



Natural
Environment
Research Council

UK-Canada Sustainable Critical Mineral Partnerships funding opportunity

Background, objectives and scope

Agenda

1 Background

2 Aims and objectives

3 Scope - what we are looking for

4 Next steps



Background

- Mineral resources are essential to achieve the green and digital economy
- Global demand for technology-critical mineral resources is outstripping production, increasing environmental pressures
- **Key challenge** to responsibly and sustainably secure mineral resources needed to reach net zero, whilst protecting future economic growth and resilience and achieving global sustainable development goals.
- UK government ambition to improve resilience of critical mineral supply chains ([UK Critical Minerals Refresh](#))



UK – Canada partnership

- March 2023: UK and Canada agreed to cooperate on critical minerals
- April 2023: UK-Canada Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee identified key joint UK and Canada research priority areas for integrated research on critical minerals
- January 2024: UK and Canada signed refreshed partnership to strengthen wider collaboration on science and innovation, identifying key priority technology areas, including semiconductors and clean energy technology, which rely on critical minerals.



Aims and objectives

Aim: To support **connections, collaboration and knowledge/skills sharing** between UK and Canadian researchers around responsible and sustainable mining

Intended outcomes:

- improved knowledge, capabilities and innovations utilising the strengths of the UK and Canadian research communities, resulting in greater impact than could be achieved alone
- enhanced collaboration and synergy between UK and Canada critical minerals research communities
- strengthened capacity and capability for UK and Canadian researchers to support future partnership
- enhanced knowledge and skills transfer between UK and Canadian researchers
- identification of shared future research priorities related to critical minerals



Scope - what we are looking for

- UK researchers will collaborate with a relevant Alliance Missions research project to:
 - **add value** to the research in line with UK expertise and priorities
 - forge new **partnerships** and **collaborations**
 - promote **knowledge and skills exchange** between UK and Canadian research communities
- Applications must be at least **50% within NERC remit** and address research aligning with one or both of the following challenge areas
- Applications should focus on **one or more of the prioritised minerals** listed in the funding opportunity
- Watch Video 2 – NSERC Alliance Mission grants for more information about these grants

Scope - what we are looking for

Challenge one

Aims to minimise the environmental impacts of mining, optimise efficiency and support data-driven decision making across critical mineral value chains from exploration to recycling and recovery, through the development or advancement of:

- knowledge and understanding
- models
- processes
- tools and technologies

Scope - what we are looking for

Challenge two

Aims to develop efficient options to advance to a circular economy with less reliance on primary mineral resources which take into consideration the environmental trade-offs, co-benefits and potential unintended consequences of a given approach, for example through (but not limited to):

- mine reclamation
- critical mineral recycling
- reprocessing of critical mineral stocks and valorisation of residual mining waste

Next steps

Sign up to our
networking
community on
[Guild](#)



Watch Video 2:
Background of NSERC
Alliance Missions
critical minerals call



Watch Video 3 on UK
application and
assessment process
and video 4 on
Canadian research
partner instructions



Panel assessment: Dec
2024
Outcomes announced:
by Feb 2025
Grants start: by 1 May
2025



Submit your
application by
**03 October
2024**



Attend the **virtual
networking
workshop** on 10th
June



Natural
Environment
Research Council

Thank you

Questions?

EarthEnergyResources@nerc.ukri.org
support@funding-service.ukri.org



NERC: Natural Environment Research Council



@NERCscience



NERCscience