

# وزارة الصناعة والثروة المعدنية

Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources



## Exploration Enablement Program (EEP) Guidelines

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Exploration Enablement Program and is intended as a guide for mineral exploration companies looking to invest in and expand their operations in Saudi Arabia, with a particular focus on Class A, critical and strategic minerals.

**Exploration Enablement Program Applications close on 31 May 2024.**

Mining in Saudi Arabia is a key part of Saudi [Vision 2030](#) and related economic diversification. After oil, gas, and petrochemicals, the Government of Saudi Arabia views mining as a potential third pillar of its industrial growth.

## 1.1 About the Exploration Enablement Program

The Government of Saudi Arabia has developed an Exploration Enablement Program (EEP) focusing on mineral exploration activities with a budget of SAR 685 million (2024–2030).

The enablement is designed to encourage and increase investment in exploration for Class A minerals as listed in Annex 1 of the Mining Investment Law. The goal is to address gaps in geoscientific knowledge, unlocking long-term strategic benefits. An essential part of the EEP involves supporting and enhancing local skills, capabilities, and capacity in the minerals sector.

The EEP is to support exploration efforts over reconnaissance or exploration licenses that are within their first 5 years of tenure.

The Government of Saudi Arabia prioritizes support for exploration in underexplored geological terranes. The EEP aims to promote innovative methods and technologies for mineral exploration to accelerate exploration activities and generate new geoscience knowledge. Exploration companies participating in the EEP are expected to produce shareable geoscientific data and knowledge as a key outcome. An important outcome of the EEP is the generation of knowledge which is of benefit to third parties.

The EEP will support mineral exploration programs that:

- Present sound technical rationale.
- Apply innovative thinking and methods.
- Address important geoscience knowledge gaps.
- Contribute to the discovery of critical and strategic minerals in Saudi Arabia.
- Transfer skills and knowledge to Saudi nationals.

Applications that propose exploration programs with accelerated completion timelines and prompt release of data are preferred.

The EEP concentrates on providing support for testing proof-of-concept greenfield exploration models. Proposals centered around the following activities are unlikely to be considered:

- Infill drilling of existing resources.
- Simple step-out or extension drilling from known mineral resources.
- Pattern drilling at resource definition scale instead of proof-of-concept spacing.

Table 1 outlines technical program items that will be favorably considered.

Table 1: Example of work program activities

Project Type	Aim	Example Activities
Greenfield Drilling	Increase density of geoscientific data to improve geological knowledge and de-risk underexplored areas of Saudi Arabia.	Single, deep, stratigraphic diamond hole in an underexplored area
		Multi-hole diamond drilling programs in underexplored areas.
		Non-diamond drilling programs where no other drilling exists.
Regional-scale Geophysics	Improve the quality and resolution of large regional geophysical datasets.	Regional-scale (>350 km <sup>2</sup> area or >25 km traverse length) geophysical acquisition resulting in a significant improvement in the resolution and quality of existing data.
		Reflection seismic surveys greater than 25 km length in underexplored areas.
Innovative Targeting	Promote innovation in exploration targeting and encourage use of existing sample sets to assess multi-commodity potential (e.g. critical minerals).	Acquisition of regional, camp or prospect-scale geophysics or geochemistry for target generation where the technique and/or approach is innovative.
		Re-analysis of existing sample sets and/or mine waste to identify potential for recognizing additional elements and/or improve targeting (e.g. multi-element analysis, petrophysical data).
Use of Innovative Techniques	Use of new or cutting-edge technology.	Machine learning and remote sensing, e.g. PRISMA satellite spectral data.

## 2. FUNDING

Applications will only be accepted for reconnaissance license and exploration licenses less than 5 years old (granted after 31 May 2019).

- One application per license.
- Maximum of 15 applications per company.
- First 5 applications per company are also eligible for talent / labor enablement support and are not subject to any clawback conditions (any EEP funding provided for approved expenditure will not be repayable).
- Next 10 applications are not eligible for talent / labor enablement support and any EEP funding provided will be subject to a clawback condition, repayable on mining production from the license, as set out in the Funding Agreement.

