

# Membership Application

Updated May 2024



Initiative for Responsible  
Mining Assurance



**IRMA**

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Mining Assurance

# Becoming an IRMA Member

**We welcome your interest in becoming a member of the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA).**

IRMA is the answer to a question posed at its founding in 2006: What does it mean to mine responsibly and how can we best assess operations at a mine site?

Over the course of a decade, IRMA did the heavy lifting to respond to this query, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to craft the world's first shared definition of responsible mining—the IRMA Standard for Responsible Mining. This Standard is now the world's most comprehensive and rigorous definition of responsible practices in mining. While the Standard describes best practice, IRMA welcomes mines at any level in their journey toward environmental and social responsibility to be measured against this Standard.

IRMA's system pairs the Standard for Responsible Mining with an independent verification program, measuring a mine's performance against the Standard in a manner accountable and credible to diverse stakeholders.

**As a member, you will help shape the future of the Standard and the verification system, and join others in advancing IRMA's vision:** a world where the mining industry respects the human rights and aspirations of affected communities, provides safe, healthy and supportive workplaces, minimizes harm to the environment, and leaves positive legacies.

# Member Benefits and Qualifications

## Benefits of Membership:

1. **Voting Rights** to shape the future of IRMA
  2. **Participation in Member Meetings**, including the Annual General Assembly
  3. **Members-Only Communications**, such as advance notice of IRMA news and key insights on developments in responsible mining
  4. **Public Listings** of your organization on IRMA's website
  5. **Member Logo**<sup>1</sup> to publicly demonstrate your support for more responsible mining
- **Exploration and Development, and Mineral Processing Companies** cannot yet apply for membership, but may join IRMA Working Groups to help develop and test the Standard for Responsible Exploration and Development or the Standard for Responsible Mineral Processing. Once these Standards have been finalized and are available for independent audit the IRMA Board will decide achievement levels required for membership.<sup>3</sup>
  - **Purchasers of Mined Materials and Investors** agree to encourage mining companies to engage in IRMA through third-party assessment and communicate an interest in sourcing materials from, or investing in, mines independently audited in the IRMA system.<sup>4</sup>
  - **Members representing NGOs, labor unions and mining-affected communities** agree to make statements that engaging in IRMA is an active way for mining companies and purchasers of mined materials to improve environmental and social responsibility in the mining supply chain and that audit reports are valued for providing key information to support more informative dialogue between stakeholders.

## Membership Qualifications:

- Aligned with **IRMA's Vision**
- Registered as a **Legal Entity**<sup>2</sup>
- Agreement to IRMA's **Principles of Engagement and Membership Principles**
- **Mining Companies** applying after Jan 2022 must have at least one site that has been independently audited against the IRMA Standard and achieved at least IRMA 50. If the company owns/operates more than one mine site, they must also submit a plan and timeline to audit a diversity of their operations against the IRMA Standard.

<sup>1</sup> Note: This logo cannot be used on products, nor as a claim of assessment in IRMA.

<sup>2</sup> Exceptions are made for mining-affected communities. Please contact [info@responsiblemining.net](mailto:info@responsiblemining.net) for further information.

<sup>3</sup> Exploration and development companies identified as Pending Members must begin an independent audit against the IRMA Standard within 12 months of its availability and may then move to full membership as agreed when they first engaged in IRMA's membership program. There will be a timeline set for reaching the achievement level required by the IRMA Board. The Pending Member status is being retired with these 2022 membership updates.

<sup>4</sup> Examples include integration of IRMA into sourcing guidelines, public commitments to source from, and invest in, IRMA-assessed mines, and direct outreach.

# Application Process and Timeline

## 1. Complete this Application

Respond to all relevant fields (pages 4-7).

Review and sign that your organization agrees to IRMA's Principles of Engagement and Membership Principles (pages 8-9).

Send the completed application with any necessary attachments (see checklist on page 7) to [info@responsiblemining.net](mailto:info@responsiblemining.net).

## 2. Applications are Reviewed

Once the IRMA Secretariat has reviewed your application and finds it generally meets the membership criteria, a summary of your application will be shared with the IRMA Board of Directors for a two-week comment period.

