Founders Metals Discovers Multi-Kilometre Gold System at Antino North; Auger Drilling Returns 20.0 m of 7.54 g/t Au at Maria Geralda

Vancouver, British Columbia--(Newsfile Corp. - February 19, 2026) - **Founders Metals Inc.** (TSXV: FDR) (OTCQX: FDMIF) (FSE: 9DL0) ("Founders" or the "Company") reports exploration results from the Antino Gold Project ("Antino" or the "Project") in southeastern Suriname. Surface exploration on the Company's recently expanded land package has delineated a multi-kilometre (km) gold system comprising multiple parallel, northwest-trending mineralized shear zones over a 4 km area. Results include 57.80 grams per tonne (g/t) gold (Au) in a grab sample and 20.0 m of 2.07 g/t Au including 7.0 m of 5.05 g/t Au in a channel sample. Separately, systematic 30-metre auger drilling at the Maria Geralda target is providing new insight into the geometry of high-grade gold shoots within the broader mineralized system.

Highlights

Antino North

- Bedrock mapping confirms ten parallel, northwest-trending gold-bearing shear structures across a **4 km** area within the newly acquired Antino North concession block (Figures 1 & 2)
- Channel sampling across one shear returned **20.0 m of 2.07 g/t Au**, including **7.0 m of 5.05 g/t Au**; previously reported grab samples of **70.93 g/t Au** and **69.85 g/t Au** from adjacent shears, with a new grab sample of **57.80 g/t Au** returned from a newly discovered shear zone further south
- Visible gold observed in multiple samples with up to 10% pyrite (Figure 3); mineralization style and scale comparable to the Froyo Gold Zone at Upper Antino (FR005: 15.5 m of 30.72 g/t Au)
- Auger sampling defines multiple kilometre-scale anomalies measuring **~3.4 km × 1.0 km;** a separate **~5.2 km × 3.0 km** anomaly from historical auger data is the single largest gold geochemical anomaly on the concession (Figure 2)
- Drilling equipment mobilizing via road from the Company's main camp at Upper Antino to Antino North; drills expected to be turning within two weeks

Maria Geralda

- Detailed 3 m × 3 m vertical auger grid to 30 m depth is building a three-dimensional picture of high-grade shoot geometry around the previously reported **22.5 m of 11.88 g/t Au** in MG003 to improve drill targeting across the broader project
- From shallow saprolite, initial results include, **20.0 m of 7.54 g/t Au** (MGAD027) **15.0 m of 7.16 g/t Au** (MGAD028), **17.0 m of 2.90 g/t Au** (MGAD026), **10.0 m of 6.95 g/t Au** (MGAD025), and **10.0 m of 1.80 g/t Au** (MGAD024)

Colin Padget, President & CEO, commented, "These results at Antino North represent the first major step in what we expect to be a wave of new discoveries across our expanded land package in 2026. Within months of acquiring this concession, our surface exploration team has identified a mineralized system with the hallmarks of what we see at Upper Antino – multiple parallel shear-hosted gold zones, strong alteration, visible gold, and kilometre-scale geochemical anomalies. We have completed road access from our main camp at Upper Antino all the way to the northern boundary of the concession and we expect to have a drill turning on the first target within two weeks.

At Maria Geralda, the auger drilling is delivering exactly what we designed it to – a detailed understanding of how high-grade gold is distributed within the broader mineralized system. The initial results confirm that the high-grade mineralization is robust and persistent in the near-surface environment and we are excited to receive the remainder of the results from this program. The insights

we're gaining here will directly inform how we target high-grade zones at Maria Geralda and across the project as we scale our drilling program in 2026."

Antino North – New District-Scale Gold System
The Company has established road access from its main camp at Upper Antino to the northern boundary of the Antino North area. Initial surface exploration at Antino North (Figure 2) includes mapping, rock and channel sampling, and auger geochemical surveys designed to rapidly advance the Company's understanding of this newly acquired exploration area.

Early results from Founders' ongoing auger sampling campaign reveal promising kilometre-scale geochemical anomalies coincident with mapped shear zones, supported by strong grab and channel sampling results. Field work has delineated ten parallel, northwest-trending shear zones up to 30 m in width across a 4 km area. The gold-bearing shears are characterized by pervasive quartz veining, intense shearing, and strong sericite alteration of the dominantly dioritic country rock. Up to 10% pyrite is observed locally, with visible gold noted in multiple grab samples (assays pending). Geological mapping and prospecting have traced individual shears along surface for up to 500 m of strike.

The style of mineralization, alteration assemblage, and structural setting at Antino North are consistent with the Froyo Gold Zone at Upper Antino, where diamond drilling has returned intervals such as 15.5 m of 30.72 g/t Au (FR005). The Company has begun mobilizing drilling equipment to the area and expects to commence drilling within two weeks.

