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Prof. Harold Gibson, PhD., P.Geo.
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RE: Centre of Exploration Targeting Collaboration with Laurentian University's Canada First Research Excellence Fund Metal Earth initiative.

Dear Professor Gibson,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Laurentian University's Metal Earth initiative application to the Canada First Research Excellence Fund. I outline below the proposed engagement between the Metal Earth initiative and the Centre for Exploration Targeting (CET).

The CET (www.cet.edu.au) is a joint venture between The University of Western Australia, Curtin University and the Minerals Industry. The CET is one of the world's largest research organisations focussed on mineral exploration. With over 60 Corporate Member companies, 90 staff and PhD students, and projects on 6 continents, the centre undertakes research projects that align fundamental science with application of research outcomes into the mineral exploration industry. We are also one of three major nodes of the largest fundamental geoscience initiative currently funded by the Australian Research Council, the ARC Centre of Excellence for Core to Crust Fluid Systems.

Laurentian University, with its strong ties to the Ontario Geological Survey, already has a world recognised research group on Precambrian mineral systems, and is a co-leader of the giant CMIC project with the Canadian minerals industry. As such, Sudbury is a centre of gravity for minerals geoscience. Laurentian is currently amongst the thought-leaders in Canada with regards to mineral exploration geoscience, and is well-positioned to affect transformational changes to industry through application of geoscience. The proposed Metal Earth initiative is an exciting opportunity that would provide sustainable critical mass to the innovative Laurentian minerals geoscience team, build on previous investments by the provincial and federal governments into this centre, cement the network of collaborative geoscience that has been established through CMIC and allow this network to achieve even greater outcomes for the Canadian minerals industry.

There are many areas for collaboration between Metal Earth and CET. Both teams are expert in Precambrian mineral systems, which is an era of Earth's history exceptionally well-endowed in metals. As Canada has the largest expanse of Precambrian rocks in the world, and Sudbury is situated on them, Precambrian mineral systems are understandably the initial focus of Metal Earth. Similarly, two-thirds of Australia consists of Precambrian rocks that are host to the majority of Australia's mineral wealth. CET is an expert in these mineral systems, particularly nickel-sulphide, iron-oxide and orogenic gold systems. CET will also bring its expertise from the West African Exploration Initiative (WAXI > 50 research, government and industry partners). Over the past decade, the WAXI initiative has undertaken geoscience research in Precambrian terranes of West Africa that has generated transformational understanding of the mineral systems in this region and translated this understanding into data and knowledge products for industry across a range of scales.

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We envisage a collaboration that will involve joint projects with industry, where research expertise from Metal Earth, CET and industry technical leaders are combined. I envisage numerous opportunities for linkages with existing CET research programs, as well as new initiatives with graduate students and joint postdoctoral fellows, as well as secondment of staff for periods as visiting researchers between the organisations. In addition to the natural collaboration in geoscience areas of Precambrian tectonics, metallogeny and mineral systems, there is also the opportunity to develop even better methods of translating this geoscience through to application in industry. Development of innovative tools and training for industry personnel, including embedded researchers in industry and embedded industry personnel in the research groups will be actively pursued.

In summary, as Director of CET I lend full support to the CFREF Metal Earth initiative, and look forward to CET actively engaging in this innovative research program.

Yours sincerely

Professor T. Campbell McCuaig
Director
Centre for Exploration Targeting