The EEP provides total funding for up to SAR 7 million per application, divided into two separate sections:

- *Technical*: up to a total of SAR 4 million of funding of eligible drilling, geochemistry, geophysics and geoscience study costs, and
- *Talent / Labor*: up to SAR 3 million for salaries (where applicable).

### Technical Funding

- A total of SAR 4 million of funding is available per license for Eligible Costs (see Appendix 2).
- Funding is set at a maximum of 25% of the eligible costs, up to SAR 4 million.
- To incentivize early expenditure and a faster proportional return of expended capital, repayment of Eligible Costs will be by declining percentages as set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Eligible Costs Refund Schedule

Hurdle	Exploration Expenditure	Proportion of Eligible Costs Repaid	
1 <sup>st</sup> million	SAR 0–1,000,000	60%	SAR 600,000 per 1M
2 <sup>nd</sup> million	SAR 1,000,001–2,000,000	50%	SAR 500,000 per 1M
3 <sup>rd</sup> million	SAR 2,000,001–3,000,000	40%	SAR 400,000 per 1M
4 <sup>th</sup> million	SAR 3,000,001–4,000,000	30%	SAR 300,000 per 1M
5 <sup>th</sup> million onwards	SAR 4,000,001 upwards	20%	SAR 200,000 per 1M
		Until SAR 4 M is repaid	

### Talent / Labor Funding

- Funding divided into two sections: Talent and Local Labor.
- *Talent*: up to SAR 1.5 million covering up to 15% of salary costs incurred for highly skilled employees (including both ex-patriates and local talent) working in Saudi Arabia, on the condition of tag-teaming with a Saudi national, and
- *Labor*: up to SAR 1.5 million supplementing HRDF (Human Resources Development Fund) salary contributions for up to 70% of local salary costs for the first 2 years and up to 100% of local salary costs beyond 2 years.
- Further information on Talent / Labor support is available at <https://www.hrdf.org.sa/Home>.

Applications for round 1 open on **1 April 2024** and close on **31 May 2024**.

This guideline outlines the details on eligibility, claimable costs, assessment criteria, how to apply and the funding process. Please direct any queries to [explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa](mailto:explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa)

### 3. OBJECTIVES

The EEP aims to support the growth of the exploration and mining industry in Saudi Arabia by targeting the following objectives:

- Accelerate and diversify mineral deposit discoveries.
- Infill gaps in the geoscientific knowledge related to Saudi Arabia.
- Increase the understanding of mineral prospectivity potential in unexplored or underexplored remote or frontier areas of Saudi Arabia.
- Increase greenfield mineral exploration activity and industry collaboration to promote the discovery and development of new mineral resources.
- Continue to build the Government's high-quality geological datasets to support the sustained growth and development of the mineral exploration and mining sector.
- Improve data-sharing timeframes from exploration activities.
- Promote and support the application of innovative exploration technologies and share results with all industry participants to enhance exploration efficiency.
- Facilitate employment and upskilling of Saudi nationals by partly funding employment and/or training during exploration programs.
- Set high exploration activity standards to promote safe, responsible practices.
- Grow and capture the maximum value from the mining sector.

#### 3.1 Impact

- The EEP is designed to support Saudi Arabia's growth targets (Vision 2030) by increasing the likelihood of mineral discoveries through the acceleration of exploration efforts, and continuously improving exploration efforts through collaboratively sharing new geoscience data among industry participants.
- The program is intended to grow Saudi Arabia's profile internationally as a preferred mineral exploration and mining investment destination by supporting investors committed to developing and testing new exploration concepts and innovative technology to help unlock Saudi Arabia's mineral wealth.
- The EEP promotes Saudi Arabia as a center of excellence for exploration and mining through the support of innovative, collaborative research and development applied directly to the exploration, discovery, and development of Saudi Arabia's mineral wealth.