In its review, the board may ask questions of applicants related to the application and membership commitments. When such an exchange is initiated, it will be handled expeditiously, while also allowing board members sufficient time to review the information. During this review, the board may seek outside perspectives and thus applicants should be aware the application process is not confidential.

As part of this review, a board member(s) may oppose granting membership. In such cases, they must provide substantiated evidence as to why the applicant does not meet one or more of IRMA's membership principles and / or commitments. Other board members will then review and decide on the appropriate course forward, which could result in denial of membership or in a suggestion that the applicant undertake one or more actions to demonstrate a willingness to address the concerns. In all cases, these reviews must be fair, reasonable, non-discriminatory, and free of conflicts of interest.

If membership is denied, the applicant will be provided clear and specific reasons for the decision. If membership is conditional, the applicant will be provided with clear metrics and outcomes as to what must be done to address the concerns raised.

It should be noted that once the board approves a member, other members and stakeholders are allowed to file grievances related to membership, should there be an assertion that a member's actions conflict with the qualifications of membership.

## 3. Payment of Membership Fees

Upon approval of membership, IRMA will request payment of the annual fee, if applicable (see page 6). No dues should be paid until the application has been reviewed and approved following the process outlined in #2.

## 4. Communications Support

Upon approval of your membership and payment of associated fees, as applicable, your organization will receive the IRMA member logo and examples of approved messages to communicate your engagement as detailed in the IRMA Claims and Communications Policy (which can be found in the [Resources section of the IRMA website](#) under IRMA Policies and Procedures).

Please note that if you wish to announce your membership, all members must secure prior approval from the IRMA Secretariat for any public statements and press about your engagement and membership in IRMA. The review ensures such statements meet the IRMA Claims and Communications Policy.

IRMA can also provide you with quotes and supporting text to contextualize your membership.

# Application for Membership

## Contact Information

Company or Organization Name	
Legal Registration Number (not required for community-based groups)	
Year Established	
Organization Category (see below)	
Address (including country)	
Main Contact (name + position)  (email + phone number)	

## Organization Categories<sup>5</sup>

### Member Groups with Voting Rights

- **Mining Companies** including companies focused on exploration and development
- **Purchasers of Mined Materials** including brands, retailers, and manufacturers
- **Labor or Trade Unions**
- **Civil Society** including nonprofits and NGOs focused on, and advocating for, stronger environmental and social protections related to mining<sup>6</sup>
- **Mining-Affected Communities** including both formal or informal associations
- **Finance** including investors, insurance companies, banks and pension funds

### Member Groups without Voting Rights<sup>7</sup>

- **Governments and Intergovernmental Agencies** including national, regional or multilateral organizations
- **Private Sector Entities** such as consulting firms and trade associations
- **Academia and Research** including research institutes, universities and think tanks
- **Standard-Setting Organizations** in the mining sector or in other natural resource-based sectors
- **Other Organizations<sup>8,9</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> The IRMA Secretariat will review the applicant organization's self-categorization against the description of its work to ensure correct categorization. If there is uncertainty, the "Other Organization" category will be the default; the applicant can appeal this designation to the Board.

<sup>6</sup> The Civil Society category is for organizations directly supporting, or advocating for, protections of the rights of affected communities, workers and/or protection of the environment. NGOs affiliated with private sector benefits, or those consulting private sector companies, should select the "Other Organizations" category.

<sup>7</sup> These groups may participate in the General Assembly.

<sup>8</sup> If the membership fee is a barrier, an organization in this category can request a fee waiver.

<sup>9</sup> Not-for-profit organizations in this category do not pay a membership fee.

