



**U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR**
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

DOI-ITAP Recruitment Announcement - Short Term Assignment

Malaysia — Mining Regulations and Mineral Processing Study Tour

Minerals Regulator/Mining Engineer/Geologist

Opportunity

The U.S. Department of the Interior’s International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) is recruiting a seasoned regulator with a geology or engineering background and broad experience working in mining governance and Rare Earth Elements (REE) to co-lead a study tour to the American Southwest and Canada to visit REE mines and processing facilities. An ideal candidate will have a geology background, experience working with mining regulatory regimes, understand the specialized conditions of REE development and processing, and experience planning, permitting, inspecting, or otherwise overseeing mineral processing in North America. The selected candidate will co-lead and assist in the development of a North America-based study tour for 8-14 local and national government officials from Malaysia who are deeply enmeshed in developing the regulatory framework and business case for rare earths in the country. This opportunity allows for significant contributions towards developing sustainable practices and regulations surrounding Rare Earth Elements in Malaysia while fostering international collaboration.

DOI-ITAP is looking for subject matter experts with the following knowledge and skills:

- At least ten years of experience working in mineral sector development;
- Developing or enforcing mining regulations;
- Demonstrated experience working with REEs and their extraction;
- Knowledge of REE processing or demonstrated experience working in the sector;
- Ability to speak broadly about the lessons learned and best practices of U.S. mining policy and how they can be translated to other jurisdictions;
- Knowledge of the international mineral sector;
- Awareness of, or interest in, Malaysian mineral assets and mining regulations;
- Excellent communication skills; a strong verbal communicator who can lead discussions and ask guiding questions; and
- Experience leading groups of foreign dignitaries, high-profiles visitors, or volunteer groups.

BACKGROUND

DOI-ITAP provides technical assistance to foreign countries on subjects of Departmental expertise on a reimbursable basis (i.e., without appropriated funds). The program is currently operating across

the globe with support from organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U. S. Department of State. DOI-ITAP has managed multi-partner projects in over 50 countries since 1995.

Malaysia currently accounts for approximately 7% to 11% of global midstream rare earths processing, primarily through Lynas Rare Earths, an Australian company that operates the largest rare earths processing facility outside of the People's Republic of China (PRC). However, the plant sources its raw materials from Australia, and much of its output is exported for further processing elsewhere. Recognizing the opportunity to meet the growing global demand for rare earth elements (REE), the Malaysian government, under Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, is prioritizing the establishment of a domestic rare earths industry. This initiative aims to enhance the existing ecosystem by increasing capacity across the entire value chain—from upstream extraction to downstream applications. By fostering a comprehensive domestic industry, Malaysia seeks to entice higher value-added investments and strengthen its position in the global REE market.

While Malaysian leaders are enthusiastic about developing the rare earths industry, they face significant challenges in establishing a regulatory framework that attracts investors, clarifies issues of trade and state-federal government jurisdiction, and fosters sustainable economic growth. In September, Malaysia's federal government enacted a ban on the export of raw rare earths to encourage higher value-added processing. Meanwhile, various state governments, which hold considerable authority over land use and extraction, are actively seeking support in regulatory development and investment. Like in the United States, Malaysia's federal system grants substantial regulatory power to state governments, creating opportunities for U.S. firms to collaborate in shaping and advancing the industry.

ASSIGNMENT

The goal of the study tour is to advance the institutional development of the participating organizations and assist them in successfully launching an indigenous rare earths industry in Malaysia. By visiting regulatory bodies, engaging with industry experts, and seeing mining infrastructure in place, participants will gain insights that they can directly apply to the Malaysian context. This knowledge will support the ongoing development of the country's clean energy objectives and facilitate the establishment of rare earth supply chains independent from the People's Republic of China (PRC). Malaysia shares similar regulatory conditions with the United States, characterized by a federal-state divide in control over trade (federal) and land use (state). This alignment makes U.S. assistance particularly valuable for stakeholders in Malaysia. With work beginning in the second quarter of FY2025, responsibilities will include:

- Virtual planning meeting with the Government of Malaysia, U.S. State Department, and DOI-ITAP.
- Regular coordination meetings with the ITAP project team
- Travel with the Malaysian delegation to REE mines and processing facilities for 5-10 days

Specific tasks include:

- Contribute to the development of the study tour itinerary and travel logistics;
- Compile pre-travel reference materials on mine sites and processing facilities;
- Frame site visits for participants, lead debriefing discussions, and asking guiding questions in meetings with mining staff, regulators, and corporate partners; and
- Contribute to a post-study tour travel report.

