

Canada's largest academic conference descends on Waterloo Region

This year's Congress includes more than 7,000 delegates from across Canada

May 25, 2012 – Waterloo, ON – Today marks the kick-off of the 2012 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. This year's Congress, hosted jointly by the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, includes more than 7,000 delegates from nearly 70 associations in Canada's largest and most significant interdisciplinary academic gathering.

Organized by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Congress brings together scholars, students, policy-makers and leaders involved in a broad spectrum of disciplines including literature, theatre, sociology, education, and population studies.

The 2012 Congress is the first time in its 81-year history that the event has been held in Waterloo. This year's theme, which changes year to year, is "Crossroads: Scholarship for an Uncertain World."

"The vibrant scholarly community in Kitchener-Waterloo was a perfect fit for the Congress," said Graham Carr, president of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. "The commitment to research, knowledge and collaboration demonstrated by the region is reflective of the interdisciplinary, collaborative nature of Congress."

Hosted by Congress academic co-convenors Eleanor Ty (Wilfrid Laurier University) and James Skidmore (University of Waterloo), Congress 2012 is a working meeting for Canada's academics, scholars and researchers – providing opportunities to share knowledge, solidify partnerships and create linkages between the university and other sectors. Over the course of eight days of meetings, panel presentations and keynote speeches, thousands will present their latest works and research at more than 2,500 events.

Big Thinking Lectures:

The "Big Thinking" lectures take place throughout the Congress, and will include such noted speakers as:

- His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada
- Canadian authors Margaret Atwood and Jane Urquhart
- Former war correspondent Chris Hedges
- Technology leader Don Tapscott
- Thomas Homer-Dixon, Chair of Global Systems at the Balsillie School of International Affairs
- Leading thinkers Dan Gardner and Diana Carney

About the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences

Organized by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Congress is the largest interdisciplinary conference in Canada. Described as a “conference of conferences,” Congress involves nearly 70 academic associations that represent a rich spectrum of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, including literature, history, theatre, film studies, education, music, sociology, geography, social work, and many others.

For more information, story ideas or to schedule an interview, please contact:

Marie-France MacKinnon

613-241-3512 x. 229

marie.france@blueskystrategygroup.com