

APPLICATION GUIDE

ENVELOPPE NORDIQUE D'INFRASTRUCTURES
EN APPUI AU SECTEUR MINIER

Société du Plan Nord

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1. DEFINITIONS

Applicant: Eligible clientele listed in section 2.2.

CAPEX or capital expenditures: Refers to the funds a company invests in the acquisition or improvement of long-term assets.

Company: Any legal entity (corporation or joint venture) or partnership.

Company in the Northern region: Any company whose head office or place of business has been located in the Northern region, as defined in this section, for at least one year at the time the work is carried out.

Construction: Projects or work carried out with a view to establishing new infrastructure for land transportation (including bridge and culvert construction), renewable energy transmission or telecommunications.

Eligible expenses: All expenses relating to the work listed in section 3.2.

Exclusive exploration rights: A real property right that grants the holder exclusive access to explore a parcel of land (public or private) for mineral substances. This is the only exploration mining title that can be issued for the search of mineral substances belonging to the Crown's domain.

Feasibility study: A comprehensive technical and economic study of the selected development option for a mineral project that includes appropriately detailed assessments of applicable Modifying Factors together with any other relevant operational factors and detailed financial analysis that are necessary to demonstrate, at the time of reporting, that extraction is reasonably justified (economically mineable). The results of the study may reasonably serve as the basis for a final decision by a proponent or financial institution to proceed with, or finance, the development of the project.

Feasibility study stage: Mining projects with a feasibility study complying with Canadian standard N. I. I. 43.101. These projects are considered to have an expectation of financial profitability.

Improvement: Projects or work carried out to improve an infrastructure from the state it was in at the time of its construction or most recent improvement, as the case may be, excluding maintenance work.

Indicated mineral resource: Part of a Mineral Resource for which quantity, grade or quality, densities, shape and physical characteristics are estimated with sufficient confidence to allow the application of Modifying Factors in sufficient detail to support mine planning and evaluation of the economic viability of the deposit. Geological evidence is derived from adequately detailed and reliable exploration, sampling and testing and is sufficient to assume geological and grade or quality continuity between points of observation.

Land transportation infrastructure: All facilities, including road surfaces, rails, drainage structures, engineering structures and related facilities, that enable the movement of people, goods and vehicles over the ground, from the existing network to the mining infrastructures.

Maintenance CAPEX or sustaining capital expenditures: Refers to the investments required to preserve the efficiency of existing assets and the productive capacity of a company throughout its lifespan.

Maintenance work: Recurring work carried out to prevent deterioration or to maintain the integrity and safety of an infrastructure.

Mineral resource evaluation stage: Mining projects with indicated mineral resources based on a technical report complying with Canadian standard N. I. 43.101.

Mining concession: A mining title that grants its holder the exclusive right to extract mineral substances discovered on a given land. This title is the predecessor of the mining lease and has not been granted since 1966, although a number of mining concessions still exist in Québec.

Mining lease: Mining title granting the holder the right to exploit mineral substances other than surface mineral substances on a designated land.

Mining production facilities: Any infrastructure required to develop a mining deposit, including, but not limited to, service buildings, tailings facilities, concentrators and processing plants.

Mining project: A mining project can be understood as any activity or set of activities related to the exploration, operation, expansion, or reopening of a mine, including associated infrastructure and environmental impacts.

Northern territory: Territory of application: the entire territory of Québec located north of the 49th degree of north latitude and north of the St. Lawrence River and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Place of business: A fixed location where the company carries out its activities on a permanent basis, where the resources related to the company's operations and management have been working on a regular basis for at least one year (excluding any site installation), which is clearly identified with its name and is accessible during normal business hours. In the case of a joint venture that has been in existence for less than one year, each of the parties involved must have been in existence for at least one year at the time the work is carried out.

Planning and design: Pre-project and project preparation work for infrastructure projects, including opportunity studies, design, preparation of plans and specifications, and right-of-way clearance.

Regional company: Any company whose head office or place of business has been located in the administrative region concerned for at least one year at the time the work is carried out.

Renewable energy: Energy from natural sources or processes considered inexhaustible, their rate of renewal being equal to or greater than their rate of consumption. Solar, wind, hydro and biomass are all renewable energies. Renewable energies can be used to produce electricity or heat.

