

2024-25 Nova Scotia Mineral Resources Development Fund (MRDF) Innovation Grant

Innovation Grants

- Innovation Grants support research and innovation in the mining industry and promote development of Nova Scotia's mineral resources.
- The maximum Innovation Grant is \$100,000. Projects may extend in phases over more than one year, but each phase of the proposed work must be applied for in separate applications in separate years. The entire length of the project must be described in the application for the first year.

Eligibility

- Innovation Grant proposals are invited from consultants, academics, mineral producers, mineral end-users, and mining industry service companies, either local to Nova Scotia or located outside of the province.
- The types of projects that may be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:
 - projects designed to reduce the cost of extracting, processing, adding value to, or transporting mineral resources to market.
 - projects leading to a new end-use application for a mineral produced, or that could be produced, in Nova Scotia.
 - projects leading to the development or implementation of new products, tools or applications that can aid in the discovery, understanding, and evaluation of mineral deposits in Nova Scotia.
 - projects designed to reduce the costs of, or create new or improved processes associated with, mine and tailing reclamation or management.
 - projects intended to develop comprehensive business plans (feasibility studies) for adding value to minerals in Nova Scotia by manufacturing end-use products for local use or for export.
 - Geoscience and Engineering are regulated professions in Nova Scotia and provincial legislation requires that individuals and companies who offer, provide, or undertake geoscience and/or engineering in the province must be registered. Geoscientists, engineers, and companies receiving Innovation Grants should

contact relevant professional associations regarding professional registration if they are not already registered.

Application Procedure

Proposals must be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (“the department”) at mrdf@novascotia.ca **no later than 4:00 pm, Monday April 8, 2024.**

- The department may ask applicants to give a Power Point presentation to staff of the department describing the project. The department will contact applicants to schedule the presentation.

Proposals for an Innovation Grant should be succinct and must include:

- an executive summary clearly stating how the project will improve the efficiency of discovery, evaluation, developing, processing, or using Nova Scotia’s mineral resources, or reclaiming land after extraction,
- A completed Innovation Grant Summary Page (found on MRDF webpage)
- a statement of project objectives,
- a detailed description of the project and its potential impact on the Nova Scotia economy, and its potential impact on the reputation and image of Nova Scotia in the mining industry,
- a detailed budget, including a list of activities required to complete the project and an estimate of time required for each activity. Unit costs for each activity must be stated to support the total proposed budget for the project.
- Proposals must provide a timeline from project commencement to completion that includes the key milestones in the progression of the project. This includes a detailed work plan for the duration of the project.
- Applicants must commit to a start and end date for the project, and submission of deliverables to the department.
- A list of the principal researchers or project leads, their qualifications, organizational affiliation, and contact information.
- Expected deliverables will depend on the scope and nature of the project, but could include the following:
 - A Final Report submitted to the department. Every project will have this deliverable.

- Reports, supporting data, analysis, forecasts, studies, etc.,
- Publication of results in a technical journal, and/or
- Presentation of results at a relevant conference

Note: All deliverables for the project will be released to the public unless specific limitations to the public release are stated in the Innovation Grant proposal and confirmed in the Contribution Agreement.

Please study the Terms and Conditions carefully before applying. Omission of critical information may lead to an application being unsuccessful.

Novascotia.ca e-mail accounts can only receive 30MB of data per e-mail; if the application and data exceed this, please notify the MRDF Administrator, who will send you a secure file transfer link.

Proposal Review and Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following (see Innovation Grant Internal Evaluation Form for more details):

- Submission of a complete proposal that meets eligibility requirements,
- The expertise of the applicant,
- relevance or potential impact of the project to improve the efficiency of discovery, evaluation, developing, processing, or using Nova Scotia's mineral resources, or reclaiming land after extraction.
- the applicant's previous work with MRDF and adherence to the law,
- organization and clarity,
- Innovation methodology and rationale of the project
- Applicability and relevance to the Nova Scotia mining industry,
- Quality of deliverables and level of collaboration,

- Budget estimation,
- Successful applicants will receive a grant contribution agreement (to be signed by the grantee) confirming that their project has been approved and listing the expenses that will be covered under the MRDF. Only approved expenses incurred starting April 1, 2024, will be eligible for reimbursement under the MRDF.

Fund Disbursement

- Sixty percent (60%) of the MRDF grant will be awarded when the application is approved, and the remaining forty percent (40%) will be awarded upon confirmed completion of the approved work program.
- Completion of the work program means that the Final Report, expense statement, receipts, and digital data obtained using MRDF funds have been received and approved by the department. All invoices submitted for reimbursement for work eligible under the terms of the grant contribution agreement must be fully paid for and dated no earlier than April 1, 2024.
- Failure to submit the *complete* Final Report by the required deadline will result in a penalty of 25% of eligible expenditures. Additionally, the grantee may not be eligible to apply for future MRDF grants, as determined by the department.