SCHEDULE

The study tour will last no longer than two weeks, in Spring 2025. Team members can expect to dedicate around 3-4 hours weekly prior to travel. Applicants will assist remotely prior to, and after the completion of the study tour. Selected applicants may be requested to continue serving as a technical expert as the project continues, depending on applicant availability and project needs.

PRE- AND POST-TRIP DUTIES

Travel to the Western U.S. and Canada will most likely be required for this assignment. All travel and logistics will be funded and arranged by DOI-ITAP.

The selected individuals will be expected to work in collaboration with DOI-ITAP project managers on the preparation of a project assistance and participate in virtual meetings to discuss technical aspects of the project.

Within four weeks following travel, the team will provide DOI-ITAP managers a travel report which can include a trip overview, topics discussed, areas of interest, and recommendations for future actions. NPS and USGS travelers will also be required to submit an additional, brief trip report to their respective Offices of International Affairs/Programs.

COSTS

DOI-ITAP will cover all costs associated with this assignment (e.g., round-trip airfare, lodging, meals, travel insurance, immunizations, official passport and visa fees, per diem, etc.). DOI team member salaries will be paid by their respective employing DOI agency for the duration of the assignment.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Competitive applicants for this assignment will:

- Demonstrate advanced technical expertise in REE;
- Demonstrate experience working with REE mines and processing facilities;
- Demonstrate experience in leading or participating in study tours;
- Demonstrate experience collaborating with a multi-disciplinary team;
- Demonstrate experience leading and working with a diverse team of international partners;
- Demonstrate experience or knowledge of international mineral markets, preferably in the Southeast Asia region;

Preference given to current or retired employees of DOI. Employees and retirees of other agencies are also encouraged to apply;

If you are selected for this assignment, you will be responsible for obtaining your supervisor's approval to participate, as well as additional approvals up your supervisory chain of command as necessary (see below).

HOW TO APPLY

Please email a cover letter and resume/CV as a single pdf document titled:

“LastName_FirstName_MalaysiaREE” summarizing relevant experience, together with a note indicating supervisor approval (if applicable), to colleen_castle@ios.doi.gov. Please use the subject line “MalaysiaREE Study Tour Application”.

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than _____. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

All applicants must secure approval from their supervisors to apply for an ITAP assignment.

Supervisors will then adhere to their Bureau requirements for any further approvals required by the Bureau. All NPS, BOR, and BLM applicants must copy their International Affairs POCs when they submit their applications to ITAP. A complete list of those POCs follows. In addition, NPS and FWS-OLE require the following:

- All NPS applicants should also copy their applications to Rudy D’Alessandro (rudya_dalessandro@nps.gov) in the NPS Office of International Affairs.
- If you are employed with FWS/OLE, please do not respond to this recruitment. FWS/OLE recruitment for ITAP assignments are being handled through FWS/OLE HQ.

Bureau	Contact	Email	Telephone
BIA	Joaquin Gallegos	joaquin_gallegos@ios.doi.gov	202-208-7163
BLM	Seneca Ransom	sransom@blm.gov	
BOR	Omero Martinez	omartinez@usbr.gov	202-513-0557
BOR	Jeff Morris	jmorris@usbr.gov	303-445-3373
FWS	Lillian Moore	lillian_moore@fws.gov	703-358-2587
BSEE	Julie Fleming	julie.fleming@bsee.gov	202-208-3827
NPS	Rudy D’Alessandro	rudya_dalessandro@nps.gov	202-354-1805
BOEM	Emily Lindow	emily.lindow@boem.gov	202-513-0825
OSMRE	Sterling Rideout	srideout@osmre.gov	202-208-2868
USGS	Kevin Kunkel	kkunkel@usgs.gov	703-648-6206
ONRR	Chris Mentasti	chris.mentasti@onrr.gov	202-513-0614
OS	Jamie Hansberger	jamie_hansberger@ios.doi.gov	202-699-0625
OWF	Amy Krause	amy_krause@ios.doi.gov	202-570-2233

Please note that ITAP travel does not require use of bureau charge cards and will not count towards bureau ‘travel caps’.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A short list of candidates will be interviewed via MS Teams. All candidates will be notified of the results of the selection process by email. **The position is open to all applicants that meet the stated requirements. If applicants do not receive an email acknowledgement of receipt of their application, please inquire with the Project Manager listed above.**