



## MINING INCENTIVE PROGRAM – CORPORATE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

### Purpose:

Mineral exploration is vital to a healthy, sustained and productive mining industry. The Mining Incentive Program (MIP) is intended to stimulate and sustain mineral exploration activities throughout the Northwest Territories (NWT) and reduce the risk associated with mineral exploration. The MIP provides funding to exploration companies who propose new exploration projects or are already carrying out NWT mineral exploration work. Application is open to exploration projects from any stage of development, from grassroots to advanced projects.

### Maximum Funding per Applicant:

Eligible corporate applicants may apply for exploration grants of up to 60% of eligible expenses to a maximum of \$240,000. Eligible expenses refer to the part of a program for which the MIP money is designated, not the overall program budget. This means a program would need to demonstrate \$400,000 worth of eligible expenses to qualify for a maximum grant of \$240,000.

### Eligibility:

- Companies with the legal right to conduct mineral exploration in the NWT may apply for exploration grants.
- Applicants must possess a registered Canadian bank account for the transfer of grant money.
- Applicants may only submit proposals for areas in which they have the legal right to conduct exploration (information on staking is available at the [Mining Recorder's Office](#)).
- Applications must propose a well-conceived and technically sound exploration program to be considered for MIP funding. Applications will be evaluated by the expert staff of the Northwest Territories Geological Survey (NTGS) and other divisions of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI).
- Applications that maximize the use of NWT goods and services will be ranked higher than comparable applications that do not provide this benefit to the NWT.
- Eligible expenses must be incurred during the period April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the proper permitting is in place and that work programs comply with existing laws and regulations (information on the Mining Regulations is available at the [Mining Recorder's Office](#)).
- Previously, the MIP has limited recipients to a maximum of \$500,000 in cumulative funding. Projects may now exceed this funding limit if a project proposal is found to be of excellent quality and scores within the top 30% of applications received.
  - When funding demand significantly surpasses the available program budget, MIP administrators will limit proponents who have reached the \$500,000 lifetime funding limit on their project(s) to a maximum of two funded projects.

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their exploration activities with local communities.
- Applicants are expected to design their proposed programs in a manner that is consistent with the highest industry standards for Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors.
- Some resources for current best practices in ESG can be found on the [Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada website](#).
- To remain eligible for MIP funding, applicants must be prepared at all times to demonstrate compliance with current orders and guidance from the Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) of the NWT.
- Any project that fails to meet any MIP eligibility criteria will not be considered for MIP funding or may have allocated funding withdrawn.

## How to Apply:

**Deadline: April 30, 2026 (11:59 Mountain Daylight Time)**

To apply for an MIP exploration grant, applicants must submit a completed application form to:

Northwest Territories Geological Survey  
Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment  
4601-B 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
P.O. Box 1320 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9  
Email: [NTGS@gov.nt.ca](mailto:NTGS@gov.nt.ca)

Application forms can be downloaded at [www.nwtgeoscience.ca/mip](http://www.nwtgeoscience.ca/mip). Applications must be either dropped off, mailed, or submitted *via* email to the NTGS office before the application deadline on April 30, 2026.

Please review the **Corporate MIP Evaluation Guidelines** in this document before filling out the application form and program proposal. **Vague or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding; projects will only be evaluated based on the information provided in the project application.** Ensure that your application provides enough information to properly evaluate your project!

Please note that large or compressed files may not be received. A file transfer service such as Dropbox or Google Drive may be necessary for large files. Contact the MIP coordinator if you do not receive confirmation after submitting your application.