Renewable energy transmission infrastructure: All facilities, networks and technical equipment needed to deliver renewable energy in its various forms (hydroelectricity, wind power, etc.) from the existing grid to the mining infrastructures.

Surface mineral substances: Peat; sand including silica sand; gravel; collector minerals and crystals; limestone; calcite; dolomite; common clay and argillaceous rocks used in the manufacture of clay products; all types of rocks used as dimension stone, crushed stone or silica ore or in the making of cement; and every mineral substance that is found in its natural state as a loose deposit, except the tilth, as well as inert mine tailings, where such substances and tailings are used for construction purposes, for the manufacture of construction materials, or for the improvement of soils.

Telecommunications infrastructure: All facilities, equipment and technical networks for the transmission, processing and reception of remote data, voice and images, from the existing network to the mining infrastructures.

2. ENVELOPPE NORDIQUE D'INFRASTRUCTURES EN APPUI AU SECTEUR MINIER

The mission of the Société du Plan Nord (Société) is to contribute to the holistic and cohesive development of Québec's Northern territory, with a focus on sustainable development. It operates in accordance with the guidelines established by the government of Québec and in consultation with representatives of the regions and Indigenous nations concerned, as well as the private sector.

As part of its mission, the Société maintains several financial tools that contribute directly to the government's objective of "Living in the North".

2.1. Objectives

The Enveloppe nordique d'infrastructures en appui au secteur minier (ENIAM) is a financial tool designed to provide financial support for strategic infrastructure projects incorporating a multi-user perspective, in support of the mining sector and for the benefit of Northern communities.

More specifically, ENIAM's objectives are to:

- Improve access to the Northern territory to promote sustainable development for communities and businesses;
- Promote the coherent development of transportation infrastructure for the mining sector and for the benefit of communities;
- Enable the implementation of projects with significant economic and social benefits;
- Enable companies to reinvest sums that would otherwise be allocated to infrastructure projects and helicopter transportation costs in their mining operations;
- Generate concrete, measurable benefits for the Northern territory;
- Participate in the development of the mining sector;
- Promote cost-sharing among users;
- Contribute to the Société's sustainable development and climate change objectives.

2.2. Eligibility criteria

2.2.1. Territory of application

The envelope concerns infrastructure projects to be carried out in the Northern territory as defined in Section 1. Exceptionally, the project may take place outside the Northern territory if it benefits northern communities and businesses. Where applicable, the proponent will have to demonstrate that the project's location is justified. However, mining projects served by this infrastructure must be located in the Northern Territory.

2.2.2. Eligible clientele

Eligible clientele includes:

- A for-profit company legally incorporated under the laws of the Government of Québec or Canada and having a clearly identified place of business in Québec where it carries out its activities on a permanent basis. The company must be registered in Québec and must hold and provide proof of a

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valid attestation issued by Revenu Québec, called an “Attestation de Revenu Québec”, when applying for financial assistance.

- A Québec government department, agency or Crown corporation.
- A community, organization or municipality, such as:
 - A band council of an Indigenous community, an Indigenous community or a group of communities of nations recognized by the Assemblée nationale du Québec;
 - A Northern village corporation, a Northern village or an Inuit landholding corporation;
 - A municipality, a regional county municipality or a municipal organization;
 - The James Bay Regional Administration, the Kativik Regional Government, the Cree Nation Government and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government;
 - An incorporated non-profit organization;
 - A cooperative or a mutual.

Ineligible applicants include those who are:

- Under the protection of the Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act (R.S.C., 1985, chapter C-36) or the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (R.S.C., 1985, chapter B-3).
- Registered with the Registre des entreprises non admissibles aux contrats publics (RENA), including their RENA-registered subcontractors.

2.2.3. Eligible infrastructure projects

To be considered eligible, infrastructure projects, regardless of the applicant, must:

- Aim to build an infrastructure that meets the needs of one or more mining projects;
- Focus on improving or constructing land transportation, renewable energy transmission or telecommunications infrastructure to support mining activities and facilitate access to the Northern territory or to energy or telecommunications services;
- Comply with the cumulative public financial aid authorized under the ENIAM (Appendix 1);
- Meet sustainable development criteria (Section 4.2 Project selection criteria).