#### 3.2 Outcomes

- Deepen the understanding of Saudi Arabia's mineral prospectivity by generating significant data flow into the National Geological Database (NGD).
- Leverage deeper understanding of Saudi Arabia's prospectivity to attract exploration investment to Saudi Arabia over a diverse commodity range.
- Accelerate mineral discoveries and increase mineral production that will significantly contribute to Saudi Arabia's gross domestic product (GDP).
- Promote self-reliance through knowledge transfer and high-skill talent development to achieve targeted 250,000 minerals sector jobs by 2035.
- Feed into strategic mining-specific bundled infrastructure projects that support diversified downstream value-add developments.

## 4. FUNDING PROCESS AND IMPORTANT DATES

The process to award the funding comprises of two steps.

### Step 1: Full Application and Technical Proposal

- Applications should provide detailed information on the proposed program, including exploration objectives and technical rationale, methodologies, timeline, and estimated budget.
- Applications will be assessed by a panel of experts who will evaluate the merits of the proposed program in line with the assessment criteria.
- The online EEP Application Form is available at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

### Step 2: Funding Decision

- Successful applicants will receive reimbursement funding for their projects, subject to the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement. <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>
- The funding amount and duration depend on the scope and scale of the program and other scoring criteria (refer to Scoring Criteria guide, provided in Appendix 3).
- Funding will be reimbursed on the submission of data, reports and associated auditing process.



Figure 1: Application Flow Diagram

Table 3: Important Dates

Date	Milestone
10 January 2024	Announcement at Future Minerals Forum 2024 Registrations open
1 April 2024	Application submissions open
31 May 2024	Application submissions close
30 June 2024	Proposal evaluations completed
1 July 2024	Announcement of successful applicants and completion of Funding Agreements
1 May 2025	EEP Annual Report and data submission due
1 June 2025	EEP invoice submission due Reimbursement process commences

## 5. GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

Note that these are not legal definitions but are included to provide guidance on the general meaning of terms used.

**Application Form:** Prescribed form to be completed in its entirety, available at [Application Form](#)

**Annual EEP Report:** The report written by exploration companies on the work conducted for activities that funding will be claimed for, this report will be made available to the public to disseminate the information and knowledge gained from the EEP funds.

**Brownfield Exploration:** Exploration near known mineralisation, deposit, or mineral occurrence.

**Class A Minerals:** as defined in Mining Investment Law and including metallic minerals, precious and semiprecious stones, and ores that require advanced operations.

**Direct program costs:** Activities or items essential for the successful completion and delivery of the work.

**Eligible Costs:** See Appendix 2.

**Exploration Enablement Program (EEP):** Program designed to co-fund mineral exploration on reconnaissance licenses or exploration licenses within their first 5-years of tenure.

**Greenfield Exploration:** Exploration located away from known mineralisation, deposit, or mineral occurrence.

**Innovative Targeting:** Introducing new ideas, workflows, methodologies, technology, or targeting methods.

**Innovative Techniques:** Using new technology for example machine learning, remote sensing etc.

**Mining Portal:** Website <https://taadeen.sa/>

**NIC:** National Incentive Committee.

**Proposed Budget:** Completed template of estimated expenditure at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>.

**Specialist services** or a **Specialist:** Is a highly skilled individual or consultant specialized in a specific and restricted field. This pertains to skills or methods that cannot reasonably be performed by general staff or contractors. Examples include mineral characterization, automated mineralogy, isotope analysis, geochronology, or machine learning–assisted prospectivity analysis.



## 6. CRITICAL AND STRATEGIC MINERALS

Critical and strategic minerals will play a continued role in the transformation of Saudi Arabia's wider economy and energy transition objectives. As such, the EEP will only support proposals exploring for minerals listed as Class A minerals under the Mining Investment Law.