**The program proposal must not exceed 15 pages\*** and must include the following elements:

- Title page **(1 page)**
- Table of contents **(1 page)**
- Executive summary **(1 page)**
- National Topographic System (NTS) map(s) of work location, access, and claims, proposed sampling grids, and any other relevant information, using an appropriate scale and Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) North American Datum (NAD) 83 projection coordinates. **(1 page)**
- Other maps (geology, previous exploration, *etc.*) **(1 page)**
- A brief summary of previous work on the property **(1-2 pages)**
- Detailed work plan **(1-2 pages)**
  - An in-depth schedule covering the logistics of your field program in as much detail as possible. The work plan should give accurate estimates as to when each item of your field program will be accomplished. The work plan can include additional budget information, if necessary.
- List of employees (job titles) and contractors **(maximum 1 page)**
  - For contractors give the company names, contact information, and a description of the contracted work
  - Indicate those contractors that are NWT based
- Exploration plan **(3-5 pages)**
  - Methods of exploration (Geochemistry/Geophysics, *etc.*)
  - Details of program logistics

- Supporting evidence
- Rationale
- Proof of necessary permits and/or licenses. Please include this in an appendix. This is not counted against the page limit.

**Separate Documents to Include** (Not counted against the page limit):

- MIP Acknowledgement of Compliance Checklist

**\*Suggested lengths** for each element are provided as a guideline for your application. The sections in your application may be shorter or longer than suggested above, as long as the total document does not exceed 15 pages.

## **Application Process:**

The MIP budget is limited and a competitive evaluation process is used to determine the most worthy applicants. It is expected that not all applications will be funded.

Corporate applications to the MIP will be comparatively scored based on the following criteria: innovation, past performance in the MIP, proposed exploration approach, use of NWT goods and services, and potential economic impact. Consult the Corporate MIP Evaluation Guidelines for a detailed account of how each evaluation criteria is assessed and scored.

Successful applicants will be issued a contribution agreement to review and sign. Once a signed contribution agreement has been returned to the NTGS, successful applicants will be awarded 85% of their grant. Proposals that are not funded initially may be offered funding later in the year, should funding become available.

Exploration programs must be completed as described in the application. Any significant changes to the exploration program, including budget changes, must be approved in advance by the MIP staff. Unapproved costs will be rejected; other unapproved changes, including scope and budget reductions, may result in grant reduction or forfeiture and may affect the applicant's eligibility for future MIP funding.

A final grant payment of the remaining 15% will be issued upon approval of the applicant's final report and expenses.

## **Corporate MIP Evaluation Guidelines:**

Corporate MIP applications are scored relative to one another based on the following categories:

- I) Past Performance in the MIP**
- II) Proposed Exploration Approach**
- III) Use of NWT Goods and Services**
- IV) Innovation**
- V) Potential Economic Impact**

Categories I-III are assigned a score from 0-10, and Category IV is scored out of 3, while category V is scored out of 5. Each project is scored a total out of 38.

## Detailed Criteria with Assessment Guidelines:

- **Past Performance in the MIP**

**Criteria:**

- The project is completed as described in the application
- The project is not under-budget
- The NWT spending obligations for the project are met
- The work specified in the application is carried out as planned
- The quality of the work and reporting
- Clarity, accuracy, and timeliness of the MIP reports from the previous years
- Quality and quantity of the geological data or mineral discoveries

**Assessment:**

- (0-1) The project was substantially incomplete, under-budget, or did not proceed.
- (2-3) The project was not fully completed, or the project was under-budget, or the quality of the work/reporting were unacceptable, *i.e.*, late reporting; or substantial unclear, missing, or inaccurate information/ data/receipts/or invoices.
- (4-6) The project was satisfactorily completed with standard reporting practices.
- (7-8) The project was satisfactorily completed with a very high quality of work and reporting.
- (9-10) The project produced results that directly enhanced the value of the property/area with clear, accurate, and timely reporting.

