The Partners In Research (PIR) Live Event program connects K-12 students with Canadian experts from coast to coast utilizing digital tools and technology. PIR Live Event webinars are designed for specific grade ranges (K-3, 4-8, 9-12), allowing multiple classrooms of similar grade levels to benefit from concurrent live participation. During the 2017/2018 school year more than 700 classrooms from all across Canada joined these webinars live, with an additional 1300 classrooms registered to view the video recording. In addition to requiring little preparation by teachers/schools, the simplicity of the free Zoom video software makes PIR Live Event a cost effective and innovative way to incorporate experiential learning early and often within the classroom.

Participate: PIR Live Event webinars connect K-12 students with researchers and facilities at academic institutions as well as entrepreneurs, professionals, and other experts at organizations across Canada. PIR Live Event webinars are prearranged by a PIR staff member in order to feature topical and/or curriculum-related themes that will engage and educate participants. PIR Live Event webinars consist of a short presentation, a virtual tour of a guest expert’s facility, and/or participation in a live, hands-on activity followed by a question and answer session with the guest expert. Live participants engage in an active discussion in which a PIR host relays their questions to the guest expert for answers in real time. PIR Live Events encourage and support student inquiry before, during and after the session.

Reflect: PIR Live Event webinars compliment student learning by introducing students to a variety of career paths in industry, academia, and not-for-profits as well as examples of entrepreneurship. Past PIR Live Events feature researchers in STEM, social sciences, and humanities as well as entrepreneurs and many others who participate so that they may share their knowledge and experiences. Learners can utilize this information to make inferences about their own attributes while contributing to their “All About Me” portfolio / Individual Pathways Plan. PIR Live Event Webinars targeted for senior grade levels provide information allowing participants to answer inquiry questions such as, “what are my opportunities?” and “what is my plan for achieving my goals?” PIR Live Event webinars intended for a younger audience place a greater emphasis on helping students discover what type of person they are/want to become based on their interests, strengths, and intelligences.

Apply: PIR Live Event webinars contribute to the curriculum by providing students with an authentic and curriculum-related learning experience. The various career paths taken by guest experts demonstrate how the decisions that students make influence future career opportunities, but that a career path is seldom linear.