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The Leighton Chajnantor Project (LCT): an update

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The Leighton Chajnantor Telescope (LCT) project is poised to open new opportunities for large astronomical surveys and advanced technology development at submillimetre wavelengths. The project will relocate the world's most accurate 10-m-class submm telescope—the Leighton Telescope of the former Caltech Submillimeter Observatory (CSO)—from Maunakea to a superior observing site on Cerro Toco within the Parque Astronómico Atacama in northern Chile.

LCT will enable a new submm window into the time-domain sky, support high-risk, high-return survey science with next-generation instrumentation, and carry out sustaining science across multiple areas of broad astrophysical interest. The project is a three-way partnership between the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), the Universidad de Concepción (UdeC), and Shanghai Normal University (ShNU). Through this collaboration, LCT will drive scientific and technological development across all partner communities and strengthen the capacity of these countries to participate in the design, operation, and management of major international observatories.

As a university-driven initiative, LCT places strong emphasis on training students and early-career researchers through direct involvement in forefront instrumentation and observational programs. In this presentation, we report on the current status of the project, including technical, logistical, and organizational progress, as we stand on the verge of transporting the telescope from Hawaii to Chile and approaching the formal launch of LCT's scientific and technical activities.

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