

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

Grants are available for projects intended to support communities as they interact with the mining industry. Activities should be intended to support the mineral resource industry in Nova Scotia.

The maximum funding available is \$25,000.

Eligibility

Applications are welcomed from municipal governments, Mi'kmaq organizations, community organizations, and other similar parties.

Activities supported by the grants include:

- projects that help inform decisions about the mining sector (e.g., municipal government decisions with respect to reclamation),
- educational opportunities for informing organizations about the sector,
- work related to raising awareness of local mineral exploration claims and permitted activity.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- contractor fees,
- staff wages for approved activities only.

All expenses over \$5,000 require three quotes/estimates unless this requirement is waived by the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables. Exceptions may be considered where there is a lack of available venues for that specific proposed activity/event. The request for an exemption from providing three quotes for an expense over \$5,000 must be included in the proposal. If requesting a sole-source contract, please include the reason.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- capital purchases,
- alcoholic beverage expenses,
- expenses not approved in the signed contribution agreement.

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) is excluded as an eligible grant expense for applicants eligible for federal government reimbursement of the tax.

Responsibilities

Grantees must follow travel and travel expense rules defined within the Government of Nova Scotia's travel policy (<https://novascotia.ca/treasuryboard/manuals/PDF/200/22601-07.pdf>).

Grantees will be required to demonstrate fiscal responsibility while managing MRDF funds.

Grantees shall keep and preserve all books, accounts, and records relating to the project or event, 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.

Application Procedure

Written proposals will be accepted and continue to be evaluated by the department throughout the year, providing funding remains available.

Proposals must be accompanied by a completed Communities Grant Summary Page (found on MRDF webpage).

Proposals for a Communities Grant must include:

- an executive summary,
- a detailed description of the project,
- a statement of project objectives,
- a discussion of the potential impact of the project,
- key performance indicators,
- a detailed budget with unit costs for each activity/item,
- a timeline from project commencement to completion that includes the key milestones in the progression of the project,
- the name of the project lead/s, their qualifications, organizational affiliation, and contact information.

Proponents must commit to a date, prior to or on February 14, 2025, for submission of deliverables to the department.

Deliverables

Expected deliverables will depend on the scope and nature of the project. Each project must include a Final Report due on or before February 14, 2025, describing the project and project outcomes. If the Final Report cannot be completed by February 14, 2025, the recipient may request an extension by e-mail to the department.

All deliverables for the project will be released to the public unless specific limitations to the public release are stated in the application and confirmed in the Contribution Agreement.

Proposals must be submitted by e-mail to: mrdf@novascotia.ca.

Proposals will be accepted starting April 1, 2024.

Please study the Terms and Conditions carefully before you apply. 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. (It is recommended you check with your e-mail provider to inquire about size limits for sending e-mails with large data amounts).

Proposal Review and Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- the completeness of the application and inclusion of any required documentation,

- the organization and clarity of the application,
- the alignment of the budget to reasonable industry standards for expenditures,
- The educational, outreach, and engagement merit of the project,
- whether the plan is well conceived and likely to achieve the stated goals on the application,
- the forecasted budget,
- past performance of applicant if they have received previous Nova Scotia Mineral Incentive Program (NSMIP) or Mineral Resources Development Fund (MRDF) grants.

More details about the evaluation criteria can be found on the Evaluation Form.

Successful applicants will receive a Contribution Agreement (to be signed by the applicant) 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

Seventy-five percent (75%) of the awarded funds will be issued upon receipt of the signed Contribution Agreement.

The remaining twenty-five percent (25%) of the grant will be awarded when the Final Report, expense statement, paid receipts, and digital data have been received, and approved by the department. All invoices submitted for reimbursement for work allowed under the terms of the Contribution Agreement must be fully paid for and dated no earlier than April 1, 2024.

Withdrawal of Funding

If it appears to the department that the project is not going to proceed, then funding may be withdrawn. The grantee may be required to attend a meeting with the department to explain delays in the project.

Reporting Requirements

Final Report

A Final Report is to be submitted digitally at a date agreed upon between the grantee and the department.

The Final Report must detail how the work undertaken impacted community interaction with the mining industry. Where possible, include comments from local mineral exploration claim owners.

The Final Report must include a clear statement of only eligible MRDF costs, and receipts totaling 100% of grant funding. We require official receipts from vendors confirming payment of invoices directly related to the costs incurred. Receipts are only eligible for work that commenced on or after April 1, 2024. Please make sure that work submitted to be reimbursed under the MRDF is allowable under the Contribution Agreement.

The Final Report must include a completed Communities Expense Form.

All data must be conveyed electronically to mrdf@novascotia.ca.

The Final Report, expense statement, any digital data obtained using MRDF funds, and scanned receipts, are to be sent to mrdf@novascotia.ca. Receipt of the Final Report and any additional data will be confirmed by the MRDF Administrator by e-mail.

Final payment will not be issued until the department has given approval that the final report and additional data are satisfactory.

Grantees are asked to acknowledge support from the MRDF in the Final Report, and in any other communications and media releases.

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.

Notes

Any changes to the proposed budget or work proposal must be submitted by e-mail to the department, and the MRDF Administrator's approval returned by e-mail. Failure to do so will mean work related to those changes will not qualify for reimbursement.

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.