## Interest in IRMA + Scope of Activities

<p>Please provide a brief description of the company's activities, including activities related to advancing responsible mining:</p>	
<p>Please provide web links (or attach relevant documents) demonstrating existing commitments to promoting and supporting responsible mining/sourcing:</p>	
<p>What is the motivation for joining IRMA?</p>	
<p>What would your organization like to achieve during your first year as a member?</p>	
<p>What is the geographical scope of your activities?</p>	
<p>Do you collaborate with any partner organizations, communities or other stakeholder groups on the topic of responsible mining? If so, please describe briefly.</p>	
<p>If you are a <b>mining company</b>, please list one or more of your mines that has achieved IRMA 50 or higher, and also your plan and timeline to independently audit a diversity of your mines against the IRMA Standard.<sup>10</sup></p>	
<p>If you are a <b>purchaser or member of the finance sector</b>, please briefly outline your plans to encourage mining companies to engage in IRMA.<sup>11</sup></p>	

<sup>10</sup> Companies must have at least one mine achieving IRMA 50 or higher, and share a plan and timeline to independently audit a diversity of your mines against the IRMA Standard.

<sup>11</sup> **Purchasers and members of the finance sector** must commit to encouraging mining companies to undergo a third-party assessment. These stakeholders must also communicate an interest in sourcing materials from, and investing in, mines independently audited in the IRMA system

## Use of Member's Information (Data Protection)

<p>As members are engaged in the governance of IRMA, IRMA publishes a list of members on its <a href="#">website</a>, and the organization may also include members' names in public presentations.</p> <p>Please acknowledge your understanding that IRMA will publicly share your organization's name as a member in these forums. Additionally, please send a high-resolution logo along with this application for use in these venues. Please also provide the specific website address you wish us to link to in these forums (e.g. the company's sustainability site) in the checklist below.</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>
<p>Your organization's main contact's name and email may be shared via internal communications, as IRMA's members may wish to connect with each other on various topics.</p> <p>Does IRMA have permission to share your main contact's name and email with other members?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>

## Additional Contacts

<p>Main Contact for Invoices (name + position) (email + phone number)</p>	
<p>Address (if different than main address)</p>	
<p>Additional Instructions About Invoicing (as needed)</p>	

<p>List of Contacts to Be Added to IRMA's Newsletters (both Member and General) (names + email addresses)</p>	
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## Checklist

- Attach a copy of the company's registration document, verifying it is a legal entity.<sup>12</sup>
- Attach a digital copy of your organization's logo.
- Obtain an appropriate signature agreeing to IRMA's Principles of Engagement and Membership Principles (see page 8-9).
- Checking this box indicates your commitment to abide by the IRMA Communications and Claims Policy<sup>13</sup> regarding use of the IRMA membership logo and claims of achievement and association which are allowed under membership.
- List the website you wish us to link to on IRMA's website:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Calculate the membership fee, if required (see chart below): \$\_\_\_\_\_
  - Attach a document verifying the company's revenue.
- For **mining companies**, check this box to indicate you understand and agree to IRMA's Membership Qualifications (see page 2). Please also send any additional documents demonstrating plans and timelines to independently audit a diversity of your mines against the IRMA Standard.
- For **purchasers and investors**, check this box to indicate you understand and agree to IRMA's Membership Qualifications (see page 1). Please also send any additional documents demonstrating existing commitments to promoting and supporting responsible sourcing (see page 5).

## Membership Fees

Membership is free for civil society organizations, labor unions, mining-affected communities, government and academia. For all others, membership fees are paid annually based on the table below.

Total Annual Revenue <sup>14</sup> in USD	Annual Fee
0 – 10 million	USD 500
10 million – 100 million	USD 2,500
100 million – 1 billion	USD 5,000
1 billion – 5 billion	USD 15,000
5 billion to 10 billion	USD 25,000
10 billion or greater	USD 35,000

<sup>12</sup> Not necessary for community-based organizations that are not legal entities.

<sup>13</sup> Communications and Claims Policy can be found in the [Resources section of the IRMA website](#) under IRMA Policies and Procedures

<sup>14</sup> Total annual revenue refers to gross revenue from all sources and from all legal entities. **\*Special note to exploration and development companies:** In calculating this figure, please base "revenue" on the Market Capitalization (Cap) of your company. If you are a publicly traded company, base Market Cap on the closing price of your shares on the date of your most recent Annual Meeting. For privately held companies, please have a company executive or senior manager (e.g., CEO, CFO, general manager, project manager) attest in writing the appropriate revenue category (e.g., 10 – 100 million, 100 million to 1 billion, etc.) for your company.