**Once the MIP programs are completed, each funding recipient will be assigned a performance score that will be included in the evaluation of future MIP applications. First-time MIP applicants lacking an MIP performance history will be assigned a past performance score of five (neutral). Multi-year applicants will be assigned their own average score, (using up to the previous three years').**

- **Proposed Exploration Approach**

**Criteria:**

- The exploration plan reflects an organized and systematic approach to constrain or develop exploration targets using technically sound methods of exploration.
- The exploration plan demonstrates knowledge of geology and past exploration in the area of the application, if available.
- The exploration plan has supporting evidence for target generation (including geological plans, cross-sections, *etc.*)

**Assessment:**

- (0-1) The exploration plan is poorly organized and uses technically unsound exploration methods; it fails to incorporate relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; it uses poor quality, or lacks, supporting evidence.
- (2-4) The exploration plan is poorly organized or uses technically unsound exploration methods; or it fails to incorporate relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; or it uses poor quality supporting evidence.
- (5-6) The exploration plan is organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; supporting evidence is of good quality.
- (7-8) The exploration plan is well organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; supporting evidence is of very good quality.
- (9-10) The exploration plan is very well organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; it has excellent supporting evidence.

- **Use of NWT Goods and Services**

**Criteria:**

- NWT goods and services are used as much as possible to maximize benefits to NWT businesses and residents.

**Assessment:**

- The percent of eligible NWT spending, excluding wages and report preparation, for a project will be calculated and then converted to a score out of ten (rounded to the nearest integer).
- A record of eligible NWT spending must be provided by funding recipients in their final report to track this economic impact. If the proposed NWT spending goals for the project are not met, this will be reflected in the applicant's past performance score.
- All eligible expenses, including spending by subcontractors, must be clearly indicated as either NWT or non-NWT expenses.
- To be considered as an NWT expense, the provider of either goods or services must maintain a permanent physical presence in the NWT, such as an office, laboratory, or store.
- Specialized analyses, necessary for certain types of exploration, which are not available in the NWT will not be counted against the NWT spending for a project, *e.g.*, caustic fusion analysis for diamond exploration.

- **Innovation**

**Criteria:**

- Tests innovative, soundly based mineral deposit model
- Tests innovative, soundly based exploration methods
- Delivers basic geoscientific information, *i.e.*, resolves age, stratigraphic relationships, structural setting, untested geochemical or geophysical anomalies, new mineral commodity/showing in the area of application, *etc.*
- Program effectively tests previously under-explored areas

**Assessment:**

- (0-1) The program is not innovative or is moderately innovative, and/or the exploration methods have a low probability success.
- (2) The program is innovative, and/or the exploration methods have a moderate probability of success.
- (3) The program is very innovative, and the exploration methods have a high probability of success.

- **Potential Economic Impact**

**Criteria:**

- Potential economic impact will be scored based on two sub-criteria:
  - 1) The degree to which the proposed work advances a project towards production; or if the project is already in production, the value of the proposed work.
  - 2) the economic impact of a fully realized project (i.e. a producing deposit).
- Criteria 1 will be given priority in scoring.
- Criteria 2 will be considered in cases where the proposed work does not significantly differentiate the scoring between applications.
- The total score for Potential Economic Impact cannot be greater than 5.
- Criteria 2 scoring cannot result in a score greater than projects ranked higher based on Criteria 1 scoring. Criteria 2 scores may not result in a score of less than .25 to separate equal Criteria 1 scores.

**1) Project Work Criteria:**

- The project work as proposed, has the potential to significantly advance the exploration stage of the project.
- Work with a higher probability of advancing the project will score higher.

**Assessment:**

- (0-1) The information provided is insufficient for evaluation, and/or there is low potential to advance the project or generate an economic impact.
- (2) The proposed work if successful will modestly advance the project.
- (3) The proposed work if successful will moderately advance the project.
- (4) The proposed work if successful will significantly advance the project.
- (5) The proposed work if successful will greatly advance the project.

**2) Economic Impact Criteria:**

- The project has the potential to yield a positive economic impact.
- Projects with potential for the largest and earliest economic impact will score higher.

**Assessment:**

- (0) The information provided is insufficient for evaluation, and/or there is low potential to advance the project or generate an economic impact.
- (.25) The fully realized project would likely have a small to moderate economic impact.
- (.5) The fully realized project would likely have a moderate to significant economic impact.
- (.75) The fully realized project would likely have a significant to large economic impact.