Mining projects must:

- Be located in the Northern territory;
- Not aimed at the extraction of surface mineral resources;
- Have at least reached one of the stages below according to a technical report compliant with NI43-101 standards and dated within the past five years :
 - The mineral resource evaluation stage; or
 - The feasibility study stage.

Companies developing mining projects must demonstrate that they:

- Maintain good relations with stakeholders¹ in the Northern territory where they are developing their mining and infrastructure projects.
- Exercise control over the sites affected by the mining project by providing one of the following documents:
 - Certificate of registration of exclusive exploration rights;
 - Mining lease;
 - Mining concession; or
- Own existing mining production facilities in the Northern territory by providing one of the following documents:
 - Mining lease;
 - Public land lease.

Eligibility does not in itself constitute a guarantee of financing nor an obligation on the part of the Société.

3. FUNDS AVAILABLE AND PARAMETERS FOR ENIAM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Société's financial commitments will be limited to the availability of the dedicated budget envelope, subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

3.1. Financial commitment

3.1.1. Planning and design study

Applications for planning and design of the following infrastructure are eligible for **non-repayable financial assistance**:

- Land transportation that meets the needs of mining projects and is at least at the **mineral resource evaluation stage**; or
- Transmission of renewable energy or telecommunications that meet the needs of mining projects at the **feasibility study stage**.

This financial assistance is governed by the following scales:

- A maximum rate of non-repayable financial assistance of 50% of eligible expenses can be paid by the Société.
- A minimum amount of financial assistance of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) can be paid by the Société.
- Total public funding (Appendix 1) shall not exceed 100% of eligible project expenses.

¹ A roadmap (such as a plan, process, consultation framework, strategy) for stakeholder consultation as well as supporting documents will be analyzed.

3.1.2. Infrastructure construction and improvement project

Non-repayable financial assistance is available for applications to upgrade or build land transportation infrastructure that meets the needs of mining projects at the **mineral resource evaluation stage**.

- This financial assistance is governed by the following scales:
 - A maximum rate of financial assistance of 50% of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) can be paid by the Société.
 - A minimum amount of financial assistance of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) can be paid by the Société.
 - Total public funding (Appendix 1) shall not exceed 80% of eligible project expenses.

Applications for **repayable financial assistance** for the improvement or construction of land transportation, renewable energy transmission, or telecommunications infrastructure that meet the needs of mining projects at the feasibility study stage are eligible.

- This financial assistance is determined according to the needs of applicants and the nature of projects;
- Total public funding (Appendix 1) shall not exceed 100% of eligible project expenses.

3.2. Eligible costs and expenses

The following works are considered eligible for financial assistance from ENIAM:

- Needs assessments;
- Solution studies;
- Preliminary and final design studies;
- Preliminary and final plans and specifications;
- Project management;
- Realization of works;
- Quality control;
- Work supervision.

The amount of eligible expenses per category of work may be limited to a maximum amount established by the Société, after consultation with the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts or the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable.

To be considered eligible for financial assistance from ENIAM, the improvement or construction work must have been carried out after obtaining the authorizations or permits required under the laws and regulations in force in Québec.

3.2.1. Ineligible costs and expenses

The following expenses and work are excluded from eligible expenses:

- Expenses associated with any activity deemed irrelevant to the project by the Société;

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- Expenses incurred prior to the project submission date;
- Expenses associated with infrastructure maintenance work;
- Expenses associated with the annual monitoring of an infrastructure;
- Recurring expenses;
- Reimbursed expenses eligible for another form of reimbursement (e.g. tax refund);
- Expenses related to the purchase of any motor vehicle eligible for registration;
- Expenses relating to a project already completed;
- Expenses associated with the improvement or construction of any road located on a lot covered by a mining lease, unless justification is deemed acceptable by the Société.

4. PROJECT SELECTION

4.1. Information required to evaluate an application

Applicants are invited to contact eniam@spn.gouv.qc.ca before completing the application form to obtain a preliminary analysis of their project and information on the amounts available.

Upon receipt of the application, the project will undergo an eligibility analysis. This analysis covers the applicant, the infrastructure project, as well as the mining project(s) and the company or companies developing them. Note that the same criteria apply if more than one mining project is being considered by more than one company.

