

Request for Proposal (RFP) - Quality Improvement Grants



Improving the care of patients living with metastatic breast cancer (mBC)

Note: A French translation of this RFP can be found [here](#)

I. BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

Rethink Breast Cancer (Rethink) is known for making positive change and rethinking the status quo when it comes to breast cancer. Rethink educates, empowers and advocates for system changes to improve the experience and outcomes of those with breast cancer, focusing on historically underserved groups: people diagnosed at a younger age, those with metastatic breast cancer and people systemically marginalized due to race, income or other factors. Through collaboration, Rethink keeps the community's voice firmly at the centre and drives impact in ways that matter most.

Rethink's strategic priorities and organizational direction are guided by the unique and unmet needs identified by patients and their families, and we strive to apply an equity lens to everything we do. Since 2018, Rethink has worked closely with their Metastatic Breast Cancer Advisory Board, which provides patient-focused insights on issues related to those affected by and concerned about mBC (2020-2021 mBC Board pictured above).

Many people with mBC experience delays in diagnosis, struggle to access specialized support, have fears about accessing future treatments, and are not given sufficient information about clinical trials. Covid-19 has exacerbated these issues and there is concern the pandemic may lead to more later-stage breast cancer diagnoses.

Rethink's Metastatic Breast Cancer Program addresses MBC issues through resources, community building and advocacy efforts to double the median overall survival of people living with mBC by 2025.

Beyond treatments, Pfizer works hand-in-hand with the broader cancer community to best support patients living with cancer. In this spirit, Pfizer is very proud to partner with Rethink Breast Cancer to launch this request for proposal program aimed at helping improve the lives of people living with breast cancer.

II. RFP INTENT

RFP INTENT

The intent of this RFP is to encourage proposals for the implementation of strategies that will **measurably improve the quality of care** of metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients. Projects should use optimal measures to improve care for patients with mBC, where treatment goals focus on improving quality and length of life as there is, to date, no known cure. In addition, preference will be given to projects that propose to address disparities in the management of mBC in underserved patient populations.

Supporting healthcare professionals in their efforts to maintain and improve their knowledge, ability, and performance related to treating patients with mBC is critical to improving patient care. The quality of care that healthcare professionals provide takes place in complex systems that are often in need of analysis and modification. These well thought out and tested changes allow for more efficient and effective patient care. In addition, providing resources and education to patients, their caregivers, and family members is crucial to help ensure they are informed and can participate in the shared decision-making process.

III. RFP SCOPE

RFP

Rethink and Pfizer are committed to funding projects that:

- Encourage the use of multi-disciplinary care models (e.g. nurse navigators, palliative care, psychological/mental health support);
- Address disparities in mBC related care for those marginalized due to age, race, income or other factors (equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility);
- Use Real World Evidence (RWE) to improve quality of care for mBC;
- Facilitate healthcare systems and providers to engage patients, their caregivers and families in shared decision-making;
- Optimize patient care by improving access to precision medicine and/or alternative diagnostic tools (e.g. liquid biopsy), and throughout the patient cancer experience, including access to clinical trials and evidence-based treatment;
- Projects that include patient engagement, their perspectives and patient involvement will be valued.

Multiple factors contribute to the complexity of treating the disease including:

- The need for cross-functional involvement in care;
- The rapidly changing options for personalizing treatment strategies, including access to precision medicine and alternative diagnostic tools;
- Managing both treatment and disease side effects;
- Communicating with patients, caregivers and family members about quality-of-life and end-of-life decisions and other obstacles patients face when living with the disease.

