

## News Release

For Immediate Release

### Government invests to help accelerate innovation in Canada's mining industry

Investment to position Canada's mining sector to benefit from, and contribute to, Canada's green economic recovery

July 13, 2021 – Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec – Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Canada's mining sector is a crucial part of our economy, and the global demand for minerals is only adding to its potential. The Government of Canada is supporting the continued success of the sector by investing in innovative solutions that will strengthen Canada's international leadership in sustainable, efficient and safe mining.

Today, the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, announced an investment of \$40 million in a \$112.4-million project of the [Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation Inc.](#) (CEMI). This investment supports the creation of the Mining Innovation Commercialization Accelerator (MICA) Network, a pan-Canadian initiative bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields to accelerate the development and commercialization of innovative technologies to make the mining sector more productive and sustainable.

MICA will be headquartered in Sudbury, Ontario, and will operate across Canada through the following main partners: the Bradshaw Research Initiative for Minerals and Mining, InnoTech Alberta, Saskatchewan Polytechnic, MaRS, Le Groupe MISA and the College of the North Atlantic. MICA is an ecosystem initiative designed to modernize mining and improve its productivity and environmental performance, strengthen the Canadian mineral supply chain, and increase the domestic and export sales of Canadian innovators. By accelerating the development and commercialization of innovative autonomous and clean technologies in the mining sector, the initiative is expected to extend the operational lives of existing mines and reduce the time it takes to bring new mineral deposits into production.

With activities that will span the country, including in the North, MICA is expected to support the creation of 900 jobs and at least 12 new businesses; the commercialization of at least 30 new products, services or processes; and the generation of interindustry spillover benefits by introducing innovative non-mining technologies to the mining sector and vice versa. MICA will mobilize investments of at least \$100 million from the private sector and expand its membership to over 350 businesses and organizations across the country.

Canada is rich in critical minerals, which are vital to the manufacturing of clean technologies, from solar panels to battery electric vehicles. This investment will support Canada's mining sector in delivering those minerals to the world more quickly and efficiently, expediting the global shift toward net zero, and positioning Canada as a leader in the global market for net-zero technologies. This project supports the Government of Canada's goal of making Canada a leading producer of zero-emission products and technologies.

### Quotes

"The mining sector is critical to the Canadian economy as it supports well-paying jobs in communities across the country. Today's announcement will help bridge the innovation-to-commercialization gap for the benefit of both Canadian mining companies and innovators by providing them with the tools, knowledge and expertise they need to meet the future demands for Canada's critical minerals. The mining sector is playing a pivotal role in our green recovery and our progress toward net zero, and I look forward to the innovations and the job creation that will come from these new collaborations."

– The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry

"Nickel Belt–Greater Sudbury's robust mining history has enabled me to see first-hand how the industry can lead us forward in the 21st century. The critical minerals sector offers tremendous opportunities for

producing clean technology, which can help us reach our climate change goals. Today's announcement is a testament to Canada's leadership in clean mining technology and expertise that can support further innovative development."

– Marc Serré, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources

"The commercialization of innovations in the mining industry has never been more important than it is today. Supplying the demand for the minerals and metals needed to advance the green transition to a low-carbon economy is critical, but if mines are to produce more and do so faster, cheaper and more sustainably, implementing innovation is essential. CEMI believes a national innovation network is necessary to identify innovative solutions and integrate them into the system-solutions that the mining industry needs. The MICA Network will help mobilize investments, grow Canadian SMEs and establish Canada's leadership role in addressing climate change."

– Douglas Morrison, President, Mining Innovation Commercialization Accelerator Network

## Quick facts

- MICA intends to connect Canada's regional mining clusters and bring together mining companies, mining suppliers, academic and research institutions, innovators from all walks of life, and others to foster knowledge sharing and collaboration and to create technical and business synergies among its members.
- According to the [Mining Association of Canada](#), the mining sector contributed \$109 billion, or 5%, to Canada's GDP in 2019. It directly and indirectly employs 719,000 Canadians, which represents approximately 1 in every 26 jobs in Canada.
- Critical minerals are those that are essential to the economy. They can be used to develop clean technologies, such as solar panels and electric vehicle batteries. They are also used in the aerospace, health care and telecommunications sectors, and demand is increasing rapidly.
- The contribution is being made through the [Strategic Innovation Fund](#) (SIF), a program designed to attract and support high-quality business investments across all sectors of the economy. The investment is under Stream 5: SIF support for national innovation ecosystems and their pan-Canadian network-led projects that involve a high degree of collaboration and aim to stimulate innovation and commercialization in areas of Canadian advantage and enhance linkages between businesses and academic/research institutions.
- CEMI has signed on to the Government of Canada's [50 – 30 Challenge](#), pledging to increase the representation and inclusion of diverse groups within the workplace and attain gender parity and significant representation of under-represented groups within its senior leadership.

## Associated links

- [Strategic Innovation Fund](#)
- [Innovation and Skills Plan](#)
- [Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation Inc.](#)

- 30 -

## Contacts

John Power  
Senior Manager, Communications and Media Relations  
Office of the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry  
[john.power@ised-isde.gc.ca](mailto:john.power@ised-isde.gc.ca)

Media Relations  
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada  
[mediarelations-mediasrelations@ised-isde.gc.ca](mailto:mediarelations-mediasrelations@ised-isde.gc.ca)

**Stay connected**

Follow Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada on Twitter: [@ISED\\_CA](https://twitter.com/ISED_CA)