Maria Geralda – Auger Grid Defines High-Grade Shoot Geometry
Founders has completed a detailed mechanical auger drilling program at Maria Geralda designed to build a three-dimensional understanding of high-grade gold shoot geometry within the discovery zone. The program utilized a 3 m × 3 m vertical auger grid drilled to 30 m depth in saprolite, centred on the previously reported MG003 intercept of 22.5 m of 11.88 g/t Au (announced June 24, 2025).

The auger program returned a series of high-grade intercepts coincident with the MG003 discovery hole results, providing initial confirmation of local continuity and robustness of gold mineralization in the near-surface environment:

- **20.0 m of 7.54 g/t Au** (MGAD027) – up-dip of MG003
- **15.0 m of 7.16 g/t Au** (MGAD028)
- **17.0 m of 2.90 g/t Au** (MGAD026)
- **10.0 m of 6.95 g/t Au** (MGAD025)
- **10.0 m of 1.80 g/t Au** (MGAD024)

The density of this auger grid provides the Company with a detailed spatial dataset that is being used to map the orientation, plunge, and continuity of high-grade gold shoots within the Maria Geralda system. This information is intended to directly inform future drill targeting, both at Maria Geralda and other similar settings across the broader Antino project. The near-surface auger data also contributes to the Company's understanding of the abundance and profile of oxide gold at this location.

About Founders Metals Inc.
Founders Metals Inc. is a Canadian gold exploration company building a district-scale gold camp in southeastern Suriname. The Company controls a 102,360-hectare contiguous land package in the Guiana Shield - the largest uninterrupted package of highly prospective greenstone belt geology in the region. Founders is backed by strategic partnerships with Gold Fields and B2Gold and is executing one of the most active exploration programs in the global junior gold sector. The Company is committed to responsible exploration, strong community engagement, and disciplined capital allocation as it advances Suriname's next major gold camp.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

Per: "Colin Padget"

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Figure 1: Antino Gold Project property map.

To view an enhanced version of this graphic, please visit:
https://images.newsfilecorp.com/files/7574/284577_d24659d8246f79fb_001full.jpg

Figure 2: Antino North Plan Map

To view an enhanced version of this graphic, please visit:
https://images.newsfilecorp.com/files/7574/284577_d24659d8246f79fb_002full.jpg

Note: Map shows the extent of historical and current auger sampling campaigns, channel sampling results, rock sample assays, and the scale of the largest auger anomaly compared with the gold-in-soil anomaly at G Mining's Oko West deposit (inset). Note map scale and auger contour levels are the same for both maps.

Figure 3: Visible Gold in Quartz Vein from Grab Sample (assay pending) Collected at Antino North Shear Zone

To view an enhanced version of this graphic, please visit:
https://images.newsfilecorp.com/files/7574/284577_d24659d8246f79fb_003full.jpg

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Information

This press release contains "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities legislation, including statements regarding long term value creation and the Company's prospects. Forward-looking information can generally be identified by words such as "plans", "expects", "is expected", "budget", "scheduled", "estimates", "forecasts", "intends", "anticipates", "believes", or variations indicating that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "would", "might" or "will" occur or be achieved.

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assumptions but are subject to business, market, and economic risks, uncertainties, and contingencies that may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied, including: general business and economic uncertainties; exploration results; mining industry risks; and other factors described in the Company's most recent annual management discussion and analysis. Although the Company has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially, other factors may cause results not to be as anticipated. There can be no assurance that forward-looking information will prove accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on forward-looking information. The Company does not undertake to update any forward-looking information except in accordance with applicable securities laws. Neither TSX Venture Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in policies of the TSX Venture Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.

All material information on Founders Metals can be found at www.sedarplus.ca.

Quality Assurance and Control

Samples were analyzed at FILAB Suriname, a Bureau Veritas Certified Laboratory in Paramaribo, Suriname (a commercial certified laboratory under ISO 9001:2015). Samples are crushed to 75% passing 2.35 mm screen, riffle split (700 g) and pulverized to 85% passing 88 µm. Samples were analyzed using a 50 g fire assay (50 g aliquot) with an Atomic Absorption (AA) finish. For samples that return assay values over 5.0 grams per tonne (g/t), another cut was taken from the original pulp and fire assayed with a gravimetric finish. Founders Metals inserts blanks and certified reference standards in the sample sequence for quality control. External QA-QC checks are performed at ALS Global Laboratories (Geochemistry Division) in Lima, Peru (an ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited facility). A secure chain of custody is maintained in transporting and storing of all samples. Drill intervals with visible gold are assayed using metallic screening. Rock chip samples from outcrop/bedrock are selective by nature and may not be representative of the mineralization hosted on the project.

Qualified Persons

The technical content of this news release has been reviewed and approved by Michael Dufresne, M.Sc., P.Geol., P.Geo., an independent qualified person as defined by National Instrument 43-101.

Founders Metals

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