The project must comply with the eligibility criteria in Section 2.2 and the following criteria:

- Applicants must demonstrate their needs and provide all the information required to analyze their application;
- All mandatory sections of the application form must be completed;
- All documents required in Section 5.1 must accompany the application.

Projects that do not meet all these eligibility criteria will be considered ineligible.

4.2. Project selection criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated according to ENIAM's analysis criteria, as well as sustainable development criteria (economic, social and environmental aspects).

The Société will also seek an opinion on suitability from its relevant government partners, depending on the area of jurisdiction in which the project falls.

4.2.1. Criteria for the analysis of mining projects at the mineral resource evaluation stage

- General and technical criteria:
 - Type of ore;
 - Mining project expected to submit its Preliminary Economic Assessment and move to the development phase (Stage 3 of the mineral development process outlined in Appendix 2) within five years;
 - Multi-user infrastructure project;
 - Infrastructure project to open up a high-potential area.
- Economic criteria:
 - Investments already made by the proponent in the mining project over the past three years;
 - Upcoming investments in exploration work (one year);
 - The company's ability to raise capital.
- Social criteria:
 - Support from local stakeholders;
 - Percentage of contracts awarded over the past three years that are with regional and Northern companies for the exploration project (construction, procurement, maintenance and exploration);
 - Percentage of the amount of planned contracts to be signed with regional and Northern companies for the infrastructure project (planning and design, improvement and construction).
- Environmental criteria:
 - Site protection or route optimization;
 - Conservation of biodiversity and carbon sinks;
 - Reducing greenhouse gases;
 - Contamination prevention;
 - Management of residual materials.

4.2.2. Criteria for the analysis of mining projects at the feasibility study stage

- General and technical criteria:
 - Type of ore mined;
 - Processing carried out in Québec;
 - Mining project expected to complete its financing and begin construction of the mining site (reaching Stage 4 or the mineral development process outlined in Appendix 2) within five years;

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- Multi-user infrastructure project;
- Infrastructure project to open up a high-potential area;
- Expected duration of infrastructure use.
- Economic criteria:
 - Investments already made by the proponent in the mining project over the past three years (including CAPEX);
 - Maintenance CAPEX investments or sustaining capital expenditures;
 - Economic benefits (estimated);
 - Confirmed financing for the mining project;
 - Rate of financial participation by parties other than the Société (infrastructure projects).
- Social criteria:
 - Support from local stakeholders;
 - Percentage of contracts awarded over the past three years that are with regional and Northern companies for the mining project (construction, procurement, maintenance and exploration);
 - Percentage of the amount of planned contracts to be signed with regional and Northern companies for the infrastructure project (planning and design, improvement and construction).
- Environmental criteria:
 - Site protection or route optimization;
 - Conservation of biodiversity and carbon sinks;
 - Reduction of greenhouse gases;
 - Contamination prevention;
 - Management of residual materials.

5. PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

5.1. Form

Applicants must complete the financial assistance application form available on the Société's website at <https://www.quebec.ca/en/government/policies-orientations/northern-territory-development/financial-support/infrastructure-mining-sector>.

5.2. Project submission

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

The following documents must be sent to the Société when submitting a project:

- Completed application form for financial assistance;
- The mandatory documents indicated on the application form;
- Any other document deemed relevant to the evaluation of the project.

All documents must be sent by email to: eniam@spn.gouv.qc.ca.

6. AGREEMENT AND REPORTING

Successful projects will be the subject of a financial assistance agreement between the Société and the applicant. The agreement will specify the terms of payment and conditions for granting financial assistance, as well as the terms of reporting and reimbursement, where applicable.

Activity reports must be produced, in accordance with the deadlines set out in the financial assistance agreement, and contain at least:

- A detailed description of the project and the activities carried out with the financial assistance;
- The cost of the project and of each of the activities carried out;
- Sources of funding and amounts obtained from each;
- An appendix with supporting documents for eligible expenses and a financial report detailing project expenses.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCES TO INFORMATION

The Société is subject to the application of the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (CQLR, c. A-2.1).

The financial assistance agreement between the Société and the proponent will specify the obligations under this law.

The information provided may also be used by the Société for research, evaluation, study, survey, statistical, or cost forecasting purposes.

