The Japan College of Rheumatology and Pfizer Announce
a Quality Improvement Grant RFP

Establishment of Hospital-Clinic Collaboration Model for Undiagnosed Rheumatic Diseases

Competitive Grant Program – using Expert Review Panel

日本語版はこちらをクリックしてください⇓
Note this RFP is also available in Japanese for your convenience

I. Background

Pfizer Japan entered into a collaboration agreement with the Japan College of Rheumatology (JCR) to implement an innovative learning and change strategy. JCR aims to contribute to society through improving the medical treatment of rheumatoid diseases and has similar goals to GMG with respect to promoting high quality education and change management initiatives that enable healthcare professionals to practice at an appropriate standard of care, thereby improving patient outcomes.

Pfizer Global Medical Grants (GMG) supports the global healthcare community's independent initiatives (e.g., research, quality improvement or education) to improve patient outcomes in areas of unmet medical need that are aligned with Pfizer's medical and/or scientific strategies.

Pfizer's GMG competitive grant program involves a publicly posted Request for Proposal (RFP) that provides detail regarding a specific area of interest, sets timelines for review and approval, and uses an external review panel (ERP) to make final grant decisions. Organizations are invited to submit an application addressing the specific gaps in practice as outlined in the specific RFP.

For all quality improvement grants, the grant requester (and ultimately the grantee) is responsible for the design, implementation, and conduct of the independent initiative supported by the grant. Pfizer must not be involved in any aspect of project development, nor the conduct or monitoring of the quality improvement program.

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II. Eligibility

Geographic Scope:	Japan
Applicant Eligibility Criteria	• The following may apply: medical, dental, nursing, allied health, and/or pharmacy professional schools; healthcare institutions (both large and small); Medical academic societies (excluding branches of the Japan College of Rheumatology); and other entities with a mission related to healthcare improvement. From the viewpoint of conflict of interest, a person belonging to a medical institution, to which any director of the Japan College of Rheumatology belong, cannot apply. • If the project involves multiple departments within an institution and/or between different institutions / organizations / associations. all institutions must have a relevant role and the requesting organization must have a key role in the project. IMPORTANT: From the viewpoint of COI, those who belong to the medical institution to which the board member of JCR belongs can't apply.

III. Requirements

Date RFP Issued	February 16, 2021
Clinical Area	Rheumatic Diseases
Specific Area of Interest for this RFP:	The purpose of this program is to call for a program for establishing a hospital-clinic cooperation model for undiagnosed rheumatic diseases which matches the diagnosis and treatment status in each region of Japan (e.g., regional characteristics, patient backgrounds, etc.) in order to establish a system where rheumatologists and non-rheumatologists in each region can work together to diagnose and treat undiagnosed rheumatic diseases through the implementation of this program. The calling for applications covers 3 areas in Japan: (1) Kanto, (2) Chubu, and (3) Chugoku/Shikoku regions. It is not our intent to support clinical research projects. Projects evaluating the efficacy of therapeutic or diagnostic agents will not be considered. Information on how to submit requests for support of clinical research projects can be found at Investigator Sponsored Research. In addition, it is not also our intent to support guideline development (e.g., clinical treatment guidelines) from the viewpoint of COI. More information can be found at Quality Improvement Grants

Target Audience:	Healthcare professionals (e.g., rheumatologists, community healthcare professionals, etc.). *NOTE: Projects whose target is "Patients only" are not eligible.*
Disease Burden Overview:	To establish a diagnosis and treatment system for undiagnosed rheumatic diseases, including preclinical rheumatoid arthritis, in the community, there is an urgent need to provide education and enlightenment to community healthcare professionals based on the evidence and regional reality.[1)] This requires an education system for non-rheumatologists (a system to teach what clinical signs or test results need to be referred to a rheumatologist), the establishment of a network to refer to rheumatologists, and an education system for rheumatologists. A model program to implement them is required.
Recommendations and Target Metrics:	EULAR recommendations for the management of rheumatoid arthritis with synthetic and biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs: 2019 update. Smolen JS, et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2020;79:685–699
Barriers:	The EULAR Recommendation 2019[2)] describes the following information at the beginning of the study issues, which has attracted attention in recent years. Study issues in EULAR Recommendation 2019 (1) Is there sufficient data to recommend specific treatments for patients who are at high risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis with prodromal rheumatoid symptoms (preclinical rheumatoid arthritis)? In Japan, an idea of undiagnosed rheumatic diseases, including preclinical rheumatoid arthritis, has not been fully disseminated, suggesting that patients, even with some symptoms or findings, may not to be referred to rheumatologists. Therefore, it is urgently required to organize a system, including the establishment of a network for the diagnosis and treatment of rheumatic diseases, and to provide education and enlightenment for regional medical cooperation.1) The current issues may be as follows. Current issues (1) Development and implementation of an education system for non-rheumatologists (2) Establishment of a network to refer to rheumatologists (3) Development and implementation of an education system for rheumatologists
Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:	The total available budget related to this RFP is 9,000,000 JPY. Individual projects requesting up to 3,000,000 JPY will be considered. The amount of the grant Pfizer will be prepared to fund for any project will

