

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the SMILE Health startup program?

A: CareQuest Innovation Partners and MATTER are joining to create the first-of-its-kind systemic health program connecting oral health to overall health. This global call to action will recruit ideas and solutions focused on making care more accessible, equitable and integrated across medical and dental needs. Solution teams will be surrounded with CareQuest Innovation Partners and MATTER resources for a 12-week, semi-virtual program to validate their solution, refine their value proposition and ultimately strengthen their ability to attract investors and customers.

What types of ideas is this challenge seeking?

A: CareQuest Innovation Partners and MATTER are seeking early-stage startups that provide accessible, equitable, and integrated oral health care to improve health outcomes. [please add SMILE as an acronym to the solutions we are seeking. We are not looking for ideas (on a napkin)]

When does the challenge begin and when will participants be announced?

A: The SMILE Health Program launches on March 13, 2023 and applications will be accepted and reviewed until May 5, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ET. The MATTER team and CareQuest Innovation Partners will select up to 10 teams to determine their fit for participation in the program in hour-long meetings during the weeks of May 22 and May 29, 2023. CareQuest Innovation Partners stakeholders will select up to five teams to move on to the SMILE Health program that will begin on June 12, 2023.

What kinds of innovations are you seeking?

A: We are seeking health care solutions, services, digital technologies, devices, tools, and novel interventions.

Does my innovation need to be ready for market?

A: Submissions can range from research-based to pre-revenue concepts.

Who chooses the SMILE Health startup program participants?

A: The MATTER team and select CareQuest Innovation Partners leaders will vet all submissions. Stakeholders from CareQuest Innovation Partners will select the SMILE Health participants.

Who is eligible to apply?

A: All applicants must be 18 years of age or older. SMILE Health is open to both MATTER member startup companies, as well as non-MATTER member

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companies, university faculty, students, corporate entities, and individuals.

What is required of applicants?

- Applicants must be able to demonstrate a validated hypothesis or preliminary proof-of-concept around how their solution addresses key problems.
- Applicants must complete a short application outlining the key problem being addressed, including a description of the solution and its value proposition.
- Semifinalists must participate in one-on-one meetings with CareQuest Innovation Partners during the weeks of May 22 and May 29, 2023.
- Selected finalists must be available to participate in a 12-week semi-virtual program consisting of weekly calls with innovation mentors, workshops taught by industry leaders, and potential validation studies with third-party partners. Time commitment from startups will be roughly 10–15 hours per week, comprising mentor meetings, focused sessions, and collaborative working sessions around validation. These valuable meetings are facilitated via conference calls or web conferencing platforms to permit global participation. The program runs from June 12 to September 1, 2023.
- Finalists must participate in Stakeholder Day and Demo Day to be held in September and October of 2023.

How do I apply for the challenge?

A: Visit the <https://carequestinnovation.com/smile/> to apply.

How many times can I apply?

A: Each applicant (i.e., a company, entity, or individual) can submit one submission to the challenge. Have multiple ideas? Select the best one for submission.

What is a Validation Study?

A: As a part of the SMILE Health program, each participating team will run one or more validation studies with a matched impact partner. Your validation study will allow you to build the structure required for validation testing and gain data to validate your solution and drive market readiness. Examples of validation studies are patient and clinician surveys, materials testing, data analysis, clinical workflow assessment and focus groups.

What is an Impact Partner?

A: Impact partners validate solutions to make them market ready as a part of the SMILE Health Program. See our webpage for our current impact partners.



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What is a Scale Partner?

A: Scale partners meet with startups to provide feedback around their solutions and may invest capital to select startups who meet their investment criteria.

How many winners will be selected?

A: The MATTER team and CareQuest Innovation Partners will select up to 10 teams to determine their fit for participation in SMILE Health. CareQuest Innovation Partners stakeholders will select up to five teams to move on to the SMILE Health program that will begin on June 12, 2023. The SMILE Health Program will culminate in two final events, held in September and October of 2023.

What will SMILE Health startup program participants receive?

A: SMILE Health startup program participants will:

- Engage with other cutting-edge startups
- Network with peers, investors, and leading influencers
- Gain exposure to the CareQuest Innovation Partners and MATTER communities
- Validate their solution through opportunities with oral health stakeholders
- Collaborate with and learn from CareQuest Innovation Partners and its network
- Pitch to potential investors, partners, and clients at the final Demo Day
- Receive a six-month MATTER membership
- Receive a non-dilutive \$10,000 cash stipend

What judging criteria will be used to evaluate solutions?

A: Candidates will be evaluated on the following:

- Ability to clearly articulate the problem addressed in the challenge statement
- Quality, feasibility, and business viability of proposed solution or technology
- Differentiation of solution within the competitive landscape
- Capability of participant/team to develop and execute solution
- Extent to which CareQuest Innovation Partners can help advance solution
- Ability of the solution to provide more equitable outcomes for underserved communities

What is minimally invasive care?

A: CareQuest Innovation Partners supports Minimally Invasive Care, which aims to advance [prevention](#) and noninvasive [treatment](#) provided or prescribed by licensed [professionals](#) to [equitably](#) reduce [suffering](#).

Prevention: Intervening to decrease future signs or symptoms of disease, by reducing exposure to ausative substances (e.g., sugar) and improving resistance to disease (e.g., immunization, supportive nutrition, strengthening the disease substrate).

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Treatment: Management of disease, signs, and symptoms, without removal of any bodily structures (e.g., FV, GIC, SDF, CRFP, SMART, Hall crowns).

Professionals: “Clinician in the loop” criteria, (e.g., RDHs, DAs, DTs, NPs, PAs, MDs, SWs, BTs, nutritionists, dieticians).

Equitably: Progressing against disparities, especially for race, socioeconomic status, and geography.

Suffering: The emotional, physical, and financial experience of pain, distress, or hardship as measurable at a state/national level, for example experienced as dental extractions, root canals, periodontal surgery, ED use, or sedation-GA use.

I am not located in the United States. Am I eligible to apply?

A: Yes. CareQuest Innovation Partners is seeking global solutions, so all applicants with interest in entering the US market are encouraged to apply. SMILE Health activities will mainly involve virtual engagements with in-person final events.

I do not have any experience in oral health. Can I still apply?

A: This program is industry agnostic and open to all ideas that can address the challenge statement. No previous experience in oral health is necessary.

What if I still have questions about SMILE Health?

A: Please contact samantha@matter.health.