

Mullard Space Science Laboratory, UCL

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Application for a research permit at Krýsuvík, Kerlingarfjöll and Ölkelduháls

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland has received an application from Mullard Space Science Laboratory, UCL, dated on the 22nd of May 2025, for a research project within Krýsuvík, Kerlingarfjöll and Ölkelduháls.

Kerlingarfjöll (Hveradalir) is protected as an area of landscape, cf. regulation [no. 822/2020](#). Disturbance to geological formations, landscape, hot springs, other springs and ecosystems in hot springs in the protected area is prohibited. Other research, apart from the research conducted by the Natural Science Institute of Iceland and the Icelandic National Heritage Board, is subject to permission from the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

Krýsuvík (Seltún) is within Reykjanesfólkvangur, public park and is protected cf. regulation [no. 520/1975](#). Disturbance to geographic features is subject to a permit from the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

Ölkelduháls is not within a protected area and is therefore not subject to a permit from the agency.

Description of the project:

The project applied for is for a permit to collect sulphur rich geological material. One or two already broken-off smaller than hand specimen sized pieces will be collected, and powders/dust/soil that can fill one 50ml falcon tube from each site. A FTIR spectrometer (an Agilent 4300 handheld FTIR) will be used for identifying and distinguishing them, this is a nondestructive technique and will not change the outcrops. The sediments will be collected using sterile metal spatulas. Only small sample sizes that will fill 50ml falcon tubes are needed. Four researchers will participate in the project.

Impact assessment:

The proposed project involves minimal disturbance, with only small, pre-broken geological samples and surface powders being collected. The sampling method is non-invasive and uses sterile tools and nondestructive analysis (handheld FTIR). The project is assessed to have negligible impact on the protected areas, while offering potential to improve scientific

understanding of local sulphur-rich geological formations. The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland considers the project is not likely to have negative impact on the conservation values, biodiversity or geological features in the areas if the applicant follows the following conditions, reducing negative impact on visitors and all traces of the project will be erased after the research. Due to the nature of geothermal areas, it can be hazardous to enter the restricted areas.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland hereby grants Mullard Space Science Laboratory, UCL permission on its behalf for a research project as described above on the 5th to 10th of July 2025 on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project. The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff of the project before work begins.
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about their arrival and departure. This is to be done 24 hours before entering the area and again before leaving it.
- If the project dates or description changes the Nature Conservation Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- All sample collection shall be done in consultation with rangers.
- Crew members should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- All traces of the work must be removed carefully from the site by the end of the work/project.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 556 6800.
- This permit is only valid for research purposes. It does not include permits to utilize the samples for commercial purposes. The samples cannot be signed over to third party for commercial use.
- Every measure should be taken to avoid damage to the sites and unnecessary disturbance while collecting samples.
- Samples should be collected where any resulting disturbance to soil, vegetation or geological formations is not visible to other visitors.
- All vehicles used during field exploration must be labelled with the identity of the researcher's institute. All participants in the project must wear high-visibility clothing during field work, labelled with the identity of the researcher or the research institute.

If the licensee causes damage to nature, according to art. 87 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland can, according to the Nature Conservation Act, f.e. order the licensee to fix damage to nature and vegetation and/or stop the project.

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland can according to art. 89 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 change conditions of the permit, add new conditions or withdraw the permit in order to prevent damage to nature if environmental conditions change.

According to art 89. in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Nature Conservation Agency can withdraw the permit if conditions of the permit are not complied to.

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland requests access to reports and scientific articles of the research, which could be used for educational purposes about the area and/or assist in its management, free of charge.

A permit from the Icelandic Environment and Energy Agency might be needed for the project in geothermal areas (www.uos.is).

If you wish to export samples from Iceland a special permit is needed from the Natural Science Institute of Iceland (www.ni.is).

Permission fee:

Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland charges a fee for processing applications for permits in protected areas based on Article 92 of Act no. 61/2013 on Nature Conservation. The fee for operational, events, research and other activities is **62.400 ISK** according to art. 7. a. in the agency's tariff no. 354/2025.

Supervision:

The Nature Conservation Agency will supervise the project. The supervisor will be a ranger from the Nature Conservation Agency.

Sincerely

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advisor

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advisor