## MIP Scoring Summary Table:

Category	Criteria	Score
<b>Past Performance</b>	The program was substantially incomplete, under-budget or did not proceed.	0-1
	The program was not fully completed, or the project was under-budget, or the quality of the work/reporting were unacceptable, <i>i.e.</i> , late reporting; or substantial unclear, missing, or inaccurate information/ data/receipts/or invoices.	2-3
	The program was satisfactorily completed with standard reporting practices	4-6
	The program was satisfactorily completed with a very high quality of work and reporting.	7-8
	The program produced results that directly enhanced the value of the property/area with clear, accurate, and timely reporting.	9-10
<b>Past Performance Total</b>		<b>/10</b>
<b>Proposed Exploration Approach</b>	The exploration plan is poorly organized and uses technically unsound exploration methods; it fails to incorporate relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; it uses poor quality, or lacks, supporting evidence.	0-1
	The exploration plan is poorly organized or uses technically unsound exploration methods; or it fails to incorporate relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; or it uses poor quality supporting evidence.	2-4
	The exploration plan is organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; supporting evidence is of good quality.	5-6
	The exploration plan is well organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; supporting evidence is of very good quality.	7-8
	The exploration plan is very well organized and uses technically sound exploration methods; it incorporates relevant knowledge of geology and past exploration, if available; it has excellent supporting evidence.	9-10
<b>Proposed Exploration Approach Total</b>		<b>/10</b>
<b>Use of NWT Goods and Services</b>	The percent of eligible NWT spending, excluding wages and report preparation, for a project will be calculated then converted to a score out of ten (rounded to the nearest integer).	
<b>Use of NWT Goods and Services Total</b>		<b>/10</b>
<b>Innovation</b>	The program is not innovative or is moderately innovative, and/or the exploration methods have a low probability of success.	0-1
	The program is innovative, and/or the exploration methods have a moderate probability of success.	2
	The program is very innovative, and the exploration methods have a high probability of success.	3
<b>Innovation Total</b>		<b>/3</b>
<b>Potential Economic Impact</b>	<b>Criteria 1 Scoring</b>	
	The information provided is insufficient for evaluation, and/or there is low potential for medium to long-term economic impact.	0-1
	The proposed work if successful will modestly advance the project.	2
	The proposed work if successful will moderately advance the project.	3
	The proposed work if successful will significantly advance the project.	4
	The proposed work if successful will greatly advance the project.	5
	<b>Criteria 2 Scoring</b>	
	The information provided is insufficient for evaluation, and/or there is low potential to advance the project or generate an economic impact.	0-.25
	The fully realized project would likely have a small to moderate economic impact.	.25
	The fully realized project would likely have a moderate to significant economic impact.	.5
The fully realized project would likely have a significant to large economic impact.	.75	
<b>Potential Economic Impact Total</b>		<b>/5</b>
<b>Project Total Score</b>		<b>/38</b>

## **Reporting Guidelines:**

To apply for final payment, successful applicants must submit a final report and a statement of eligible MIP expenses (Expense Form A and B) accompanied by receipts, invoices, and time sheets.

The final report will match the format and requirements of an assessment report, as per the NWT Mining Regulations; however, in the final report applicants must disclose all activities, data, and expenditures associated with MIP-funded projects.

All final reporting maps should clearly outline the location of all activities in the exploration program using an appropriate scale and UTM NAD 83 projection coordinates. The maps must include the locations of sampling grids, sample collection, trenches, drill holes, and geophysical grids.

Total annual spending will be reported on April 1<sup>st</sup> every year following MIP funding until the project is complete regardless of whether or not the program received MIP funding that year. Reporting of the total annual project spending may be submitted *via* email or letter to the NTGS and will be used to evaluate the impact of the MIP. This information will not be made public.

Any unspent MIP funding must be returned by the final reporting deadline.

## **Eligible MIP Expenses:**

MIP-funded companies may claim expenses related to: food/consumables, field gear, wages, fuel, travel, analysis, equipment rental, self-isolation (if required), logistics and expediting, and report preparation.

