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SETI I - Technical Aspects (1.)

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## DEFINITION OF A SETI SEARCH

### **Abstract**

Since the inception of modern SETI nearly a half a century ago, more than one hundred searches have been conducted to detect signs of intelligent extraterrestrial life. To date, most searches have focused primarily on detecting extraterrestrial technology through incongruous electromagnetic radiation – artificial radio or optical signals. The SETI Institute and SETI League and others have produced excellent lists of completed and ongoing SETI projects; however the lists are not all-inclusive. A comprehensive SETI project database to be updated annually would be a valuable tool for SETI research as the field evolves and search strategies broaden to include fresh ideas. The database will include projects that fall outside the realm of electromagnetic radiation; for example direct or indirect searches for abandoned industrial structures, monuments, astroengineering projects and nanoprobes, perhaps within in our own solar system. In addition, a reference database could serve as a repository for individuals to document the results of SETI datamining projects. Defining the criteria for screening projects for inclusion into a scientific reference SETI database becomes problematic, especially with the more unconventional projects. This paper discusses the criteria that define a valid SETI project for inclusion in the SETI project database and how to draw the arbitrary fine line between scientific and nonsensical searches.