**Open Research Fund Application Guidelines**‌

To promote extensive academic exchange of ideas and personnel, cultivate scientific talents, and contribute to the establishment of new metallogenic theories, exploration of novel prospecting methods, and the search for national critical minerals, the State Key Laboratory of Critical Mineral Research and Exploration (hereinafter referred to as the "SKLOCM") opens to domestic and international scholars by establishing an Open Research Fund. Each year, the fund supports 10–15 scholars from China and abroad to conduct research in the SKLOCM.

**‌Research Disciplines and Funding Scope‌**

The SKLOCM addresses major national demands and international scientific frontiers in critical minerals, focusing on two core scientific questions: ‌**supernormal enrichment of critical minerals**‌ and ‌**efficient prospecting prediction**‌. Specific research directions include:

1. ‌**Metallogenic tracers and key prospecting technologies**‌
2. ‌**Element activation, migration, and mineralization**‌
3. ‌**Intelligent prospecting of critical minerals**‌

Through research in these fields, the SKLOCM aims to innovate metallogenic theories and prediction-exploration technologies, building a highland for theory, talent, and platforms to establish itself as a leading domestic and world-class laboratory. Priority is given to studies on ‌**lithium, cobalt, nickel, gold, platinum, copper, and iron (critical minerals)**‌ and ‌**tungsten, tin, molybdenum, antimony, indium, germanium, and scandium (advantageous minerals)**‌. Recent funding will focus on:

① Metallogenic tracers and prospecting technologies

② Thermodynamics and kinetics of ore-forming fluids

③ Theoretical modeling of mineralization processes and experimental geochemistry

④ Metallogenic processes and models of typical hydrothermal deposits

⑤ Intelligent prediction of critical minerals

‌**Preference will be given to applicants who meet the following criteria:**‌

① Proposals for original innovative research

② Projects with breakthrough potential for economic development and significant socio-economic benefits

③ Well-founded research that can be elevated through the SKLOCM’s facilities

④ Outstanding young and mid-career scientists

**‌Application Procedures‌**

1. ‌**Eligibility**‌: Senior and mid-level researchers in ‌**mineral deposit geology, geochemistry, and related fields**‌ may apply to become visiting scholars.
2. ‌**Scope**‌: Proposed topics must align with the SKLOCM’s research directions.
3. ‌**Submission**‌: Applicants must submit ‌**three copies**‌ of the application form (downloadable at [http://sklodg.gyig.cas.cn/](http://sklodg.gyig.cas.cn/" \t "_blank)). Junior researchers must include a recommendation letter from a senior expert. Applications must be signed by the applicant’s institution and mailed to the SKLOCM.
4. ‌**Duration**‌: Projects typically last ‌**2 years**‌ (extendable to 3 years under special circumstances).
5. ‌**Funding Use**‌: Covers travel expenses to/from the SKLOCM and analytical testing fees.
6. ‌**Deadline**‌: Applications close annually on ‌**October 30**‌.

**‌Review Process‌**

Applications are evaluated based on ‌**scientific merit, feasibility, applicant capability, and budget design**‌. The SKLOCM conducts preliminary reviews, followed by final approval by the director’s office. Results are notified to applicants and academic committee members.

**‌Work Conditions‌**

1. Fund recipients become ‌**visiting scholars**‌ with access to SKLOCM resources.
2. A designated liaison assists scholars in adapting to the SKLOCM’s workflows.
3. ‌**Facilities include**‌: Nano-SIMS, LA-ICP-MS, MC-ICP-MS, EPMA, etc.. Testing must be conducted on-site.

**‌Funding Management‌**

1. Funds are disbursed as a lump sum and managed by the SKLOCM.
2. Expenditure must comply with financial regulations. Unused funds are returned post-project.

**‌Project Management‌**

1. Approved applicants must submit a detailed ‌**work plan**‌ within one month.
2. Principal investigators coordinate instrument usage schedules with the SKLOCM.
3. A ‌**final report and academic papers**‌ must be submitted within six months of project completion.
4. The SKLOCM reserves the right to monitor progress and terminate funding for non-compliance.

**‌Intellectual Property‌**

1. ‌**Shared ownership**‌:
   * Publications/patents ‌**first-authored by the SKLOCM**‌ receive funding for publication fees, and the affiliation should be “State Key Laboratory of Critical Mineral Research and Exploration, Guiyang 550081”
   * All outputs must acknowledge: "Supported by the Open Fund of the State Key Laboratory of Critical Mineral Research and Exploration (Grant No. XX)".
   * Collaborators from the SKLOCM must be co-authors.
2. ‌**Archiving**‌: Raw data and reports must be submitted to the SKLOCM.
3. ‌**Performance evaluation**‌: Scholars may use results for institutional assessments, but award nominations require SKLOCM approval.