



For immediate release — Thursday, April 23, 2020

Lethbridge Regional Science Fair goes virtual

The Southern Alberta Technology Council (SATC), which has organized the Lethbridge Regional Science Fair and Science Olympics since 2002, has decided to virtualize the 2020 Regional Science Fair event.

Originally scheduled to take place on March 27 and 28, the science fair had to be postponed due to limitations on public gatherings put in place shortly before the event was scheduled.

SATC is now accepting video submissions of student projects from Grades 4 to 12 until Thursday, April 30. Virtual project judging will take place from Monday, May 4 to Monday, May 11. A public showcase of the projects and student awards will be held virtually following the project evaluation.

This format allows students, judges, and the public to follow social restrictions while celebrating the work these students have done.

“We have done our best to include aspects of the fair that are feasible during this time of uncertainty,” says Dr. Locke Spencer (MSc '05, PhD '09), SATC President and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Lethbridge. “While postponing until a time when we could run the full event would have been ideal, given the uncertain timeline, we wanted to have something in place that was possible within our current social restrictions. We are one of only a small few regions in Canada hosting a virtual Regional Science Fair this year.”

A few regions held their Regional Science Fair in advance of the public restrictions and many cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Youth Science Canada (YSC), the parent organization of the Canada-Wide Science Fair (CWSF), has cancelled the 2020 CWSF, which was scheduled to take place in Edmonton in May. YSC will be hosting a [Youth Science Canada Online STEM Fair](#) open to virtual project submissions from students across all of Canada.

Kelly Oikawa, SATC Board member and Lethbridge College instructor, was key in developing plans for this year’s virtual event.

“For many of our participants, the science fair is something they look forward to each year and many have already completed projects and had school science fairs,” says Oikawa, who also represents Lethbridge College within SATC. “These young scientists are our future and this could set an example of how to move forward, adapt, and problem solve in an ever-changing and complex world. I think today's youth could use a message of being positive, innovative, and dealing with challenge, as opposed to much of the negative press and noise on social media, and this could offer that opportunity.”

“I am glad to hear that the science fair will still occur amidst this uncertain time,” says Charlène Golsteyn, a Lethbridge Regional Science Fair alumna (2009-2015), two-time national science fair medalist, and a virtual judge for this year’s event. “I think it is important for students to have a chance to present and be rewarded for their hard work.”

To host the Lethbridge Regional Science Fair and Science Olympics, SATC is sponsored by the City of Lethbridge, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge College, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Quantum Alberta, and many other local and regional sponsors. Information about this year’s event, the SATC organization, and its sponsors is available at www.satclethbridge.ca.

This news release can be found online at [Science Fair goes virtual](#).

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Contact

Dr. Locke Spencer, SATC President and Board Chair
University of Lethbridge
locke.spencer@uleth.ca
587-220-4099