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ELIGIBILITY

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE:	Canada
APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only organizations are eligible to receive grants, not individuals or medical practice groups.• The following may apply: medical, nursing, allied health, and/or pharmacy professional schools; healthcare institutions (both large and small); professional associations; government agencies; and other entities with a mission related to healthcare improvement.• Canadian health care institutions, large and small; health care professional organizations and other organizations with a mission related to healthcare improvement.• Collaborations within institutions (e.g., between departments and/or inter-professional), as well as between different institutions / organizations / associations, are encouraged. Please note all partners must have a relevant role and the requesting organization must have a key role in the project.• Efforts to increase representation of diverse populations within the team(s) responding to this RFP and those designing projects that are participatory and collaborative [inclusion of voices within the communities most impacted by disparities] are encouraged.



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REQUIREMENTS

DATE RFP ISSUED	January 27 th , 2022
CLINICAL AREA	Oncology – metastatic breast cancer
AREA OF INTEREST FOR THIS RFP:	<p>Topics of highlighted interest include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-disciplinary care models (e.g., nurse navigator, palliative care, psychological/mental health support)• Address disparities in mBC related care for those marginalized due to age, race, income or other factors (equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility)• Use Real World Evidence (RWE) to improve quality of care for mBC• Strategies to encourage shared-decision making between patients and their healthcare teams• Improved access to precision medicine and/or alternative diagnostic tools (e.g. liquid biopsy), especially considering the current COVID-19 pandemic• Approaches to optimize care throughout the patient cancer experience, including optimal access to clinical trials and evidence-based treatment• Multi-disciplinary collaborations are encouraged when appropriate, but all partners must have a relevant role• It is expected that projects will be evidence-based (education and/or quality improvement) and the proposed evaluation will follow generally accepted scientific principles. During review the intended outcome of the project is given careful consideration and, if appropriate based on the project goal, projects with the maximum likelihood to directly impact patient care will be given high priority.• There is a considerable amount of interest in receiving responses from projects that utilize system-based changes. Although educational efforts for grantees and patients may be entirely appropriate component responses to this RFP, projects that include an overt description of system changes and how to successfully achieve them will be given high priority.• All submissions must include an overall “lay person’s” summary of the proposal (please limit project summary to 5 sentences or less). It is <u>not</u> our intent to support clinical research projects. Projects evaluating the efficacy of therapeutic or diagnostic agents will not be considered.
TARGET AUDIENCE:	Healthcare professionals and mBC patients

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DISEASE BURDEN OVERVIEW:

It is estimated that in 2021, 27,700 Canadian women were diagnosed with breast cancer and that close to 5,400 Canadian women died from breast cancer; representing 13% of all cancer deaths in women. According to the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), in Canada, about 5-10% of new breast cancers are diagnosed metastatic; while 20-30% of women first diagnosed with early stage breast cancer will go on to develop metastatic breast cancer in their lifetime.

Advanced breast cancer has a significant impact on functioning, quality of life and work productivity with a 5-year survival rate of 28%. Despite significant advances, metastatic breast cancer still remains an incurable disease associated with a 24-month median overall survival.

The specific data for metastatic breast cancer occurrences and prognosis is actually unknown, as not consistently tracked in Canada. The CCS notes the estimates are based on 'information that comes from a variety of sources [which] may include statistics from other countries that are likely to have similar outcomes in Canada'.

EXPECTED APPROXIMATE MONETARY RANGE OF GRANT APPLICATIONS:

- Individual projects requesting up to \$100 000 (CAD) will be considered. Please note, smaller grant request amounts are strongly encouraged.
- The total available budget related to this RFP is \$200,000 (CAD).
- The amount of the grant Pfizer and Rethink will be prepared to fund for any project will depend upon the joint review panel's evaluation of the proposal and costs involved and will be stated clearly in the grant agreement.

