

## **2025 Nova Scotia Mineral Resources Development Fund (MRDF)**

### **Advanced Project Grant: PEA, PFS, and FS Projects**

#### **Program Terms and Conditions**

This sets out the program terms and condition which are to be met by applicants and grant recipients, as the case may be. Further, this will, in conjunction with the application and the [project agreement], establish binding terms and conditions in respect of the project being funded.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), through MRDF, provides Shared-Funding Advanced Project Grants to support mineral development projects in Nova Scotia that are advancing toward commercial viability through the completion of the following eligible categories of work:

- Preliminary Economic Assessments (PEA) - with a minimum applicant investment of \$225,000;
- Pre-Feasibility Studies (PFS) - with a minimum applicant investment of \$525,000; or
- Feasibility Studies (FS) - with a minimum applicant investment of \$525,000

The grant is intended to support qualified applicants who commit to investing a minimum of 1/2 of the funds in advancing mineral development projects toward technical and economic evaluation. The remaining 1/2 of the investment will be supported by the MRDF.

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

Applicants must:

- Hold a valid mineral license under the *Mineral Resources Act* or have a registered agreement with the license holder;
- Be registered to do business in Nova Scotia and be in good standing with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies;
- Have an authorized signing officer or a registered agent of the license;
- Have completed reporting and commitments for any past MRDF or NSMIP funding;
- Be compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, including those under the *Mineral Resources Act*.

## **Professional Responsibility**

Geoscience work must be conducted or overseen by a registered Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.) as per the *Geoscience Profession Act*. Engineering work must be conducted or overseen by a registered Professional Engineer (P.Eng.) as per the *Engineering Profession Act*. All contractors performing geoscientific or engineering work in the province must also be appropriately authorized to practice in Nova Scotia.

## **Responsibilities of Grant Recipients**

- Must have submitted a proposal;
- Track all expenses associated with the grant-funded components of the project;
- Submit any budget or scope changes to the DNR for pre-approval, at [mrdf@novascotia.ca](mailto:mrdf@novascotia.ca);
- Maintain financial records for two years for potential audit by DNR;
- Comply with all relevant laws, including those related to health, safety, the environment, and labour;
- Provide an indemnity to the Province against any liability arising from the funded activities;
- Include the completed expense form and all receipts upon completion;
- Clearly indicate that MRDF support was provided in the report and any public materials.

## **Eligible Expenses**

Eligible technical, geoscience, and engineering work (new or completed in the last six months prior to MRDF grant proposal) includes, but is not limited to:

- Economic modelling and scoping studies,
- NI 43-101 compliant technical reports (PEA, PFS, FS),
- Metallurgical and mineral processing studies,
- Geotechnical or hydrogeological programs,
- Engineering design and cost estimation,

- Tailings and waste rock management studies,
- Infrastructure studies (power, water, roads, ports),
- Environmental baseline studies and permitting work,
- Community and/or Indigenous engagement activities,
- Market and logistics studies (transport, product delivery),
- Consultant fees (must include CV and rationale),
- Legal or permitting-related advisory services.

Email file size is limited to 30MB. If your proposal exceeds this limit, contact the MRDF Administrator for a secure file transfer link.

## **Project Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluation criteria for grant proposals related to Preliminary Economic Assessments (PEA), Pre-Feasibility Studies (PFS), and Feasibility Studies (FS) typically reflect the increasing technical, economic, and social rigor expected at each project stage. Below is a consolidated list of core evaluation criteria, followed by stage-specific considerations:

### *Core Evaluation Criteria (Applicable to PEA, PFS, and FS Proposals):*

#### Project Relevance and Strategic Value

- Technical Merit
- Project Readiness
- Budget and Financial Planning
- Work Plan and Schedule
- Environmental, Social, and Regulatory Considerations
- Team Qualifications and Experience
- Risk Assessment and Mitigation

### *Stage-Specific Evaluation Criteria*

#### Preliminary Economic Assessment (PEA)

- Minimum level of resource definition (Inferred or higher).

- Demonstrated conceptual understanding of mining and processing options.
- Preliminary infrastructure considerations.
- Initial economic indicators (NPV, IRR, payback).
- Justification for PEA as the next logical step.

#### Pre-Feasibility Study (PFS)

- Presence of Indicated Mineral Resources.
- Use of more detailed engineering and design assumptions.
- Metallurgical test work results.
- More robust economic analysis with multiple development scenarios.
- Engagement of subject-matter experts (mine design, tailings, etc.).
- Environmental baseline data and early regulatory assessments.

#### Feasibility Study (FS)

- Proven and Probable Mineral Reserves based on detailed engineering.
- Final project design and capital/operating cost estimates (Class 3 or better).
- Detailed environmental impact assessment and mitigation plan.
- Comprehensive stakeholder and Indigenous engagement plan.
- Clear project execution strategy and financing plan.
- Permitting pathway outlined with timelines and risks.

### **Application Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will also be assessed for the following:

- Completeness and quality of submission;
- Technical merit and advancement potential of the project;
- Applicant's and consultant's qualifications and access to expertise;
- Quality of proposed engagement with stakeholders and Indigenous groups;
- Alignment of costs with industry standards;

- Innovation and originality in technical approach; and
- Track record in completing previously funded work (if applicable).

### **Fund Disbursement**

- **60%** of the grant will be disbursed to the grant recipient upon approval and signing of the Contribution Agreement.
- **20%** is paid following the acceptance and approval of the interim progress report
- **20%** is paid following review and approval of the Final Report and supporting documentation including the completion of all financial reporting.

### **Final Report**

Failure to submit the Final Report by the deadline may result in forfeiture of 25% of eligible expenses and future grant ineligibility.

### **Reporting Requirements** (dates to be confirmed at signing of Contribution Agreement)

#### *Preliminary Report*

Confirms project start, contractor engagement, permitting status, and funding readiness.

#### *Interim Reports*

Provide updates on progress, challenges, and any scope or timeline changes).  
Signed contractor agreements are due with the First Interim Report.

#### *Final Report*

The Final Report must be posted on the System for Electronic Document Analysis and Retrieval (SEDAR)

### *Proponent Responsibilities*

- Include the completed expense Form and all receipts;
- Clearly state that MRDF support was provided (in the report and any public materials).

### **Withdrawal of Funding**

Funding may be withdrawn if the project is not proceeding or halts midway through its performance. Grantees must return unspent funds upon request.

### **Audit and Inspections**

Grantees must maintain records for a minimum of two years and may be subject to audits or site inspections by the department.

### **Contact**

For all communications, send emails to DNR at the following: [mrdf@novascotia.ca](mailto:mrdf@novascotia.ca)