



2026 Grant Criteria S.M.I.L.E. Grants Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation

The Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation is seeking grant applications for **2026/27**. All applications are due by **Wednesday, February 18, 2026**.

The Mission of the Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation is: *To improve the oral health of New Jersey and Connecticut residents by providing charitable contributions to solve oral health care challenges.*

The populations our Foundation seeks to serve include uninsured and underinsured:

- Children (ages 0 - 17)
- Developmentally disabled persons
- Veterans (ages 18+)
- Seniors (ages 65+)
- Perinatal Mothers and their children (up to age 3 postpartum)

The Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation's 2026/27 Grant Cycle is based on the **S.M.I.L.E. Method**. **Please be sure to read below to determine if your program meets our strategy and criteria.**

What is the S.M.I.L.E. Method?

S.M.I.L.E. - Solution-based: *Our Foundation will fund projects and programs that address and solve oral health care challenges facing five critical uninsured/underinsured populations: children, developmentally disabled persons, veterans, seniors, and perinatal moms.*

S.M.I.L.E. - Measurement and Impact: *Grant Applicants must clearly identify goals and outcomes to show how the program assesses success in the short term and long term.*

S.M.I.L.E. - Longevity: *Grant Applicants must clearly outline how the Foundation's funding will continue outside of the grant period relating to the sustainability of the program being funded.*

S.M.I.L.E. - Execution: *Grant Applicants must focus on applying for solution-based programs for one of the above-mentioned populations explaining how the program will be executed, the anticipated outcomes for that program, and how the program will affect that population's oral health care.*

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Delta Dental of New Jersey S.M.I.L.E. Grants Funding Requirements:

- Applicants must request at least \$25,000 (*exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis*)
- Multi-year requests will be considered (*up to three years*)
- Program must serve at least one of the following populations: Children, Developmentally Disabled, Veterans, Seniors, and/or Perinatal Mothers and their Children (up to age 3 postpartum)

Following are the funding priorities for each population.

Children:

We recognize that dental decay is the number one chronic disease of childhood. We are looking for programs that will have long-term effects by treating children at an earlier age when they can learn lifetime good oral health habits.

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. **Our Foundation seeks to support:**

- School-based dental sealant programs
- Establishing dental homes for children
- Early childhood dental care access programs for children ages 0-3
- Programs that integrate oral health with pediatricians and family practice physicians

Developmentally Disabled Persons:

We recognize that developmentally disabled individuals require specialized care to maintain good oral health. The Foundation seeks to fund programs that will improve access to dental care that meets their unique health care needs.

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. **Our Foundation seeks to support new or existing dental care programs serving those with:**

- Autism spectrum disorders
 - Down syndrome
 - Cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, vision impairment, and/or other developmental disabilities
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Veterans:

We recognize that many veterans lack access to dental care, and many do not qualify for VA dental benefits. The Foundation seeks programs that will improve veterans' access to dental care so the men and women who served our country can maintain good oral health.

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. **Our Foundation seeks to support:**

- Preventive dental care programs (establish a program or expand a current program)
 - Programs that establish dental homes for veterans
 - Programs that allow edentulous veterans to get dentures
 - Programs that address the total care of the patient and incorporates oral health care into the person's overall health care team (for example, persons with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes)
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Seniors:

We recognize that health care needs change as we age. Seniors are prone to severe periodontal disease, a condition linked to other health conditions including diabetes, tooth loss, dry mouth, and oral cancer. The Foundation seeks programs that will improve seniors' access to dental care so they can maintain good oral health.

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. **Our Foundation seeks to support:**

- Oral cancer prevention and treatment programs
 - Mobile dental clinics that visit nursing homes, assisted living facilities, senior centers, and/or community events for seniors
 - Programs that allow edentulous seniors to get dentures
 - Programs that address the total care of the patient and incorporate oral health care into the person's overall health care team (for example, persons with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes)
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Perinatal Mothers and Their Children (up to age 3 postpartum):

We recognize that poor oral health can negatively impact pregnant women and their babies, increasing the risk of preterm birth, low birth weight, and gestational diabetes. It's important for expectant mothers to maintain good oral hygiene to protect both their own health and their child's future oral health. The Foundation seeks programs that will improve pregnant women's oral health and that of their babies (up to age 3 postpartum).

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. **Our Foundation seeks to support:**

- Establishing dental homes for underserved pregnant moms and their babies for continuity of care
- Providing dental education programs for pregnant moms regarding the safety and importance of dental care during and after pregnancy
- Educational sessions for maternal health workers, such as doulas, midwives, OB/GYNs, and lactation consultants

The above programs can be accomplished in several ways. The types of programs our Foundation will consider funding include, but are not limited to mobile dental units, dental equipment and supplies, supporting dental personnel, and direct patient care.



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S.M.I.L.E Mini-Grants

In addition to the **S.M.I.L.E. Grants**, our Foundation also awards **S.M.I.L.E. Mini-Grants**. The **S.M.I.L.E. Mini-Grants** seek to serve the same populations as listed above:

- Children (ages 0 - 17)
- Developmentally disabled persons
- Veterans (ages 18+)
- Seniors (age 65+)
- Perinatal Mothers and their children (up to age 3 postpartum)

The **S.M.I.L.E. Mini-Grants** can support direct patient care, as well as support dental education programs for any of the above populations to help increase awareness of the importance of healthy smiles, teach proper brushing and flossing techniques, the role oral health plays in overall health and wellness, as well as provide oral health tools (toothbrushes, floss, toothpaste, mouthwash).

- The Foundation plans to award at least 10 Mini-Grants in 2026
- Applicants should apply for no more than \$10,000
- Examples of Mini-Grants the Foundation will consider funding are Give Kids A Smile Day, dental supplies and equipment, direct patient care costs, and dental education programs
- If you are applying for a S.M.I.L.E. Grant and would also like to apply for a S.M.I.L.E. Mini-Grant, please contact Kim at keltmore@deltadentalnj.com

All grant applicants must create an account in [Foundant](#) to apply.

If you already have an account, please log-in to complete your grant application(s).

If there are any questions, please contact Kim Elmore at keltmore@deltadentalnj.com