KEY DATES:

- RFP release date: **January 27th, 2022**
- Full proposal due date: **April 8th, 2022**
Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Time (New York, GMT -5)
- Review of Full Proposals by Review Panel: May 2022
- Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: June 1st, 2022
- Grants will be distributed following a fully executed agreement
- Anticipated Project Start and End Dates: September 2022 to December 2024

HOW TO SUBMIT:

- Please go to www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/QI and sign in. First-time users should click "Create your password".
- In the application:
 - For the question "Are you replying to a Request for Proposal as part of the Competitive Grant Program?" select **Yes**
 - Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: **2022 Oncology CAN: Rethink-Pfizer metastatic breast cancer**
 - Select the following Primary Area of Interest: **Oncology - Breast**
- Requirements for submission:
 - Complete all required sections of the online application and upload your project proposal (see Appendix) in the Full Proposal Submission field.
 - If you encounter any technical difficulties with the website, please click the "Technical Questions" link at the bottom of the page.

IMPORTANT: Be advised applications submitted after the due date will not be reviewed by the committee.

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QUESTIONS:	If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to the Grant Officer, dewayne.brumlow@pfizer.com , with the subject line “[2022 Oncology CAN: Rethink-Pfizer metastatic breast cancer and 27 January 2022].”
GRANT AGREEMENTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your grant is approved, your institution will be required to enter into a written grant agreement with Pfizer. Please click here to view the core terms of the agreement.• Pfizer has drafted the terms of these agreements to be balanced and reasonable and to further the goals of both parties. Negotiating grant agreements requires significant resources, so please ensure that your institution (including your legal department) is able and willing to abide by these terms before proceeding with submission of your application as they will need to be accepted in their entirety.
REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This Quality Improvement Grant RFP uses a joint review panel with both Rethink Breast Cancer and Pfizer to make final grant decisions.• The panel is comprised of metastatic breast cancer experts (patients and medical experts) and Pfizer medical affairs personnel.
MECHANISM BY WHICH APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All applicants will be notified via email by the dates noted above.• Applicants may be asked for additional clarification during the review period.

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Appendix A Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal

Applications will be accepted via the online portal. Full Proposal documents should be no longer than 5-10 pages in length (12-point font and 1-inch margins) including Organization Detail and References. When uploading your Full Proposal please ensure it addresses the following:

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Briefly state the overall goal of the project. Also describe how this goal aligns with the focus of the RFP and the goals of the applicant organization(s).• List the overall objectives you plan to meet with your project both in terms of learning and expected outcomes. Objectives should describe the target population as well as the outcomes you expect to achieve as a result of conducting the project.• All submissions must include an overall “lay person’s” summary of the project proposal (please limit project summary to 5 sentences or less).
ASSESSMENT OF NEED FOR THE PROJECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please include a quantitative baseline data summary, initial metrics (e.g., quality measures), or a project starting point (please cite data on gap analyses or relevant patient-level data that informs the stated objectives) in your target area. Describe the source and method used to collect the data. Describe how the data was analyzed to determine that a gap existed. If a full analysis has not yet been conducted, please include a description of your plan to obtain this information.
TARGET AUDIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the primary audience(s) targeted for this project. Also indicate whom you believe will directly benefit from the project outcomes. Describe the overall population size as well as the size of your sample population
PROJECT DESIGN AND METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the planned project and the way it addresses the established need.• If your methods include educational activities, please describe succinctly the topic(s) and format of those activities
INNOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain what measures you have taken to assure that this project idea is original and does not duplicate other projects or materials already developed.• Describe how this project builds upon existing work, pilot projects, or ongoing projects developed either by your institution or other institutions related to this project.

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Appendix A

Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal (cont'd)

EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In terms of the metrics used for the needs assessment, describe how you will determine if the practice gap was addressed for the target group. Describe how you expect to collect and analyze the data.• Quantify the amount of change expected from this project in terms of your target audience.• Describe how the project outcomes will be broadly disseminated.
ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide an anticipated timeline for your project including project start/end dates
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is any additional information you feel Pfizer should be aware of concerning the importance of this project, please summarize here
ORGANIZATION DETAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the attributes of the institutions / organizations / associations that will support and facilitate the execution of the project and the leadership of the proposed project. Articulate the specific role of each partner in the proposed project.

*The online application also includes the fields noted above. The text in those fields should be the same text that is included in your Full Proposal document.

