

Introduction

IMI's *Exploring Innovations Program* projects are meant to advance the “next generation” and “future mines” innovations of the minerals industry. With this program, IMII is seeking to:

- Seed potentially transformational research & development;¹
- Explore the potential of emerging technology to generate new innovations through applied research projects; and
- Explore and understand emerging technology that could be adapted or adopted for use by the minerals industry.

This program focuses on short-term research and development (R&D) projects in the two areas that explore whether innovations are possible. Partners are to apply their expertise to address an industry challenge where the ideal outcome is scientific research that is ready to transition to applied research.

Areas of Focus

Next Generation Mines and Mills

- Develop emerging technologies or applications or validate “new to mining” technology components to manage risks and/or lower liabilities.

Future Mines

- Enabling the generation of innovative approaches to significantly improve the sustainability (environmental, social or economic) of future mines and mills.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the *Exploring Innovations Program*, a project must meet the following criteria:

- At least two IMII member companies involved in the project; and
- At least one IMII member university, polytechnic and/or research organization involved in the project.

Project Funding

Funding recipients are universities, polytechnics and/or research organizations and are eligible to receive funding up to \$25,000 for a maximum period of six months from IMII.

- With industry support and to further developments, applicants may apply for a subsequent Exploring Innovations award to support a project for an additional six months.
- Funding is inclusive of all overhead costs and must not exceed 25% of the total project budget

Examples of eligible expenses:

- Salary of necessary staff for the research project (including students, postdoctoral fellows, technical or professional assistance);
- Laboratory equipment and supplies, including the services of third-party providers if vital to the project; and
- Equipment or facility rental.

¹ The National Science Foundation (US) defines **Transformative research** as *involving ideas, discoveries, or tools that radically change our understanding of an important existing scientific or engineering concept or educational practice or leads to the creation of a new paradigm or field of science, engineering, or education. Such research challenges current understanding or provides pathways to new frontiers.*

Federal Agency Funding

Upon approval of the project by IMII's Board of Directors, the team has two months to submit the application to federal agencies should the project be eligible for a grant. If an application is not made, IMII may withhold future payments or not consider future applications from the team.

Intellectual Property

The *Exploring Innovations Program* is meant to be a first step at establishing a successful R&D collaboration in response to the needs of IMII minerals company members. In general, due to the focus on a problem specific to the minerals industry and the short duration of this grant, it is IMII's intent that intellectual property arising from the project will reside with the collaborating IMII member companies.

It is also expected that university or polytechnic researchers will have the right to use the new knowledge or technology in future teaching and research, subject to confidentiality provisions. Faculty may also be able to describe the project on their curricula vitae. Other knowledge sharing, IP management or protection provisions may also be considered.