXPERTISE INFORMATION

EXPERTISE ONTOLOGY
UTEP'S RESEARCHERS SUB-DISCIPLINES

Screen shot of iMove Community Page: Connecting Effective Practices and Research

Institutionalization:

- Innovative, interdisciplinary research projects receive seed money through the Provost's Interdisciplinary Research (IDR) Fund program.
- The Provost's Office established the Campus Office of UG Research Initiatives.
- The Office of Research and Sponsored Project created a new position, Interdisciplinary Network Manager, that is responsible for facilitating connections on campus regarding interdisciplinary research and projects.
- The Center for Institutional Evaluation and Resource Planning established a Student Success Database.
- Graduate School hired a full-time Professional Development Director.

Outcomes:

- The Expertise Connector System is expected to be launched in April 2014.
- Communities are being formed in areas such as mentoring, peer leading, advising, gender in STEM, and UG research.
- Engagement Encounter events and an annual IDR Symposium provide opportunities for faculty to share effective practices and research interests.
- Faculty are engaged in graduate professional development and Fellow-Net, an effective practice approach, is now available to students across all disciplines.
- I3 surveys and interviews capture the positive changes at the university.