

2026 Clinical Dental Education Innovation Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

Q1. Could a training site and the school both receive a grant, or do we need to pick which one applies?

A1. Both a training site and a school that partner together can submit for a grant separately.

Q2. Would you need 5 letters of support to earn 5 points?

A2. No, reviewers consider both quantity and quality of letters when assigning the bonus points.

Q3. Can an organization submit a project that doesn't start until September 2026?

A3. Yes, projects that start anytime in the grant period can be submitted. It is important to consider whether the grant funds can be fully spent by the end of the grant period.

Q4. Does the organization have to be an education/training institution that serves public program patients?

A4. The two eligibility criteria for the grant are listed below. If your organization meets these two criteria, the application would be eligible.

- One, eligible applicants include teaching institutions and clinical training sites that train dental professionals. The teaching institution or the clinical training site must provide accredited clinical training. An exception can be made if the organization is actively seeking accreditation with a reasonable assumption of success.
- Two, all applicant organizations must also have a policy to ensure no person will be denied services due to inability to pay (e.g., sliding-fee scale).

Q5. What is the definition of accredited for this application?

This grant requires that the teaching institution or training site provide training that is clinically accredited. For example, for dental students, that body would be the [Commission on Dental Accreditation \(CODA\)](https://coda.ada.org/) (<https://coda.ada.org/>).

Q6. Previously our organization has received less than the full amount that was in our application. Should we be asking for less than \$150,000 this year and can you give any feedback on why we received less than the full amount.

MDH grant staff can't make a recommendation or give feedback about how much an organization should apply for this year. Staff can share that last year was the most competitive year we've seen for the grant so far and none of the grant recipients received the full amount they requested in their original application.

Q7. Can funds be used for building renovation?

Yes, building or renovating clinic space for a clinical dental education program is an allowable activity.

Q8. What if we spend the funds in 2026 on setting up our clinic, but we are not able to provide services to anyone in 2026, are we still eligible for funding? Can one of our objectives be to complete the clinic space? And another be to secure a dentist?

Activities related to setting up a clinic in the grant period with plans to provide services after the grant period ends are allowable for this grant.

Q9. If we apply for funds for the clinic space, do we need to finish the space by December 31, 2026?

It is allowable to submit an application that proposes building or renovating a clinic space that will be completed after the grant period ends.

Q10. Can you give more clarification on what is needed for section 6 question 2 in the due diligence review form?

This section is requesting information about the organization's staffing and budget that shows your organization's capacity to effectively manage the grant.

Q11. If a dental clinic isn't accredited or seeking accreditation, but is utilized by accredited dental teaching institutions as a place for their dental students to receive hands-on, on-site training, is that dental clinic eligible to apply?

A dental clinic that is formally partnered with a clinically accredited training institution can apply for the CDEI grant.

Q12. Could you provide more detail on how an exception may be granted when an organization is actively pursuing accreditation with a reasonable expectation of success? Additionally, could you define what is meant by a “reasonable expectation of success”?

Your organization will have to provide proof of seeking to become accredited or having a formal partnership with an accredited teaching institution. You would do so by providing whatever documentation you have showing you are in the process of seeking accreditation and explain why you believe it will be successful.

Q13. Would a clinical rotation site based at a private dental practice in Minnesota, but accredited through Marquette University in Wisconsin, qualify to apply for the 2026 Clinical Dental Education Innovation Grant Program?

If the program the dental clinic is formally partnered with is a clinically accredited training institution, then they are eligible for the CDEI grant.

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