	depend upon the external review panel's evaluation of the proposal and costs involved and will be stated clearly in the approval notification.
Key Dates:	• RFP release date: February 16, 2022 • Due date: ~~April 20, 2022~~ **Extended Due Date: May 11, 2022** Please note the deadline is midnight Eastern Time (New York, GMT -5). • Review of Full Proposals by External Review Panel: June 2022 • Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: August 2022 • Grants distributed following execution of fully signed Letter of Agreement Anticipated Project Start and End Dates: 1-3 years (January 2023 – December 2025)
How to Submit:	• Please go to www.cybergrants.com/pfizer and sign in. First-time users should click "Create your password". • In the application: o Select the following Project Type: "*Quality Improvement*". o Select the following Primary Area of Interest: "*Rheumatoid Arthritis*" o Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: "*2022 I&I JP: Establishment of Hospital-Clinic Collaboration Model for URD*" • Requirements for submission: Complete all required sections of the online application and upload the completed Full Proposal template (see Appendix). • 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 through the wrong application type and/or submitted after the due date will not be reviewed by the committee.
Questions:	If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to the Grant Officer, Akihiro Kamina (meg.japan@pfizer.com), with the subject line "*2022 I&I JP: Establishment of Hospital-Clinic Collaboration Model for Undiagnosed Rheumatic Diseases*."
Grant Agreements:	• 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：	• The panels are comprised of professionals from the medical community with advanced degrees and expertise in particular clinical areas, or specific needs of a geographic region/learner group, or expertise in research, continuing professional development or quality improvement • The external review committee is composed mainly of experts in the field of rheumatism selected by JCR.
Mechanism by which Applicants will be Notified:	• All applicants will be notified via email by the dates noted above. • Applicants may be asked for additional clarification or to make a summary presentation during the review period. • In principle, JCR and Pfizer can't accept the withdrawal of the grant after the notification of approval. • Pfizer must complete payment procedure by the end of November 2022. Please confirm the procedure of your institution for receiving our grant before proceeding with submission of your application.

References：

1) The perspective of patients with early rheumatoid arthritis on the journey from symptom onset until referral to a rheumatologist. Rheumatology Advances in Practice 2019; 0:1–8

2) EULAR recommendations for the management of rheumatoid arthritis with synthetic and biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs: 2019 update. Ann Rheum Dis 2020; 79:685–699.

Appendix A

Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal

Applications will be accepted via the online portal. Full Proposal documents should be no longer than 10-15 pages in length (12-point font and 1-inch margins) excluding Organization Detail and References. When uploading your Full Proposal please ensure it addresses the following*:

Goals and Objectives	• 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.
Assessment of Need for the Project	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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.
Evaluation and Outcomes	• 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	• Provide an anticipated timeline for your project including project start/end dates
Additional Information	• If there is any additional information you feel Pfizer should be aware of concerning the importance of this project, please summarize here
Organization Detail	• 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. Letters of support from partner organizations will be required at the Full Proposal stage only and should not be included with the LOI.
Budget Detail	• A total amount requested is the only information needed for the LOI stage. Full Budget is not required. This amount can be adjusted at the Full Proposal stage as applicable. • The budget amount requested must be in Japanese YEN (JPY). • While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind: o Institutional overhead and indirect costs may be included within the grant request. Examples include human resources department costs, payroll processing and accounting costs, janitorial services, utilities, property taxes, property and liability insurance, and building maintenance as well as additional project expenses such as costs for publication, IRB / IEC review fees, software license fees, and travel. Please note: Pfizer does not provide funding for capital equipment. o The inclusion of these costs cannot cause the amount requested to exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP. o It should be noted that grants awarded through GMG cannot be used to purchase therapeutic agents (prescription or non-prescription). o Consumption tax should be included in your budget. • Pfizer maintains a company-wide, maximum allowed overhead rate of 28% for independent studies and projects.