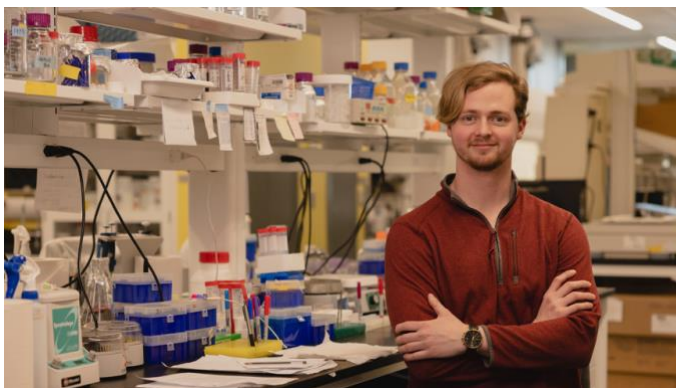




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University of Lethbridge grad student sees a world of possibilities in mushrooms

With burgeoning research into both psychedelic, or so-called magic mushrooms, and non-psychedelic mushrooms, Gregory Robinson, a PhD candidate at the University of Lethbridge and entrepreneur, is poised to take advantage of the surge in interest in mushrooms.



He launched his psychedelic pharmaceutical research and development company, [Mycos Biotech](#), a year ago after seeing much promise in developing techniques to make extracts from mushrooms. After finishing his master's at Western University, Robinson came to ULethbridge to work with Dr. Igor Kovalchuk in

the Department of Biological Sciences. He soon began concentrating his research on the study of fungi, a field known as mycology.

“A lot of research has gone into understanding the properties of mushrooms and their benefits,” says Robinson. “There are many known benefits to mushrooms, but you usually cannot get the benefits of mushrooms by just eating them. You actually have to extract a lot of the chemicals.”

Mushroom extracts can be helpful in fighting inflammation, maintaining cardiovascular health, promoting sleep and regulating blood glucose levels. One of the difficulties, whether it's psychedelic or non-psychedelic mushrooms, is that there's enormous variability in the amount of active compounds between and within mushroom species. That's where Robinson focuses his research.

“We want to make sure that we, in any mushroom that we produce, know the exact amount of metabolites present, such as psilocybin in the case of psychedelic

mushrooms,” says Robinson. “We want to make it consistent and, at the same time, ensure that we have the highest amount of those metabolites.”

Robinson is looking to develop processes and techniques that provide both consistency and a high quantity of metabolites in mushrooms and then sell those techniques to mushroom producers.

Thanks to grants from Mitacs, Agility, Technology Alberta and Venture for Canada, Robinson has been able to continue his research and nine students have been hired on a part-time basis. He’s also collaborating with local companies involved in the growing field of mycology, including [Pharmapsil](#) and [Herbal Apothecary](#).

“There’s a lot of research and work that’s going on in psychedelics here in Lethbridge and there’s a bunch more in Calgary,” says Robinson. “I would argue that Alberta and even Lethbridge is like a psychedelic hub for research and development.”

In March, Robinson started a second corporation called Mycos, which is working with a dozen different non-psychedelic mushrooms. They are combining various extracts into different formulations to create supplements that are targeted to specific problems. Robinson, who’s also completing a master’s in business administration through the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, is participating in a pitch competition through Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Mycos made it into the top 20 finalists for a chance to win \$50,000 US in funding. See [Robinson’s video pitch](#).

“The benefits of these edible mushroom extracts just go on and on,” says Robinson.

This news release can be found online at [Mycos Biotech](#).

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Our University’s Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.