

Industrial Commission of North Dakota



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Governor

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Attorney General

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Industrial Commission awards more than \$7.6M in funding through Lignite Research Program

BISMARCK, ND - The North Dakota Industrial Commission approved more than \$7.6 million in Lignite Research Program grants for four projects that received a funding recommendation from the Lignite Research Council, the 26-member council that supports the Industrial Commission in the administration of the grant program.

The Lignite Research, Marketing and Development program was created in 1987 and has invested over \$180 million in more than 260 projects supporting the North Dakota lignite industry since its inception. Funding for the program is generated from lignite severance tax, as well as oil and gas production tax revenue.

The Lignite Research Council held a meeting May 8 in Bismarck to review grant proposals and make funding recommendations. Approved proposals were advanced to the Industrial Commission for consideration of final approval. The Commission is comprised of Gov. Kelly Armstrong, Attorney General Drew Wrigley and Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring.

The Commission approved the following projects:

- \$1,175,000 to Ore Spring Materials for “The Forge Project: Rare Earths and Critical Materials Integration”
- \$550,000 to the Lignite Energy Council for “Lignite Energy Council Education Program”
- \$5,000,000 to the Energy and Environmental Research Center for “Bakken Cracking the Code 2.0: Broad Infrastructure and Development for CO2-Based EOR”
- \$971,225 to Microbeam Technologies Inc. for “Demonstration of REE-CM Exploration and Characterization Technologies for ND Lignite”

“Through state-industry partnerships, North Dakota continues to be a world leader in developing technologies that create diverse new uses of our abundant energy resources,” said the Commission in a joint statement. “The development of critical minerals projects and technologies is essential for high-tech and defense applications, and time is of the essence when much of the global processing capacity remains concentrated in a single geopolitical rival.”

The next grant application submission deadline for the Lignite Research Program is Oct. 1, 2026. Additional program information may be found on the Industrial Commission’s website at <https://www.ndic.nd.gov>.