APPENDIX 1 — CALCULATION OF CUMULATIVE PUBLIC FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Calculation of the cumulative amount of direct or indirect financial assistance received from agencies and Crown corporations of the governments of Québec and Canada, including tax credits, as well as from municipal entities that are not direct recipients of the program, shall not exceed the limits indicated in Section 3.1, depending on the type of assistance received.

For the purposes of calculating the cumulative rate of public financial assistance, the term “municipal entities” refers to municipal organizations included in Section 5 of the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (CQLR, c. A-2.1).

The assets referred to in Paragraph 1, Article 89 of the *Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government* (CQLR, c. G-1.04) are not considered for the accumulation rule of this standard.

For the purposes of calculating the cumulative rate, all forms of financial assistance granted by a public body shall be calculated at 100% of their value, whether they are reimbursable or not.

APPENDIX 2 — MINERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Processus de développement minéral						
		Processus de développement minier				
Étape	1 Levés géoscientifiques	2 Exploration	3 Mise en valeur	4 Construction et rodage	5 Exploitation	6 Restauration
Objectifs	Identifier le potentiel minéral sur le territoire québécois	Exploration de base : chercher et identifier un indice et confirmer sa teneur et sa continuité Exploration avancée : délimiter un premier inventaire minéral d'un gîte et évaluer son potentiel économique de façon préliminaire	Valoriser le gîte en définissant les paramètres du projet minier	Construire le site minier Faire la mise en service et le rodage	Extraire et traiter le minerai Faire la mise en marché du produit	Fermer, sécuriser et restaurer le site minier Faire le suivi post-restauration
Méthodes	Acquisition de connaissances : levés, échantillonnage, recherches et synthèses des données acquises	Revue et synthèse de l'information disponible Prospection, cartographie, levés, décapage et forage Échantillonnage en surface, en tranchée et en forage Estimation des ressources Essais minéralurgiques et métallurgiques à l'échelle laboratoire Analyse technico-économique sur des données exploratoires	Définition du gîte : forages Choix de la méthode de traitement : échantillonnage en vrac, essais minéralurgiques et métallurgiques à l'échelle pilote Ingénierie et estimation des coûts, étude de marché Analyse technico-économique sur des données confirmées Analyse des risques environnementaux, sociétaux, politiques et financiers	Gestion de projet et gestion de la qualité des travaux Plan de mise en œuvre et entraînement du personnel	Gestion de la production en vue de l'amélioration continue de la qualité, du rendement et de la sécurité des employés	Gestion de la fermeture et de la restauration du site minier en vue d'atteindre un état satisfaisant
Résultats visés à la fin de l'étape	Publications d'informations géologiques et de zones propices à l'exploration minière	Évaluation économique préliminaire d'un gîte Décision de mise en valeur du gîte	Étude de faisabilité et décision de mise en production d'un gisement Obtention du financement	Atteinte de l'exploitation commerciale	Rendement de l'investissement et bénéfices Exploitation optimale du gisement	Site minier restauré répondant aux exigences en matière de restauration minière au Québec
Inventaire minéral						
Bonne pratique du promoteur	Le plus tôt possible dans le processus, le promoteur devrait informer et consulter les citoyens, le milieu municipal et les communautés autochtones sur l'évolution des travaux et du projet afin de mieux intégrer ceux-ci au milieu d'accueil et ainsi favoriser l'obtention de l'acceptabilité sociale du projet. Mettre en place des pratiques responsables qui tiennent compte des enjeux sociaux, environnementaux, économiques et de gouvernance.					
Obligations légales du promoteur	Obtenir les permis et autorisations nécessaires à chacune des activités ayant un impact sur l'environnement ou le territoire Réaliser le processus d'évaluation environnementale provinciale et fédérale, selon le cas					
Obligation de l'État	<p>Aperçu des obligations à remplir :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquérir des claims et aviser le propriétaire du terrain et la municipalité Obtenir l'approbation du plan de réaménagement et de restauration et déposer la garantie financière Obtenir le bail minier Mettre en place un comité de suivi Réaliser les suivis environnementaux Réaliser les travaux du Plan de réaménagement et de restauration du site minier 					
	Le gouvernement doit respecter ses obligations constitutionnelles en matière de consultation des Autochtones et, le cas échéant, d'accommodement.					

Ce document n'a pas de portée légale.
8 octobre 2020 – Direction générale du développement de l'industrie minière