## IRMA's Principles of Engagement

We agree to the following principles as a basis for our participation in any IRMA initiatives or projects:

1. We are committed to and recognize the value of a multi-sector process and solutions with the participation of all sectors.
2. We acknowledge that we must develop strategies and systems that add value for all sectors, recognizing that different sectors define value differently.
3. We recognize that while we may not always agree, and that sometimes our disagreements may be aired in public, we see value in finding solutions where we are able to find agreement. We are therefore committed to dialogue despite these disagreements or differences of opinion.
4. We are committed to a process that seeks to improve and advance best practices and standards.
5. We will seek to learn from and build upon current examples of site-based good practice as well as broader initiatives that are underway.
6. We will seek to identify and recognize progress and improvements at existing operations, understanding that there could be, in some cases, inherent limits as to what can be achieved at these sites. We recognize that in certain cases sites with complex and challenging issues could implement improvements that could lead to certification.
7. We recognize that in certain cases, whether or not there is governmental approval, due to potential impacts or other values or benefits, no mining could be the best option. We seek to advance methodologies that allow such decisions to be made within a sustainable development context. We also recognize that we must pursue solutions that avoid simply leaving the mining of such sites to less responsible operators.
8. We will ground our standard setting and verification process in sound science with regard to all stages of mine development through closure, considering identified risks, while recognizing that scientific uncertainty is not a reason for inaction, and respecting traditional knowledge, custom and values.
9. We agree that efficiency is essential. We seek to develop and advance criteria, targets, benchmarks and processes that integrate, whenever possible, existing tools, processes and resources, such as current reporting or auditing. We seek to build on existing knowledge and systems where applicable.
10. We recognize that it is essential to develop a system that enables mutually acceptable, credible, independent, third-party verification of compliance with standards, thresholds or performance targets. Accordingly, we seek to create a system that offers public recognition for such compliance and a mechanism to ensure that these commitments are being met in practice on an ongoing basis.

## IRMA's Membership Principles

The following principles apply to all members of IRMA.

IRMA's mission is to protect people and the environment directly affected by mining. We do this by creating financial value for mines independently verified to achieve best practices and share this value and greater confidence with the businesses that purchase material from these mines.

As an IRMA member, you commit to supporting this mission by promoting, influencing, or implementing responsible mining within your sphere of influence or within your supply chain, and/or with your partners, clients, customers, stakeholders or beneficiaries.

Additionally, you agree to uphold the following Membership Principles<sup>15</sup>:

- **Active Support for IRMA:** As members, we actively and constructively communicate and support the IRMA Standard for Responsible Mining, IRMA processes and the implementation of IRMA projects in the world;
- **Concrete Actions for Responsible Mining:** As members, we develop and implement actions to the best of our ability within the appropriate channels and mechanisms in our company or organization, in order to further responsible mining in the world;
- **Shared Participation:** As members, we know improvement requires many actors and we understand we can all participate in transforming the mining sector towards more responsible practices
- **Continuous Improvement:** As members, we support and promote continuous improvement and we encourage mines and mining companies at any stage in their journey to engage in IRMA and to continuously improve;
- **Transparency:** As members, we act responsibly and are transparent in our dealings with IRMA;
- **Credible Communications:** As members, we do not make any misleading or unsubstantiated claims about our involvement in IRMA, our IRMA membership, our IRMA achievement levels (for mines), or our sourcing (for purchasers), our investing practices (for investors), nor about the impact associated with our engagement in IRMA. External communications about IRMA are truthful, accurate and based on robust systems. (Note: the IRMA Communications and Claims Policy provides specific guidance in support of IRMA members on this issue.)

## Signature by Senior Leader

I hereby ensure our organization will follow the obligations laid out in IRMA's Principles of Engagement and IRMA's Membership Principles.

Name and Position	
Signature and Date	

<sup>15</sup> **Termination of Membership:** Please note membership may be terminated if a member becomes insolvent, is dissolved, resigns from membership with a notice period of 30 days, no longer meets one or more of the membership criteria, fails to pay the annual membership fees, or fails to uphold IRMA's Membership Principles or IRMA's Principles of Engagement.