- All claimed expenses, including subcontracted costs, must be supported with submitted receipts or invoices. Claims for wages and food/consumable allowances must be supported by time sheets.
- If an eligible expense is to be incurred in the NWT, it must be clearly indicated, and the name of the supplier must be provided.
- Eligible expenses not incurred in the NWT must also be clearly indicated.
- Specialized analysis, necessary to certain types of exploration, which are not available in the NWT, will not be counted against the NWT spending (*e.g.*, caustic fusion analysis for diamond exploration) for a project. If your program requires such analyses, please indicate this in your program proposal and application form.
- MIP staff reserve the right to refuse expenses they deem extraneous or ineligible.
- Applicants that do not make efficient use of MIP funding will not be approved, or will become ineligible for future funding.
- Eligible expenses must be incurred during the period April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027.

### **Food/Consumables:**

A maximum of \$70 per person per field day may be claimed for food and consumables, *e.g.*, bug spray, spray paint, toilet paper, *etc.* Such items may not be claimed as field gear. Food and consumables will be reimbursed as supported by time sheets.

### **Field Gear:**

Field gear will be reimbursed as per submitted receipts.

### **Wages:**

Wages must not exceed 40% of expenses claimed.

### **Fuel:**

Fuel will be reimbursed as per submitted receipts. Fuel may account for a maximum of 35% of expenses claimed.

### **Travel:**

Air travel expenses incurred within the NWT (to and within the field area) may be claimed as eligible expenses.

### **Analyses:**

Analyses costs will be reimbursed as per receipts. Sample analyses and shipping may be claimed.

### **Equipment Rental:**

Equipment rental will be reimbursed as per receipts. Self-owned equipment may be charged at 75% of the going commercial rate.

### **Self-Isolation:**

Any NWT expenses incurred to comply with mandatory self-isolation periods will be considered eligible expenses for MIP funding.

**Logistics and Expediting:**

Any NWT expenses related to expediting or program logistics will be considered eligible expenses for MIP funding.

**Report Preparation:**

Report preparation may account for a maximum of 10% of the total grant.

**Ineligible Expenses:**

- Capital expenses
- Staking costs
- Recording, renewing, grouping, transferring or otherwise acquiring or maintaining an interest in a mineral property
- Management, legal, or accounting fees
- Travel to the NWT
- Activities directly resulting in net income from mineral production
- Expenses related to reclamation
- Expenses related to consultation with local communities
- Personal expenses

## Confidentiality:

Applications and proposals are always confidential and can be returned upon request. Final reports will be kept confidential for two years, before being made public through the NTGS.

Applicant name, project name, project location (NTS map sheet 1:50,000 if on claims, 1:250,000 if not), and the amount of MIP funding given will be made public.

Information provided in annual spending updates will be used to evaluate the impact of the MIP and will not be made public.

## Deadlines:

Application Deadline	<b>April 30, 2026</b>
Interim Reporting Deadline	<b>August 31, 2026</b>
Project Completion Deadline	<b>March 31, 2027</b>
Final Reporting Deadline for Summer Work	<b>November 30, 2026</b>
Final Reporting Deadline for Winter Work	<b>April 1, 2027</b>
Return of Unspent MIP Funds	<b>April 1, 2027</b>
Annual Spending Update Deadline	<b>April 1, each year until the project is completed</b>

- Applications received after the application deadline will not be considered.
- All funded applicants must submit a completed interim report form prior to the August 31 interim reporting deadline.
- Project work must be completed by March 31.
- Final reports for projects that consist of spring and summer work must be submitted by November 30; whereas projects with winter components must be submitted by April 1. These deadlines allow for the assessment of an applicant's past performance prior to considering new MIP funding requests. Early reporting is appreciated and may result in accelerated final payment.
- Annual spending updates are due on April 1 of each year until the program is completed.
- Late reporting may result in grant forfeiture and may affect future eligibility for MIP funding.
- Eligible expenses must be incurred during the period April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027.