

SMILE Workforce Initiative Grant Criteria

Funding requests for single-year grants may start at \$15,000 and go up to \$100,000, depending on the type of program these funds would support. Multi-Year grants up to three years will be considered.

Questions? Contact Kim Elmore at [kelmore@deltadentalnj.com](mailto:kelmor@deltadentalnj.com)

We recognize, especially during these extraordinary times, that there is a shortage of dental assistants to provide dentists with vital support while treating patients and increasing access to dental care across New Jersey and Connecticut.

Dental assistants are essential members of a dental healthcare team – improving the oral and overall health of children, seniors, veterans, those with developmental disabilities, and adults of all ages.

Our Foundation is introducing this new SMILE grant opportunity to focus on workforce development and recruitment of dental assistants to provide dental care in underserved communities throughout New Jersey and Connecticut.

This can be accomplished through a variety of programs. Our Foundation seeks to support new or established programs that:

- Are State-approved and adhere to State regulations or are in the process of seeking State approval
- Are continuous and sustainable programs, and have the support and commitment from your overall organization
- Where applicable, have received approval from the Department of Education and/or Department of Labor
- Follow the NELDA model, with radiology and infection control, including Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) exam {based on NJ and/or CT regulations; In NJ: HS graduates only, minimum age of 18}, Infection Control Exam (ICE), and Anatomy, Morphology and Physiology (AMP) exam (The NELDA model is preferred, not required)

Establish or expand dental assisting programs through any of the following ways:

- Encourage and expose middle school and/or high school students to the dental assisting field
- Increase the number of dental assistants working in a public health setting, including FQHCs, community clinics, and hospitals
- Build a strong dental assisting workforce in underserved communities throughout New Jersey and Connecticut
- Improve access to dental care in our communities by recruiting and rebuilding depleted dental assistant staff

Funding can be applied in several ways, including but not limited to:

- Student scholarships, including covering the costs of tuition, books, exams, radiology, and or other costs assumed by students to complete their RDA requirements or CDA certifications
 - This includes certificate/diploma and associate degree programs
- Supporting school-to-career programs, dental assisting training programs, HOSA, dental radiology, as well as dental assisting programs at New Jersey and Connecticut colleges and other educational institutions
- Funding colleges and/or other institutions that are establishing and/or expanding dental assisting programs
- On-the-job training for dental assistants in public health settings
- Supporting the salaries of dental assistants in public health settings (full or partial funding to help make dental assistant salaries more competitive)
- Marketing efforts around promoting dental assisting careers to middle school, high school students or other groups; promoting schools' dental assisting programs, assist with student recruitment, and raising awareness for Expanded Function Dental Assistant - EFDA (Connecticut) and Registered Dental Assistants - RDA (New Jersey) opportunities
- Needs assessment(s) of service areas to help determine if program is needed in that community, as well as the viability of the program
- Student Association fees for dental assistants in training