



**Canada Impact+ Research Chair in
Critical Minerals and Energy Transition: Political Ecology and Social Sustainability
Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

Posted Date: April 27, 2026

Closing Date: May 26, 2026

The Department of Geography at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador invites applications for nomination as the **Canada Impact+ Research Chair in Critical Minerals and Energy Transition: Political Ecology and Social Sustainability**. The CIRC program is a one-time-only initiative funded by the Government of Canada aimed at recruiting top-tier international researchers with expertise in key areas addressing critical national and global challenges. The program emphasizes both research excellence and tangible impact.

CIRCs are appointed for a period of eight years in values of either \$8 million (\$1 million per year) or \$4 million (\$500,000 per year), with the possibility of a 4-year extension at 50% of the original award value, determined by an external review in Year 7 of the award. The awardee may also request an additional \$100,000 per year over six years to recruit an Early Career Researcher (ECR) and to apply for research infrastructure funding. While the CIRC program places no restrictions on nationality or citizenship, the candidate must be internationally based (both working and residing outside of Canada) at the time of the intake's application deadline.

Housed in the Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Impact+ Research Chair in Critical Minerals and Energy Transition will direct a leading interdisciplinary research program addressing the political, social, and justice dimensions of critical minerals extraction and processing. This research and engagement program will address the significant global and regional challenges related to the growing demand for "critical" or "green" minerals: metals designated as essential to digital communications and decarbonizing energy systems. Although critical minerals development is widely promoted by international agencies and governments, as well as federal, provincial, and territorial governments in Canada, locating and extracting and processing these mineral resources presents challenges related to scarcity, supply chain security, environmental sustainability, social justice, and geopolitical risk.

The Impact+ Chair will lead interdisciplinary social science research, graduate training, and collaborations across the university, addressing Impact+ strategic priority foci on **Clean Technologies and Resource Value Chains** and **Democratic and Community Resilience**. They will also support the nascent MUN Minerals research and teaching strategy (currently under development) as well as Memorial's strategic research themes **Sustaining People, Sustaining Place, and Sustaining Economy**.

The successful CIRC will either be appointed at the academic level of Full Professor or Associate Professor, eligible for promotion to Full Professor within 2 years of the Chair's start date, or; hold a position outside of academia with equivalent qualifications necessary for appointment at these academic levels. The salary for the position will be commensurate with qualifications and experience, in accordance with the Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association (MUNFA) Collective Agreement.

Candidate Profile

The successful candidate must be an established, internationally recognized research leader with expertise and experience in one or more of the following broad areas: natural resource governance/management, political ecology/environmental justice, political economy and extractivism, environmental and social impact assessment (including FPIC, GBA+ and other equity considerations), and cognate fields. The regional focus for the chair is open, though we particularly welcome applicants with active engagements with communities in the Global South, Arctic and Northern regions, rural and remote communities, and/or Indigenous nations. They will have the primary responsibility for directing the research program and all related activities, and will be expected to develop and implement a plan for an inclusive environment that fosters equity, accessibility, and diverse participation in research activities and public/community engagement.

Memorial acknowledges that career paths can be diverse and that life circumstances, such as illness, disability, and family and community responsibilities, are often an expected part of life and are likely to affect a nominee's record of research achievement. Applicants are encouraged to explain in their cover letter any life circumstances that may have resulted in career interruptions, if applicable. These impacts will be carefully considered during the assessment process.

Memorial is committed to employment equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism, and encourages applications from all qualified candidates, including: women; people of any sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; Indigenous Peoples; visible minorities, and racialized people; and people with disabilities. All applicants are invited to identify themselves as a member of an equity-deserving group(s) as appropriate. Please note that applicants cannot be considered as a member of an equity-deserving group(s) unless they complete Memorial's employment equity survey. Applicants will receive the survey via email once they submit their application. The survey link expires after 7 days of receiving it. If an applicant does not receive a survey or has any questions about it, please contact equity@mun.ca.

Memorial is committed to providing an [inclusive learning and work environment](#). Applicants who require an accessibility arrangement to ensure their full participation in the application process can contact Mandy Penney (equity@mun.ca) to make appropriate accommodations.

Memorial University and the Department of Geography

We acknowledge that the lands on which Memorial University's campuses are situated are in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, and we acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province. Memorial has an all-Indigenous Committee for Ethical Research Impacting Indigenous Groups to ensure research, including classroom research, meets high standards of ethics and responsibility. The focus is on

research with, by and for Indigenous Peoples that emphasizes engagement based on understanding and respect.

The Department of Geography is a dynamic research and teaching unit with the Faculty of HSS, offering BA/BSc., MA/MSc, and PhD programs. Our interdisciplinary, research-intensive faculty highly value collaboration in research and mentorship. We encourage applicants who will build on our existing departmental areas of expertise in resource geography, climate change, biogeography, biodiversity conservation, anticolonial research methods, urban planning, fisheries geographies, waste and discard studies, GIS and remote sensing, Arctic communities and ecosystems, and freshwater and marine sciences. Memorial geographers work closely with the Marine Institute and Faculty of Science, particularly in Biology, Earth Sciences, and Ocean Sciences. We offer Joint Honours degrees with Computer Science and Earth Sciences. Faculty in Geography collaborate with the newly established School of Arctic and Subarctic Studies (SASS) on the Labrador Campus, which has a constitution that enables co-governance of the School with Indigenous Nations and offers graduate programs in Arctic and Subarctic Futures. Applicants can learn more about the Department of Geography at www.mun.ca/geography.

Memorial University is the largest university in Atlantic Canada and has a special obligation to the people of this province. As the province's only university, Memorial plays an integral role in the education and cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador. Offering diverse undergraduate and graduate programs to 19,000 students, Memorial's St. John's campus provides a distinctive and stimulating environment for learning in the capital city, which has a vibrant cultural life and access to a wide range of outdoor activities. With 15 academic departments and a variety of interdisciplinary major, minor, and diploma programs, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences offers breadth, depth, and diversity. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences houses, among other units and resources, the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), the Maritime History Archive, the Folklore and Language Archive, and the Aboriginal Languages Archives.

How to apply

The Canada Impact+ Research Chairs competition involves a two-stage process as outlined below.

Stage 1: Applications must be submitted as a single PDF file, with the subject heading CIRC in Critical Minerals and Energy Transition and quoting the file reference number HSS03486.

Applications should include:

- a cover letter describing the applicant's vision, leadership experience, and fit with the CIRC in Critical Minerals and Energy Transition
- a one-page research statement outlining the applicant's vision for establishing and leading an internationally recognized research program/group at Memorial University
- a curriculum vitae with a clear summary of major research, leadership and knowledge mobilization achievements, as well as an overview of career teaching and service activities
- names and contact information of three referees who can provide letters of reference within a short time frame if short-listed.

Application packages should be submitted through this portal: [CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#) , as soon as possible but no later than May 26, 2026. Candidates with inquiries about this opportunity or the Department of Geography should contact the Department Head, Dr. Joel Finnis, jfinnis@mun.ca.

Stage 2 (immediately following the deadline): Will consist of a virtual interview between shortlisted candidates and the search committee, as well as an open meeting with the Department of Geography community.

The successful candidate will be registered with the CIRC program as Memorial's nominee and will complete the CIRC application with support from the Faculty of HSS and Memorial's Research Initiatives & Services (RIS). The completed nomination package will be submitted electronically by the CIRC's application deadline, very shortly following selection and registration. Appointment of a candidate to the advertised faculty position is contingent upon the success of the submitted CIRC application.