

Mining companies invest R40m in Wits Bushveld Complex research

A consortium of mining companies has pledged R40m over five years to establish the Bushveld Geology and Metallogeny Research Chair at Wits University. The initiative aims to boost research into the geologically rich Bushveld Complex while fostering the next generation of geoscientists.



Wits students at the Bushveld Complex

The Bushveld Complex holds vast reserves of critical minerals, including chromium, platinum group elements (PGEs), and vanadium – all essential for the global transition to greener technologies. Leading mining firms African Rainbow Minerals, Dwarsrivier Chrome Mine, Northam Platinum, Rustenburg Platinum, and Sibanye-Stillwater Platinum Mines are financially backing the initiative.

Prof Rais Latypov, a specialist in mafic-ultramafic layered intrusions, will lead. "Soaring global commodity prices have renewed focus on the Bushveld Complex," said Latypov, highlighting the region's importance to South Africa's economy.



African Rainbow Minerals invests R20m into research at Wits, gets building named after it

23 Nov 2023



Key goals of the Initiative include generating critical geological knowledge of the Bushveld Complex to guide exploration and mining strategies. It will also seek to train highly qualified geoscientists to meet industry needs through postgraduate programmes and skills development courses and promote public awareness of the Bushveld Complex's importance through talks, excursions, and educational online resources.

"This partnership will ensure scientifically sound mining practices in the Bushveld Complex while nurturing geological expertise," said Prof Gillian Drennan, head of the Wits School of Geosciences.

Nithaya Chetty, dean of the Faculty of Science, emphasised the project's potential to address environmental concerns and support communities impacted by mining.

Wits Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Zeblon Vilakazi, praised the initiative as a continuation of the university's long history of serving South Africa's mining industry and contributing to sustainable, equitable development.

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