## 7. ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All EEP applications must satisfy the following eligibility criteria:

- The applicant must be the holder or operator of a valid reconnaissance or exploration license in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- The license must be within the initial 5 years of its tenure from date of license grant (granted after 31 May 2019).
- The application license must be for Class A minerals.
- The applicant is required to have sufficient financial and technical capacity to complete the proposed exploration program, irrespective of securing partial reimbursement of eligible costs in the future.
- Applicants must pass financial and technical capacity checks. Entities and company directors may be subject to financial probity checks.
- The applicant (and/or associated entities) must ensure that the tenure they hold is in good standing with the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources. This involves adhering to license work program conditions and consistently meeting reporting and data submission requirements.
- Applicants will be vetted for compliance prior to their proposal being assessed.
- Applicants must have current and appropriate public liability insurance.
- Applicants must use the EEP Application Form template and associated Budget template.
- Proposals must not include work that has already been completed before successful applicants have been publicly announced (i.e. not retrospective).
- EEP funded activities can only commence when the successful applicants have been publicly announced, and the Funding Agreement is fully executed.
- Applicants must demonstrably commit to use local service providers in preference to foreign services wherever practicable.
- Applicants must demonstrably commit to skills transfer processes for Saudi nationals.

## 8. ELIGIBLE REIMBURSABLE COSTS

Funding is made available on a reimbursement basis.

To participate in the EEP, applicants need to have adequate funds or demonstrate accessible funding to cover all costs associated with their proposed program. Direct program costs encompass activities or items essential for the successful completion and delivery of the proposed program, meeting industry-accepted standards.

- The list of eligible and ineligible reimbursable costs can be found in Appendix 2, is available from the portal <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>, and is included in the Application Form.

Estimates of direct program costs submitted with the application should be as accurate as possible to ensure that they are commensurate with the proposed exploration program. Claims for funding will comply with guidelines set out in Section 2 and be up to 25% of the total eligible direct program costs (capped at SAR 4 million) and must be supported by supplier invoices.

These guidelines do not offer a definitive or exhaustive list of specialist services. In the context of the scheme objectives, 'specialist services' or a 'specialist' refers to a highly skilled individual or consultant specialized in a specific and restricted field. This pertains to skills or methods that cannot reasonably be performed by general staff or contractors. Examples include mineral characterization, automated mineralogy, isotope analysis, geochronology, or machine learning–assisted prospectivity analysis.

## 9. APPLICATION PROCESS

### 9.1 Applying Online

Before applying online, this Guideline must be read in full.

Applications open through <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program> on 1 April 2024 and close on 31 May 2024.

The Government of Saudi Arabia is not obliged to accept late applications. All applications are to be received via the Mining Portal. (<https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>).

If required, contact [explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa](mailto:explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa) for assistance with the application process.

The application process is outlined in Appendix 1.

### 9.2 Application Form

Applicants must use the Application Form template and associated Budget template. Both templates can be downloaded from: <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

The Application Form has the following sections which must be completed:

- Application details
- Project summary,
- Target minerals,
- Exploration program target area
- Geology,
- Previous exploration
- Exploration concept,
- Target description and style,
- Proposed exploration program and its technical rationale,
- Proposed timeline,
- Use of local talent / labor on the program,
- technical and financial capability,
- Technical capability
- Financial capability
- Other projects
- conclusion,
- Supporting documents,
- Checklist.

An application exemplar (fictitious project scenario) is provided as additional guidance to applicants, to showcase the minimum level of application information quality expected. The exemplar can be found at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>.

### 9.3 Assessment Process

In June 2024, the assessment panel will evaluate all eligible applications by scoring them against specific assessment criteria. This scoring criteria can be found in Appendix 3. The assessment will focus on the technical merits of the project and its capacity to broaden the geological knowledge of Saudi Arabia mineral estate.

