



For Immediate Release
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MANITOBA AND GENOME CANADA INVEST IN RESEARCH IN CANADA'S ARCTIC

\$4 Million Investment for Genomics Research in Oil Spill Preparedness and Emergency Response in Arctic Marine Environment

Research Manitoba and The Government of Canada today announced \$4 million in funding for GENICE: a large-scale applied research project (LSARP). LSARP is one of Genome Canada's funding programs and is aimed at projects using genomic approaches to address challenges and opportunities of importance to Canada's natural resources, including interactions between natural resources and the environment, thereby contributing to Canada's bioeconomy and the well-being of Canadians.

"These genomic research projects strengthen Canada's position as a leader in producing evidence-based solutions that will address some of our grandest challenges," said the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science. "In addition to growing the economy and quality of life for middle-class Canadians, they will accelerate our drive toward clean technologies."

"The GENICE project brings together research, residents, industry, and many levels of government," said Minister Cliff Cullen, Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade. "This level of collaboration is inspiring and will allow Manitoba to create jobs, foster community development, and prepare for future economic growth in the north."

"Oil spills and other environmental disasters are a threat to Canada's arctic marine environment," said Terry Duguid, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. "I'm pleased to see these issues are being tackled through Genomics research here in Manitoba."

Today's announcement recognizes the primary recipients of the funding, Drs. Casey Hubert and Gary Stern. Their research, which uses cutting-edge genomics, will bring best practices to Canada's Arctic communities and will put Manitoba in the best position to deal with an increasing amount of traffic in Canada's northern waterways and the risk that comes with shipping and oil exploration.

"Partnerships, such as this one with Genome Canada, allow us to complement existing investments and generate unique opportunities for our scientists, reinforcing Manitoba as a global leader in Arctic research," said Ms. Christina Weise, CEO, Research Manitoba.

“Climate change may present the opportunity for year-round shipping traffic along Canada’s Arctic coast,” said Dr. Simon Potter, Director of Operations, Genome Prairie. “The work of the GENICE team on genomics-based bioremediation will help Canadian companies and agencies be better prepared to mitigate the environmental impact of expanding industrial activities in the Arctic.”

"The University of Calgary and the University of Manitoba have a longstanding working relationship in the area of arctic research. This combined with the contributions of the many other partners will significantly enhance the knowledge and awareness that is going to be required to allow Canada to be better prepared for the effects of Climate Change in the Arctic," said Dr. Gijs van Rooijen, CSO for Genome Alberta.

"I congratulate the team members on the funding support for this important research and thank the Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada for their continued support to the research enterprise of the University of Manitoba," said Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vice-President (Research and International), and Distinguished Professor, University of Manitoba.

"My colleagues and I look forward to collaborating with the University of Manitoba to address gaps in understanding oil spill remediation in the Arctic, incorporating microbial genomics" notes Casey Hubert, Campus Alberta Innovates Program (CAIP) Chair from the University of Calgary. "Collaborative projects like this that pool expertise and resources from Manitoba, Alberta, and the federal government, will help develop the predictive understanding we need for the protection and preservation of Canada's Arctic marine ecosystems."

“It’s a very exciting project and it comes at a critical time. Canada needs to be prepared in the event of an oil spill in Arctic waters. I would really like to thank the Provinces of Manitoba and Alberta and the Federal Government of Canada for recognizing the need for such as study and everyone who contributed to writing of the proposal,” said Dr. Gary Stern, Professor, University of Manitoba, Centre for Earth Observation Science.

Research Manitoba is providing \$1 million for this project, while Genome Canada is contributing \$3 million.

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About Research Manitoba:

Research Manitoba promotes, supports, and coordinates the funding of, research in the health, natural and social sciences, engineering and the humanities in Manitoba. Research Manitoba advises the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade on matters related to research and from moneys received from the Province, provides funds for research through several grants and awards programs. For more information, visit: www.researchmanitoba.ca.

About Genome Prairie:

Genome Prairie, a non-profit organization, with offices in Winnipeg and Saskatoon, aligns partners and resources to develop and manage genomics and bioscience research projects addressing key regional priorities including agriculture, human health, the environment, energy and mining. These efforts are playing a central role in building the region's reputation as a location of choice for innovation and commercialization. For more information, visit www.genomeprairie.ca.

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