Withdrawal of Funding

If it appears to the department that the project is not going to proceed, the grant may be withdrawn. The grantee may be required to attend a meeting with the department to explain delays in the project. Grantees will be responsible for returning funding to the department upon the department's request. Grantees shall comply with this request, or they may not be eligible to receive future MRDF grants.

Reporting Requirements

Preliminary Report

- Grantees are required to e-mail a Preliminary Report to the department at mrdf@novascotia.ca no later than 4:00 pm, Monday, August 12, 2024. The purpose of this report is to confirm that funding is in hand or has been arranged, that land access has been cleared with property owners, and that contractors have been engaged to complete the work in a timely manner.

First Interim Report

- Grantees are required to submit an Interim Report to the department at mrdf@novascotia.ca no later than 4:00 pm, Friday, September 27, 2024, providing an update on the status and progress of the project.
- Grantees must inform the MRDF Administrator if they will not be proceeding with a project on or before the First Interim Report deadline. Failure to do so may result in the grantee being ineligible for future MRDF grants.
- Signed contracts with any contractors must be provided by the First Interim Report deadline and sent to the MRDF Administrator by email with the interim report.

Second Interim Report

- Grantees are required to submit a Second Interim Report to the department at mrdf@novascotia.ca no later than 4:00 pm, Monday, November 18, 2024, providing an update on the status and progress of the project.
- Any anticipated issues that may delay or affect timely completion of the Final Report must be communicated to the MRDF Administrator at this time.

Final Report

- A Final Report must be submitted digitally no later than 4:00 pm, Wednesday, February 12, 2025.
- The Final Report must include a clear statement of only eligible MRDF costs and paid receipts totaling 100% of grant funding. The department requires official receipts from vendors confirming payment of invoices directly related to the costs incurred. Receipts are only eligible for work on or later than April 1, 2024.
- The report must include the completed Innovation Grant Expense Form (found on the MRDF webpage)
- The receipts must have a zero balance, or the bill must be signed and dated by the vendor as paid. Please make sure that work submitted to be reimbursed under the MRDF is allowable under the grant contribution agreement. Wire transfers are not acceptable as proof of payment. Proof of payment can include: cheques for personal bank accounts, a copy of the scanned cheque with a bank stamp showing that the cheque has been processed, bank statements demonstrating payment of invoices, confirmed and accepted e-transfers, official paid receipts from vendors, vendor signing and dating the bill as paid, or letters/emails from vendors confirming payment of

invoices directly related to the costs incurred, and the pay stub for payment of wages to a student. The MRDF Administrator may ask for additional proof of expenditures, and the grantee shall comply with this request.

- The Final Report must describe the results, successes, or failures of the project to improve the efficiency of discovery, evaluation, developing, processing, or using Nova Scotia's mineral resources, or reclaiming land after extraction.
- All data must be conveyed electronically. The Final Report must be a PDF with all components (figures, assay information, etc.) in one file. Datasets that cannot reasonably be added to the PDF can be submitted as separate files.
- Maps must be submitted at an appropriate scale, clearly showing detailed geology, legends, structural data, relevant geophysical/geochemical data, and previous drill collar locations (including longitudinal sections if applicable). Maps must clearly show the location of completed work, claim boundaries, and include an index map showing approximate location of the project area in the province.
- The Final Report, expense statement, any digital data obtained using MRDF funds, and scanned paid receipts, are to be sent to the department at mrdf@novascotia.ca. Receipt of the Final Report and any additional data will be confirmed by the department by e-mail.
- Payment will not be issued until the department has approved the Final Report and any additional data.
- Please ensure that the Final Report and any media releases acknowledge that the project was funded by the MRDF.
- Grantees shall keep and preserve all books, accounts, and records relating to the MRDF grant, and keep them available for examination and audit by the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables for a period of not less than two years after receipt of funding. The recipients shall have complied with all applicable provincial and federal laws and regulations, including those respecting mineral resources, surface rights, health, environment, safety, and conditions of labour.
- Grantees shall be solely responsible for any declaration required under the *Income Tax Act* relative to the contribution made in respect of this program. HST is excluded as eligible grant expense for applicants eligible for federal government reimbursement of the tax.

Notes

- Projects funded by an MRDF Innovation Grant may also receive funding from additional sources (e.g., government, industry, industry associations).
- Any changes to the proposed project must be submitted by e-mail to mrdf@novascotia.ca for prior approval to the department, and the department's approval returned by e-mail before any changes are made.
- An on-site inspection of projects may be conducted by the department to verify project progress, compliance, and completion.
- Grantees shall comply with all applicable provincial and federal laws and regulations, including those respecting mineral resources, surface rights, health, environment, safety, and conditions of labour.
- Grantees will be required to demonstrate fiscal responsibility while managing MRDF funds.
- It is recommended that the grantee maintain regular contact with the MRDF Administrator throughout the duration of the project. If the grantee requires a change in project scope, they must request this to the MRDF Administrator by email and receive approval in writing.