The following criteria are key considerations for the Government of Saudi Arabia:

#### *Strategic Alignment*

- Adds value and enhances Saudi Arabia's geoscience information by seeking to address a key knowledge gap, and positively contributes to mineral exploration and development in Saudi Arabia.
- Supports exploration activity in remote or frontier areas that are underexplored.
- Has the potential to enhance mineral prospectivity, stimulate new mineral deposit discoveries, and generate exploration investment opportunities.
- Demonstrates the potential for data, knowledge, and/or techniques, generated or proven by the proposed program, to benefit third parties, thereby helping achieve the Government of Saudi Arabia's strategic mineral objectives.

#### *Innovation*

- Tests a new concept, or uses/tests a new method, technique, or technology.

#### *Local Capability and Capacity*

- Supports the development of local talent in the field of exploration.

Where there is a potential, actual, or perceived conflict of interest between a technical panel member and an applicant (company, associate, or program manager), panel members will be excluded from the decision-making process on that specific application, and where necessary, an alternative assessor will be used.

### 9.4 Notification

By 1 July 2024, successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources via email at [explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa](mailto:explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa).

Upon announcement, information about successful applicants and project areas will be publicly disclosed on the Mining Portal website. Such information will be restricted to the company name, relevant licenses, and key points of the proposed work program. All other details from the proposals will be treated as 'commercial in confidence' and kept confidential.

The assessment panel reserves the right to partially fund a proposal. The Government of Saudi Arabia is under no obligation to release any details relating to the assessment of proposals. The decision made by the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources following assessment of the proposals will be final. There will be no right of appeal.

## 10. SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Applicants will receive notification regarding the outcome of their application(s) by 1 July 2024. The primary contact for each application will be notified via email at [explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa](mailto:explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa). The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources will maintain communication with successful applicants throughout the agreed program to monitor progress and discuss any challenges.

Successful applicants will be subject to the EEP reporting and data submission requirements described in the applicable guidelines.

### 10.1 Funding Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter a Funding Agreement with the National Incentive Committee (NIC) on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Funding Agreement will provide the legal framework for the obligations of each party and the terms in relation to funding the exploration activity. The Funding Agreement is provided in its final form and is not open to any renegotiation of its substantive terms. A proforma Funding Agreement will be provided at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

Successful applicants who do not substantially complete their agreed work program, or fail to meet key milestones, may have their funding deed terminated and may have restrictions regarding future funding rounds placed upon them.

### 10.2 Timeframe to Complete Funded Activities

The purpose of EEP funding is to stimulate exploration activity and investment in new or underexplored areas by employing new and/or best practice exploration techniques and testing innovative concepts or exploration models. Preference is therefore given to activities that can be completed and reported within expedited timeframes.

Eligibility to claim reimbursement for exploration activities outlined in an approved application is only permissible after the full execution of a Funding Agreement and a public announcement by the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources to that effect. Successful applicants are required to inform the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources about the start and end dates of the exploration activities proposed in their application.

To seek reimbursement of eligible costs, successful applicants must submit an Annual EEP Report along with supporting exploration data in the prescribed form by 1 May each year. An invoice for eligible reimbursable costs, with supporting financial documents, is to be supplied no later than 1 June of the same year. The applicant bears responsibility for managing and delivering the approved program, as outlined in the Funding Agreement, and bears all associated liabilities.

If the applicant foresees any risks affecting the ability to complete the work program by the agreed activity milestones or within broader timeframes, the applicant is to notify the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources as soon as possible.

Any proposed alterations to the program specified in the Funding Agreement necessitate written approval from the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources. Significant variations mandate a Deed of Variation, requiring signatures from both the applicant and the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources. It is essential to seek variations proactively and not retroactively.

### 10.3 Invoicing

Within 1 month of 1 May each year, successful applicants will be required to submit an invoice for eligible reimbursable costs incurred in the preceding annual period, as set out in the Funding Agreement. The invoice should be addressed to the NIC (with copies to the Ministry of Industry and the Mineral Resources) and should be issued by the legal entity named on the Funding Agreement.

