



January 15, 2026

Smart Start Partnership for Children is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support, educate and advocate to build a strong foundation for young children in our community. To that end we support programs that focus on early childhood education, health, and family engagement for families with children ages birth thru five residing in Henderson County, North Carolina.

SSPFC is accepting applications for Smart Start funding for the Fiscal Year 2026-2028 funding cycle (July 1, 2026– June 30, 2028) for the following evidence-based or evidence-informed programs and services as approved by the SSPFC Board of Directors:

- Kindergarten Transition
- Technical Assistance and Training for Child Care Providers (incl. Behavioral Support Services)
- Child Care Health Consultation
- Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library
- Dual Subsidy Services for families eligible for TANF/CCDF (incl. Infant/One-Year-Old Enhancements)
- Dual Subsidy Services for non-TANF/CCDF-eligible families
- Dual Subsidy Administration Services

Smart Start Partnership for Children requests proposals yearly. There is a three-step grant request and review process for the 2026-2027 funding cycle.

Letter of Intent:

The first step is submission of a 1-2-page Letter of Intent. It should briefly outline the following:

- 1) Name of your organization and contact information
- 2) Project Title
- 3) Estimate of grant request amount
- 4) Your organizations mission and work
- 5) Statement of Need
- 6) Scope of Work
- 7) Overall goals and objectives

Completed LOIs should be emailed to Sonia Girona at sonia@smartstartpfc.org.

Request for Application:

The second step is the submission of a complete Request for Application. The RFA package will be provided to agencies upon review and acceptance of their letter of intent.

The Review Process:

Smart Start Partnership for Children Board Committees will review the RFA's carefully to ensure the applications fit our current priorities and resources. During this period the committee may request additional information, a site visit or a face-to-face interview. Recommendations for funding will be submitted to the full Board of Directors on April 23, 2026, for final awards. Notifications will occur on Friday June 26, 2026

Timeline

January 22, 2026	Release Request for Letters of Intent
January 29, 2026	Letters of Intent Due (by 3:00 p.m.)
February 2, 2026	Request for Applications released to approved LOI's
March 5, 2026	Applications Due (by 3:00 p.m.)
April 23, 2026	Board Meeting for Approval of Activities and Allocations
April 24, 2026	Award Notification

For more information about the programs funded please visit our website at www.smartstartpfc.org. All questions can be directed to Sonia Girona, Executive Director at 828-693-1580 or sonia@smartstartpfc.org.



Activity Bidding Timeline for 2026-2028 Activities

Thursday, January 22, 2026

- Executive Committee votes to approve Annual Plan
- Release request for Letters of Intent for planned activities (pending board approval)

Thursday, January 29, 2026

- Letters of Intent due from interested agencies

Monday, February 2, 2026

- Request for Proposals released to approved agencies based on Letters of Intent

Thursday, March 5, 2026

- 2026-2028 Proposals due to Smart Start Partnership for Children by 3pm

March 13, 2026 – April 2, 2026

- Board Committee Review
 - Program Committee recommendations completed by May 20
 - Finance Committee allocation recommendations completed by June 3

Thursday, April 23, 2026

- Board meeting to vote for final approval of activities and allocations

Friday, April 24, 2026

- Award notification to agencies for approved activities