



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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U of L art professor's research program boosted by Canada Foundation for Innovation funding

A University of Lethbridge project is one of 332 research infrastructure projects to receive support through the Canada Foundation for Innovation's John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF), as announced today by the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry. More than \$77 million in funding will go to projects at 50 Canadian universities.

"Our researchers have always thought big," says Champagne. "Now, more than ever, they need state-of-the-art labs and equipment to turn their visions into reality. Investing in our university research infrastructure is key to our continuing role as an innovation leader in wide-ranging fields, from Indigenous research to quantum computing, from neurobiology to advanced robotics. These investments will not only support our ground-breaking contributions to science and research but also improve our economy, environment and quality of life."



The U of L's Jackson Two Bears, Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Indigenous Arts Research and Technology and associate professor in the Department of Art, has received over \$82,000 to support the development of the Onkwehonwe Research Environment (ORE) — a research and creation space that will bring students, researchers, and the community together.

"I don't know if there's ever been a time in my life where I've had the opportunity to do what I've pictured in my mind," says Two Bears gratefully. "Usually, you invent a project, then you scale it back to what you can afford to do, or what you can do with space. Now, there's no ceiling on being able to explore all the stuff that I've been wanting to for many years. It's an unbelievable opportunity."

"Funding from CFI is essential for supporting innovation and growing both the capacity and the opportunities for new partnerships that impact our regional communities, as well as the

national landscape,” says Dr. Dena McMartin, U of L vice-president (research). “Professor Two Bears’ research program is a fundamental piece of that puzzle.”

Emerging at a crucial moment, when the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) have become essential to defining the future of our nation, Two Bears’ research program asks the crucial question: what do reconciliation and decolonization look like in the digital age?

Funding will support the development of a lab space in the University Centre for the Arts where students and researchers will have the tools to develop new technology for production and experimentation in Indigenous media arts research, the space to create large-scale multimedia installations, and the opportunity for intensive community engagement and partnership building with local, national and regional Indigenous groups, knowledge-keepers and elders. The lab will allow for everything from screening a movie on a large screen, to video projection, programming, ambisonic sound development, visualization, 3D projection and general production.

“The idea was to think about it as a modular space, as opposed to setting up a lab with a singular specific focus,” describes Two Bears. “This lab will hopefully accommodate all kinds of different research projects, from development to production, even presentation of media and materials in some capacity.”

ORE is also supported by the Alberta Research Capacity Program, Canada Council for the Arts and uLethbridge.

This news release can be found online at [JELF funding](#).

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