The invoice must accurately capture eligible program costs and must include all supporting contractor and supplier invoices. Actual costs should reflect estimated costs presented in the application budget, with any significant variations accompanied by explanatory notes.

The invoice will only be paid once eligible costs are verified and invoices assessed as accurate, and all project deliverables stipulated in the Funding Agreement verified as received by the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources.

Applicants must use the expenditure template<sup>1</sup> to provide an itemized costing report for claimable expenses.

For payments to be processed, successful applicants must ensure they have supplied correct bank account details.

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<sup>1</sup> To be advised.

## 11. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Successful applicants seeking reimbursement of eligible costs must ensure that along with fulfilling invoicing conditions set out in Section 10.3, an Annual EEP Report outlining exploration activities, along with the stipulated data submission, is submitted by 1 May each year.

Successful applicants should use the program reporting template as the template for the Annual EEP Report, which can be found at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

The Annual EEP Report should:

- Provide clear descriptions of all work programs undertaken.
- Provide details on exploration models and targeting methodologies used.
- Clearly outline the sampling methods and QAQC protocols used.
- Contain all results, including an interpretation of the data and whether further work on the exploration target is needed.
- Include an assessment of the effectiveness of the exploration program methodologies, any learnings or improvements that could be taken from the activity and shared with the broader exploration community.
- Provide a summary of the applicant's Environment, Social and Governance performance (ESG).
- Provide a summary of workplace safety statistics.
- Provide data files in the prescribed formats.

Annual EEP Reports must be accompanied by project data, set out in formats specified in the EEP Data Deliverables guideline available at <https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

Applicants must adhere to Regulation 6 provisions of the Mining Investment Law whereby all drill samples must be preserved for inclusion in the national drilling samples library.

## 12. GUIDING PRINCIPLES & CONDUCT

Successful applicants are expected to maintain the following standards throughout the program:

- Provide high-quality information to the Government of Saudi Arabia that enables greater opportunity for collaboration, innovation, and exploration, through shared and open datasets and reports.
- Ensure all activities are undertaken with utmost care for the safety and welfare of workers, local communities and the environment.
- Maintain an excellent social license to conduct activities by demonstrating good Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance.
- Demonstrate capability and capacity building of local talent and labor.
- Ensure full understanding of, and compliance with, all regulatory requirements and Laws.

## 13. GENERAL CONDITIONS

The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources reserves the right to do the following.

- Amend the EEP initiative, at any time prior to the application closing date, providing applicants are notified.
- Extend the application submission closing date.
- Clarify any aspect of a proposal after the specified closing date.
- Seek the advice of external consultants to assist in the evaluation or review of submitted applications.
- Extend the period of assessment.
- End the EEP initiative at any time without liability, whether before or after the receipt of applications.
- Refuse to accept any application without obligation to provide reasons for the decision.
- Fund only part of a proposal. If partial funding is recommended by the Technical Assessment Panel, the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources will advise the applicant confidentially. The applicant must resubmit the varied proposal to suit partial funding.

The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources shall incur no liability to any applicant by reason of any of the foregoing.

In addition:

- Management of the project will be undertaken by the applicant and/or operational nominees.
- The applicant bears all liabilities associated with the project.
- A final Funding Agreement (2 copies) will be prepared and forwarded to the Applicant. Both copies are to be returned to Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources for execution.
- Drilling must be conducted in accordance with an approved environmental management plan.
- Payment schedule: Final payment will be made on lodgment and acceptance of the Annual EEP Report containing all technical information (correctly presented) that is directly relevant to the project.
- EEP funding cannot be included as part of company mineral license expenditure commitments.

## 14. LEGAL PARAMETERS

### Disclosure of information

Information received from applicants, and communications, will be treated confidentially, subject to the Mining Law, the Implementation Regulations, and any other applicable laws in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. However, applicants acknowledge and agree to the following.

