

## Twitter Research Competition information package

The Laurentian and Prairie Northern Chapters of SETAC are excited to bring back the Twitter research competition for its 2nd year! Traditional poster presentations provide an excellent platform to talk in-depth about your research, answer questions, and build relationships with other researchers. The virtual nature of conferences over the past year have challenged these elements of scientific communication and networking. We want to re-engage these aspects of the traditional poster presentation using Twitter and provide students an opportunity to share their research and engage with a large audience.

Twitter is used by researchers around the world to share new publications, highlight new research findings, and create dialogue with other researchers and the general public. If you were thinking about jumping into the world of science communication, this may be a great opportunity to start building a Twitter following while sharing the exciting work that you are doing!

### Important dates:

- Register and indicate interest in participating in competition by **May 20th**
- Create a Twitter account if you do not already have one
- Post content by **June 13<sup>th</sup>** at 12:00 EDT (most of Ont.) | 11:00 CDT (NWO, MB) | 10:00 CST/MDT (Sask., Ab.)
- Judging commencement: June 15th (same times)
- Judging submission: June 16th (same times)
- All content screenshots uploaded to Laurentian/PNC website for viewing on June 13th
- Feedback provided to participants starting June 18<sup>th</sup> (estimated)

### Content requirements:

Our aim with this competition is to provide a platform for students to **share** their research with a wider audience and to **engage** with other researchers and the public, answer questions, and discuss elements of the research. This is your opportunity to highlight specific elements of your research, get feedback on methodology, and more. The Twitter science community is huge! Be prepared to engage with researchers outside of the Laurentian and Prairie Northern memberships.

Requirements:

- Your thread (typically the first and last tweets) must include **#LaurentianPrairieResearch** and mention @LaurentianSETAC or @SETAC\_PNC. This will help us find and track your posts.
- Rely on visual elements (photos and figures) to convey your research.
- Expand beyond a traditional poster (all information contained within a single image), which will be challenging to read and interpret on a phone screen.
- Instead, present specific figures, lab/field photos, etc. with corresponding descriptions, all contained within a single Twitter thread.
- **Use plain language.** Our goal is to communicate our work to a larger audience, not just academics who *may* have knowledge of your field.
- At the end of each tweet, indicate the order and number your tweets (e.g., 1/10, 2/10) so we (and others) know how many tweets are in the thread and know the order you want things presented. See examples below for how this numbering works.

It is up to you how you wish to present your work. Don't be scared to get creative! Some suggestions follow:

- **Tell a story** with a Twitter thread, using figures or photos to draw in the reader or emphasize key components.
- Share a video from the field if you have any (keep in mind accessibility considerations: include captions, link to a transcript, etc.)
- If you want to include a single image/document that describes your research to kick off your Twitter thread, instead of a traditional poster with lots of text, think graphical abstract, or include a key figure or photo from your research to draw the reader in. Have a focal image that you would use on a poster? Use that! Don't make it too detailed though – this is what will draw in the reader.
- **Focus on main takeaways.** What is it that you want the person reading your posts to walk away with? Focus on that.
- Have fun with it – throw in some GIFs or other fun content to engage the reader.
- Don't let your thread go too long. Brevity is key and we don't want to lose the reader half-way through.

### **External resources on Twitter sci-comm threads and using Twitter for science:**

[Twitter for Scientists](#) – Great guide for folks using Twitter for the first time: outlines how to set up a profile, compose tweets and threads, reply to tweets, etc. in addition to some helpful advice for scientists wanting to use the platform for science communication.

[10 reasons I love reading paper threads on Twitter](#)

[A nifty guide for academics on using Twitter](#)

### Example Twitter threads:

There are some good threads [here](#). Some of these examples are quite long. No more than 10 tweets within your thread should suffice!

Some other examples from the Laurentian/PNC team with ways that they could be improved for you to consider when preparing your own threads:

<https://twitter.com/pitrod/status/1327698609379319808> - could use some graphical elements/photos to draw in the reader, but otherwise detailed and tells a clear story.

[https://twitter.com/\\_tylerandrew/status/1343663820967976961](https://twitter.com/_tylerandrew/status/1343663820967976961) - could use some more data/figures to support the tweets, summarizes the outcomes well.

### Making your Twitter content more accessible:

As with other online content, there are barriers associated with accessing content on Twitter. With the goal of reducing these barriers as much as possible, please consult the below content when preparing your posts to ensure that the content is accessible to individuals using screen readers or other aids.

- Ensure that any image has **alternative text** associated with it. When posting a photo, select “Add description” under the photo. This allows you to provide a 1,000 character written description of the image (alt-text). Use this space to describe the image in as much detail as possible. Include any text on the photo.
- **Capitalize each word** within a hashtag (#LaurentianPrairieResearch NOT #laurentianprairieresearch)
- Save hashtags and mentions for the **end of your text**
- **Limit the amount of text** within your images; exceptions include data figures and tables. On that note, find alternative ways of sharing your data that do not rely heavily on tables or loads of text.
- **Avoid acronyms** wherever possible
- Posting a short video? Most video editing software can assist you with including captions. Associating a transcript with the video is an alternative.

### External resources:

[6 ways to make your social media posts accessible for people with a visual impairment](#)

[Creating an accessible Twitter post](#)