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## University of Lethbridge researcher receives Brain Canada grant

Dr. Chelsea Ekstrand, a University of Lethbridge assistant professor at the Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience, has been awarded a 2023 Future Leader in Canadian Brain Research grant. Worth \$100,000, the grant is through [Brain Canada](#) in partnership with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Brain Health and Cognitive Impairment in Aging Research Initiative.



Announced today, the grant is one of [21 Brain Canada awards to early career researchers](#) across the country.

“Empowering the next generation of scientists is critical to improving health outcomes for people living with brain conditions and their families. We are confident that supporting these bold ideas will advance research and accelerate progress in ways that will benefit all of us,” said Dr. Viviane Poupon, President and CEO of Brain Canada, in a news release. “With this funding, we are building a strong pipeline of neuroscience leaders and laying the groundwork for future research excellence.”

“I’m extremely grateful to receive this grant,” says Ekstrand. “It allows me and my team to conduct novel research into real-world memory formation. This is an urgent necessity as we look to develop treatments for dementia.”

Ekstrand and her team are studying how memories are formed. Memory is fundamental to human cognition, allowing people to recall past experiences that shape future actions. The team plans to have study participants navigate a building, interact with others and wear a camera. The events captured on camera will then be compared to participants’ recollections while their brains are being imaged.

“By comparing healthy participants and those with mild cognitive impairment, we will be able to identify early markers of memory dysfunction,” says Ekstrand. “This, in turn, has implications for diagnosis and intervention.”

[Read this news release online.](#)

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**Contact:**

Caroline Zentner, public affairs advisor  
University of Lethbridge  
403-394-3975 or 403-795-5403 (cell)  
[caroline.zentner@uleth.ca](mailto:caroline.zentner@uleth.ca)

*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.*