- a) Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Investment may share information with those assisting in the Exploration Enablement Program or future mining auctions.
  - b) Correspondence with the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Investment may be disclosed on the Ministry website.
  - c) Information requests and answers may be shared with all applicants and/or made public via the Mining Portal.
  - d) Summary of rights, obligations, and names of successful applicants will be published on the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Investments websites at the conclusion of the assessment.
  - e) The program and all activities in connection with the program are subject at all times to the Mining Investment Law, the Regulations, and the Concession Agreement between the Government and Saudi Aramco that approved by the Royal Decree No. (M/38) dated 1439/04/06 AH, and all other applicable laws and regulations as in effect from time to time in KSA (including, without limitation, the minimum annual expenditure requirements applicable to exploration licenses contained in Article 108 of the Regulations).
  - f) The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources is not responsible in any way for any expenses incurred by any applicant in connection with its application for a grant under the program.
  - g) All materials and documentation submitted to the Ministry by any applicant in connection with the program shall become the sole property of the Ministry.
  - h) No information contained in this guideline or in any communication made between the Ministry and any applicant in connection with the program shall be relied upon as constituting a contract, agreement or representation that any funding shall be offered under the program.
- The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Investment may change the assessment procedures or cancel the assessment process without notice.
  - These guidelines, and any communications between the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Investment and any prospective applicant, do not constitute a contract, agreement, or representation that any contract shall be offered in accordance with these guidelines.

## 15. CONTACT DETAILS

All general enquiries: [explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa](mailto:explorationincentive@mim.gov.sa)

## 16. USEFUL LINKS

<https://taadeen.sa/exploration-enablement-program>

<https://ngd.sgs.gov.sa/>

<https://www.hrdf.org.sa/Home>

<https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/en/vision-2030/overview/>



