



**NORWEGIAN OFFSHORE
DIRECTORATE**

**Guidelines for applying for access to the
Norwegian Offshore Directorate's geological
sample materials**

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Introduction

Geobank is the Norwegian Offshore Directorate's storage facility for geological sample materials. This includes physical samples from exploration and production wells on the Norwegian continental shelf, for example cuttings, cores and oil samples. It is possible to apply for use of the Norwegian Offshore Directorate's geological sample materials. This is governed by Section 37 of the Resource Management Regulations. The Norwegian Offshore Directorate's geological sample materials must contribute to conducting scientific and professional studies of the subsurface on the Norwegian continental shelf. Geological sample materials are a scarce resource that must be managed in a way that ensures maximum benefit for the broader community. For more information about Geobank, see [Geobank – Norwegian Offshore Directorate \(sodir.no\)](https://sodir.no).

The purpose of this guide is to explain how to obtain access to geological samples from Geobank, as well as the criteria for such access.

Regulations

Licensees are obliged to collect cuttings, cores and oil samples and to submit them to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate. This follows from Sections 16 and 29 of the Resource Management Regulations. Following submission to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate, such materials are subject to confidentiality pursuant to Section 85 (3) of the Petroleum Regulations for two years from when the material became available to the owner of the data. The materials can be released once the duty of confidentiality expires.

Access to geological sample materials may be granted upon application with a legal basis in Section 37 of the Resource Management Regulations:

Section 37. Using geological sample material from the Norwegian Offshore Directorate

The Norwegian Offshore Directorate may, based on an application, grant permission to use geological sample material from its geological sample archive.

The recipients of geological sample material must, within six months after sampling is carried out, submit to The Norwegian Offshore Directorate a complete final report and analysis results from all studies, in addition to one set of thin sections, micropalaeontological and palynological slides, if these were produced.

What can you apply for use of?

You can apply for use of the Norwegian Offshore Directorate's geological sample materials from boreholes in the form of cuttings, cores and oil samples. The sample materials are available for access once the confidentiality period of two years expires. An overview of which materials that are available can be found on the Norwegian Offshore Directorate's [FactPages](#).

The standard volume of samples released is a maximum of 20 grams of cuttings or core samples. Oil samples consist of up to two millilitres. Larger volumes can be released in exceptional circumstances if the Norwegian Offshore Directorate has a large volume of sample materials, for example if the applicant needs more unwashed cuttings.

Who can apply for use?

People associated with oil companies, oil service companies or an academic educational institution can apply for use of geological sample materials if they are going to conduct professional studies linked to the subsurface on the Norwegian continental shelf. Applications from an academic educational institution must be signed by a scientific employee or a PhD candidate. Applications from a foreign academic educational institution must be signed by a scientific employee.

Application content

Applications for use of geological sample materials must be submitted to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate using the standardised [form](#). The application must provide information about the applicant, their position, institution, an account of the planned study, including which issues will be investigated and which analyses will be carried out. The desired sample volume must be stated.

The Norwegian Offshore Directorate's assessment of the application – criteria

Applications for use of geological sample materials are assessed by the Sample Release Committee in the Norwegian Offshore Directorate, consisting of geologists and representatives from Geobank. Other qualified personnel are included as needed.

The Norwegian Offshore Directorate uses the following criteria as a basis for its assessment of the application:

- The project's/study's relevance for the Norwegian continental shelf
- The scope of the material in question
- The volume of available materials in Geobank
- Whether the applicant has access to the material in a different manner, for example as a licensee in the licence that drilled the well

Access to materials once the application is granted

Cuttings and cores may be sampled only by qualified personnel following an agreement with Geobank. The applicant must provide the qualified personnel. Oil samples are packaged by Geobank and must be collected at the Norwegian Offshore Directorate's reception.

Submitting final report, etc.

If materials from the Norwegian Offshore Directorate 's geological sample materials are released, the applicant receiving the materials must submit a complete final report with analysis results to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate within six months of the materials being released. The applicant must also submit thin sections, micropaleontological and palynological slides from all studies that include production of such preparations. After sampling geological material, the applicant receiving the materials must submit a complete final report with analysis results to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate within six months after the samples are collected. The applicant must also submit thin sections, micropalaeontological and palynological slides from all studies that include production of such preparations.

Appeal process

Decisions denying access to geological sample materials can be appealed pursuant to Section 28 first paragraph of the Public Administration Act. Appeals must be submitted to the Norwegian Offshore Directorate within three weeks of receiving the decision.