



## Case Study:

Building a Global Collaboration Network to Fight Cancer  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson**  
~~Cancer~~ Center  
Making Cancer History®

## Executive Summary

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center is one of the world's most-respected centers devoted exclusively to cancer patient care, research, education and prevention.

To achieve their mission "Making Cancer History," Dr. Oliver Bogler, Vice President of Global Academic Programs, was seeking to further facilitate research collaboration within MD Anderson and across their 23 sister institutions around the globe. Dr. Bogler decided to utilize SciVal Experts to help researchers and administrators at MD Anderson identify experts within the network and enable opportunities for

collaboration. Dr. Bogler says "SciVal Experts provides a tool for researchers to find potential collaborators according to their interests and achievements, with results that are weighted according to how active an investigator has been in a given field. It has opened an important new approach to forming collaborations."

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## Background: One of the world's most respected cancer centers

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center is one of the premier cancer centers in the world. It is located in the Texas Medical Center in central Houston, alongside over 40 other health care entities.

MD Anderson was created in 1941 as a part of the University of Texas System. The institution is one of the nation's original three comprehensive cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Act of 1971 and is one of 40 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers today.

In 2010, *U.S. News & World Report's* "America's Best Hospitals" survey ranked MD Anderson as the top hospital

in the nation for cancer care. It has achieved the top ranking seven times in the past nine years and has ranked as one of the top two hospitals for cancer care since the magazine began its annual survey in 1990.

MD Anderson employs more than 17,000 people, including 1,500 faculty members. During Fiscal Year 2010, MD Anderson provided cancer care for about 105,000 patients. Of those, more than 32,000 were new patients. MD Anderson receives more grant support from the National Cancer Institute than any other institution. In 2010 MD Anderson received over \$200M in federal grants and contracts, with total research funding of \$547M that year.

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## Challenge: Enable collaboration within MD Anderson and across 23 sister institutions

Dr. Oliver Bogler, Vice President of Global Academic Programs, focuses on the following missions; (a) to bring MD Anderson's research-driven, multi-disciplinary patient care model to their partners, (b) to support collaborative cancer research and educational exchange with their sister institutions and (c) to provide strategic opportunities to MD Anderson faculty, staff, and administrators to connect with partners around the world.

Dr. Bogler's team was facing a challenge. On a daily basis, they would receive inquiries from partners around the globe. Their partners wanted to know who within MD Anderson was doing research in similar areas to their own faculty, and which experts they should approach to initiate joint research

programs. But finding the right collaborators was a laborious process for Dr. Bogler's team. They would search multiple internal databases or rely on word-of-mouth recommendations to identify a researcher's expertise.

Dr. Bogler says "I have a team of five people. Although they are extremely hard working and knowledgeable about MD Anderson, it is quite a challenge for them to understand what research each of our 1,500+ faculty members are doing. We were in search of an efficient way to guide our researchers to find the right collaborators. Then we learned about SciVal Experts."



## Solution:

Dr. Bogler and MD Anderson chose to implement SciVal Experts, a directory of research expertise that would help his team and other faculty identify ‘who knows what’ in the institution, leading to more meaningful collaborations among researchers. Based on publication data from Scopus®,

MD Anderson’s SciVal Experts site also includes awarded grants. At MD Anderson, Dr. Bogler’s team and other faculty members use SciVal Experts for various purposes, as illustrated below.

## Using SciVal Experts to understand the research activities of individual faculty members

**Step 1:** Access MD Anderson’s SciVal Experts solution at [www.experts.scival.com/mdanderson](http://www.experts.scival.com/mdanderson)

**Step 2:** Input a concept in the search engine at the top-right side of the screen and click search.

**Step 3:** The list of researchers provided is organized in order of how relevant the concept is to each author’s publication history in Scopus. Click on the name of a researcher to access his or her profile.

From the researcher’s profile, you can access detailed information including:

- Key concepts across career-long publication history
- Past publications including links to full text
- Awarded grants
- Trends chart showing how author’s research interests have evolved over time
- Experts conducting research in similar areas
- List of co-authors and institutional network
- Visualization of co-author network

The screenshot displays the SciVal Experts search interface. On the left, a search results table lists 419 experts found, with columns for name, affiliation, and metrics. The main area shows search terms 'Tumor Suppressor Protein p53' and a list of related concepts such as 'Anatomy', 'Chemicals & Drugs', and 'Protein-DNA Interactions'. Below this is the profile for Guillermo (Gigi) Lozano, MD Anderson, Cancer Center Support Grant... The profile includes a navigation menu (Home, Expert Overview, Profile, etc.), a list of publications (e.g., 'Tumor Suppressor Protein p53'), a trends chart, and a research network visualization. The right sidebar shows similar experts and journals.

## Using SciVal Experts to identify the right collaborators to strengthen grant proposals

**Step 1:** Open a profile page for an individual researcher.

**Step 2:** Click “Similar Experts” in the left-hand menu. A list of faculty conducting similar research will appear. Click on a researcher’s name to access his or her own profile.



### Conclusion:

Dr. Bogler and his team believe that SciVal Experts has made MD Anderson’s network “transparent to everyone.” Dr. Bogler says “SciVal Experts has made it easier to find the right expert at MD Anderson, and so has lowered the barrier for potential collaborators to make a good connection.”

MD Anderson’s SciVal Experts site currently includes data from one of its sister institutions, the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ). Dr. Bogler hopes to expand the tool to the remaining 22 sister institutions over the next few months. This will allow researchers and administrators throughout all of the organizations to identify experts and enable collaboration across MD Anderson’s global cancer network.

In addition, Dr. Bogler’s team plans to extract the raw data from SciVal Experts via Web Services to further understand the network connections that form. By analyzing the collaborations and related publications, Dr. Bogler aims to better understand the size and activity level of specific research areas within the network. He hopes to use this insight to identify gaps in certain areas. Then Dr. Bogler and his team can decide where they may want to dedicate more resources to help further research growth.