

U.S. Geological Survey

Mineral Resources External Research Program – FY 2013

Funding Opportunity and Award Description

The Mineral Resources Program (MRP) of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is offering a grant and/or cooperative agreement opportunity, called the Mineral Resources External Research Program (MRERP) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. This opportunity is extended to universities, State agencies, Tribal governments or organizations, and industry or other private sector organizations that have the ability to conduct research in topics related to nonfuel mineral resources.

The total amount of funding available for the FY 2013 MRERP is expected to be \$250,000. As of the posting date of this notification the Federal appropriations process for FY 2013 was not complete. If the available funding remains \$250,000, the MRP anticipates making MRERP awards in FY 2013 for 3 to 5 proposals, however, individual proposals are not restricted to a set level of funding

The FY 2013 MRERP is accepting applications to September 26, 2012. Access and download the FY 2013 MRERP announcement by going to <http://www.grants.gov/> and search for this grant opportunity by using keyword “mineral”, funding opportunity number “G12AS20078”, or CFDA number “15.816”.

Applicant Eligibility

Applications will be accepted from any individual who has the ability to conduct research consistent with the Mineral Resources Program goals (see Research Topic Eligibility section below) and who is not employed by a U.S. federal agency. Applicants need not be U.S. citizens and can be affiliated (but are not required to be affiliated) with universities, State agencies, Tribal governments or organizations, industry, or other private sector groups.

Research Topic Eligibility

All proposals must meet two primary criteria to qualify for funding consideration.

Criterion 1: The proposed work must be research; a systematic inquiry to generate new knowledge about a subject of investigation, through a process of interpretation. Data collection and compilation are important early steps in a research project, but do not, alone, constitute research.

Criterion 2: The proposed work must address the long term goals of the MRP as defined in the current USGS Energy and Minerals Science Strategy (<http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2012/1072/>). These are:

- understand fundamental Earth processes forming mineral resources
- understand the environmental behavior of mineral resources and their waste products
- provide inventories and assessments of mineral resources

- understand the effects of mineral development on natural resources
- understand the availability and reliability of mineral resource supplies

All proposals that meet the two qualifying criteria will be accepted for further evaluation based on additional criteria. **Note that evaluation criteria will reward proposals that address one or more of the priority research topics outlined below.**

Priority Research Topics

The USGS MRP conducts research on the genesis of mineral deposits, the regional controls on the distribution of mineral systems, and the mineral environmental characteristics of mineral resources. Information from this research is used to reduce the uncertainty in nonfuel mineral resource and mineral environmental assessments. Each year the MRERP designates priority research topics consistent with ongoing research directions supported by the MRP. In FY 2013 the MRP is embarking on several new research directions and expanding its research in the area of critical mineral resources.

To complement these new and expanded research efforts, the FY 2013 MRERP is soliciting research proposals that address one or more of the following topics:

- The Mid-continent Rift of the U.S. -- Multidisciplinary studies to image and characterize the mineral resource potential of this significant crustal feature
- Alaska as a mineral resource frontier -- Core science investigations as a foundation for documenting mineral resource potential
- Hyperspectral imaging or other geophysical investigations of selected regions of the U.S. -- State-of-the-art tools for mineral resource and mineral environmental investigations
- Materials flow studies -- Investigations to address supply chain analysis (including risk analysis) and sustainable mineral supplies
- Critical Mineral Resources -- Research to better understand the genesis and regional controls on the distribution of critical mineral-bearing systems. For the purpose of this solicitation critical mineral commodities are defined as follows (in alphabetical order): cobalt, gallium, indium, lithium, niobium, PGEs, REEs, rhenium, tantalum, tellurium.

For further information contact MRERP@usgs.gov.