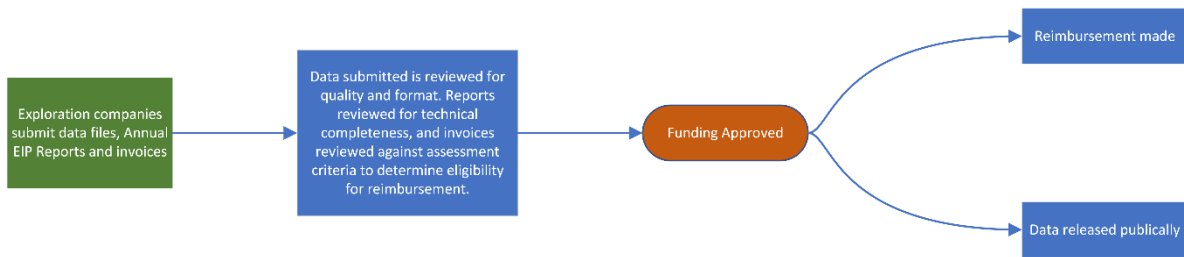


# APPENDIX 1 - PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM

## Application Process



## Reimbursement Process



## APPENDIX 2 - ELIGIBLE / INELIGIBLE REIMBURSABLE COSTS

<b>Eligible Costs – What can be claimed.</b> Costs that <b>directly</b> relate to the acquisition of new knowledge.	<b>Ineligible Costs – What cannot be claimed.</b> Costs that do not <b>directly</b> relate to the acquisition of new knowledge is borne by the company
Drilling costs per metre incurred during active drilling to produce diamond core, percussion-drilled rock chips or auger samples.	Drilling rig mobilization / demobilization costs
Drilling consumables including fluids, muds, normal bit wear, casing, and hole plugs	Site access and drill pad preparation costs
Rig work and active standby time	Drillhole collar survey
Rig move time	Inactive rig standby time
Water used for drilling	Water used for exploration work, camp
Core orientation costs	Any material lost or abandoned in hole, intentionally or otherwise
Core trays, markers, blocks	Insurance
Downhole camera costs	Core cutting costs
Downhole / directional survey costs	Core or sample freight costs
Wireline logging	Rig breakdown, spare part purchases or repairs
Accredited laboratory geochemical analysis cost for drill, rock chip and soil samples	Purchase of analytical equipment (including hand-held analytical devices)
Soil sample collection	Project management overheads
Thin section preparation	Fuel
Mineralogy sample preparation costs	Rehabilitation
Mineral geochronology	Vehicle expenses (including purchase costs, rental costs, repairs, and consumables)
Mineral characterization (including thin section petrography, microscopic studies, XRF, XRD and similar)	Travel costs
Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	PPE and other WHS costs
Automated Mineralogy	Camp set up cost, including core shed and storage sites
Per line km / per station cost of geophysical acquisition and survey reporting.	Aircraft / seismic / ground geophysical equipment mobilization, demobilization / standby costs
	Workforce competency training
	Food and accommodation
	Telecommunications costs
	Legal advice
	Community engagement costs
	Environmental assessments or survey
	Landowner liaison or site access permission costs

## APPENDIX 3 - SCORING CRITERIA

Assessment is against the Project application and will only occur for those applications and applicants that meet the Pass/Fail funding criteria.

### APPLICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Criteria	Available score	Applicant score
Critical Mineral (Class 'A' minerals)	PASS/FAIL	
Valid Exploration / Reconnaissance License (less than 5 years tenure)	PASS/FAIL	
Technical Capability	PASS/FAIL	
Financial Capability	PASS/FAIL	
Compliance Status (with License Obligations; Data and Technical Reporting)	PASS/FAIL	

Target Area	5	
Location of the proposed program in an underexplored area.		

Geology	10	
Demonstrated knowledge of regional and local geology.		

Previous Work	10	
Demonstrated knowledge relevant previous exploration.		

Exploration Concept	15	
Well considered technical rationale that is based on a sound geological or exploration model that is relevant to the terrain and target.	10	
Potential of the exploration program to stimulate exploration in underexplored areas and generate new high quality geoscience data beyond the applicants own license.	5	

Target Description	10	
Clear demonstration of the target(s) that are the focus of the proposed exploration program and clear goals of the exploration program.	10	

Proposed Exploration Program	20	
Demonstrates the appropriateness of the proposed methods, approach and program design to support the exploration concept and target commodity in the target terrain.	2	
Demonstrates appropriate sampling methodologies for each relevant selected methodology.	2	
Generates improved/enhanced knowledge of the region from a multi-commodity perspective particularly beyond the applicant's own	2	

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Available score</b>	<b>Applicant score</b>
license.		
Demonstrates selection of appropriate and compliant analytical techniques	2	
Extent to which the program adopts new, novel or innovative approaches, methods or techniques that is appropriate to the terrain to aid discovery and evidence to support this.	2	
Demonstrate a robust and appropriate Data Quality Management System. Demonstrate that data will be collected and reported with appropriate QAQC information sufficient to demonstrate the level of accuracy and precision of the information obtained.	2	
Extent to which selected exploration methodology is validated by results and applicability of methodology in a broader context.	2	
Extent to which the exploration program will address knowledge gaps in relation to regional geology (e.g. depth to bedrock or nature of the basement, major structures, geophysical anomalies).	2	
Potential of the program to have implications for target generation and future exploration in the broader region.	2	
Quality of the supporting evidence of effective target generation and testing (including figures, geological maps and images of geophysical targets and/or cross sections where appropriate.)	2	
<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	<b>5</b>	
Appropriateness of the estimated timeframe for the proposed program.		
<b>Talent / Labor</b>	<b>10</b>	
Demonstrate capacity and planning to provide training and knowledge transfer to residential workforce.		
<b>Local Content Support</b>	<b>5</b>	
Provide details of the local and national organizations intended to participate in undertaking work program activities.		
<b>Proposed Budget</b>	<b>10</b>	
Appropriateness of the estimated budget for the proposed program.		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	