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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY  
KNOWLEDGE CONQUERS CANCER

Competitive Quality Improvement Grant Program  
Improving Metastatic Breast Cancer  
(mBC) Quality of Care and Equity via  
Meaningful Capacity Building in  
South East Asia



Request for Proposals  
September 6, 2023

## INTRODUCTION

Conquer Cancer®, the ASCO Foundation and Pfizer Global Medical Grants are collaborating to offer a Quality Improvement grant funding opportunity to improve the quality of care and to help build capacity to address the needs of metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients in South East Asia. This grant program will support innovative approaches to diagnose inequities and improve the quality mBC patient care in the select geographies in the region (please review eligibility section below).

Submissions addressing the expressed Areas of Interest with a measurable and sustainable positive impact on patients will be favored by the Scientific Review Committee (SRC).

**This grant awards program was purposefully developed with the Asia Pacific Regional Council of ASCO expressly for the patients of the Asia Pacific region.**

Conquer Cancer is the lead organization for the review and evaluation of applications. Grant funding will be provided directly from Pfizer. Collectively, up to **\$750,000** is available to fund **Quality Improvement projects** under this RFP. The grant term is for **18 months**.

Successful applicants to this RFP will be expected to share the initial results of their project with ASCO's Asia Pacific Regional Council at a future grantee meeting to be convened by Conquer Cancer in 2025.

### About Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation

Conquer Cancer®, the ASCO Foundation, funds research for every cancer, every patient, everywhere. Since 1984, its Grants & Awards program has awarded more than \$178 million through more than 8,600 grants and awards to improve cancer care and accelerate breakthroughs in clinical and translational oncology research. Conquer Cancer's EveryGrant® program is an end-to-end, white label solution, helping organizations develop and deliver grants programs that attract the brightest researchers and make a difference for people with cancer everywhere. For more information, visit [CONQUER.ORG](https://www.conquer.org)

### About ASCO Asia Pacific Regional Council

The Asia Pacific Regional Council works to address the specific needs and challenges faced by oncology professionals in the region. Council members serve as voices for their respective countries, facilitate engagement in ASCO's global programs, and work with Society leadership and staff to tailor ASCO programs to best support members in the region.

### About Pfizer Global Medical Grants

The mission of Pfizer Global Medical Grants is to accelerate the translation of science into quality patient care through independent grants, partnerships, and collaborations. Pfizer Global Medical Grants 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. For all independent grants, the grant requester (and ultimately the grantee) is responsible for the design, implementation, sponsorship, and conduct of the independent initiative supported by the grant, including compliance with any regulatory requirements. For more information, please visit <https://www.pfizer.com/about/programs-policies/grants>.



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## ADDRESSING GAPS IN MBC PATIENT CARE

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in Asia Pacific. Despite significant advances in the detection, management, and treatment of breast cancer, patients in Asia face significant challenges. These challenges include a shortage of oncologists, insufficient training of health care providers, and lack of access to the latest therapies. Moreover, there are significant disparities in access to care in Asia, including between those utilizing public and private health care. These factors are particularly critical for stage IV, or metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients.

The goal of this program is to improve the quality of mBC patient care by understanding and addressing gaps in the care that contribute to disparities in mBC patient outcomes in South East Asia. These may include:

- Gaps in clinical practice, such as the ability or competencies of the health care professionals themselves, the abilities, or competencies of the systems in which they work to promote or allow proper management, or other factors related to the external environment or patient population.
- Gaps in the local literature and localized or adapted treatment guidelines.
- Gaps in patient education, including factors that contribute to delays in seeking care and impediments to shared decision making.
- Gaps in the coordination of mBC patient care across the healthcare system, including primary care, appropriate referral of patients at and the utilization of patient navigation.
- Gaps in real world evidence needed to diagnose the contributors to disparities in care & treat metastatic breast cancer patients.

This RFP seeks to provide funding to projects that are aimed at addressing these and other relevant gaps, ultimately helping health care providers deliver the best treatment to each patient at the optimal time.



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## SCOPE

This RFP is open to investigators from institutions in **select South East Asian geographies** (see eligibility criteria). Collaboration between institutions across geographies is encouraged to foster the interactive sharing of knowledge and expertise, and to utilize the combined strengths of the investigators and their institutions. Also, partnerships between clinically focused academic centers/departments with centers of health policy, healthcare management and health economics skills and patient advocacy groups are also encouraged. Please note: all partners must have a relevant role. Investigators can be of any health care professional background.

Proposals in the following areas of interest are strongly encouraged, but are not limited to:

- Access to oncology care, including access to multi-disciplinary teams (MDT) and specialized services (including radiotherapy and clinical trials). This may include education and technology-based strategies for patients, community members, and healthcare providers.
- Strategies to address late-stage diagnosis of mBC as well as rare and aggressive forms of mBC
- Data acquisition projects and strategies, including multi-institutional or multi-national registries to collect data on mBC care and outcomes.
- Improving pathology and radiology quality and capacity through Big Data approaches.
- Novel digital strategies to improve healthcare literacy and access, including health apps, telemedicine, and tools to facilitate health education and data collection.
- Enhancing and improving the journey of mBC patients, including training the non-oncology workforce, improving referral pathways, care networks, and support MDTs.
- Access to culturally appropriate care, including traditional and non-traditional treatments and palliative care.
- Strategies to improve cancer education standards and address cultural stigmas.

## FRAMEWORK

While the ultimate goal of this program is to affect change that will impact patients, it is understood that in some cases, there is insufficient data to develop meaningful interventions. Thus, proposals may be focused on the generation of real-world evidence to better understand a specific gap impacting mBC patient care, with the interest of developing evidence-based interventions to address these gaps.

The funding is intended to be available for Quality Improvement projects to help solve issues identified above, and other gaps impacting the quality of mBC patient care. It is expected that projects will be evidence-based and follow generally accepted scientific principles. Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework in designing their projects.

Project recommended duration up to **18 months**, which should include: development, need assessment, execution (e.g., gap analysis, evidence collection, validation, implementation, etc.), evaluation of impact (e.g., outcomes, improvements, solutions, etc.) and communication/publication plan to share results.

All proposals must ensure that the project reflects the needs of patients with mBC, particularly those from underserved communities in Asia Pacific; therefore, participation and input from local patient advocates is encouraged.

The Project must be **executed** in the **South East Asia-Pacific geographies noted below** with a focus on Academic Cancer or Medical Centers, large and small hospitals, community hospitals, ambulatory care settings, and other healthcare facilities.



Multi-disciplinary collaborations or partnerships with global healthcare organizations, local health agencies, academia, advocacy groups and medical societies aligned with the mission to improve oncology care in the development of this proposal are strongly encouraged. Collaborating organizations may be based outside of the eligible geographies noted below. All partners must have a relevant role and should be described in the application.

**It is not our intent to support clinical research projects. Projects evaluating the efficacy of therapeutic or diagnostic agents will not be considered.**

## REVIEW PROCESS

Conquer Cancer and Pfizer have agreed upon a formalized 2-stage review procedure to select the research proposals of highest scientific merit.

- Stage 1 is the submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI)
- Stage 2 is the full proposal for invited applicants

Please refer to the Requirements below and Appendix A for additional LOI requirements. Conquer Cancer will convene a Scientific Review Committee (SRC) composed of **Asia Pacific** subject matter experts who will perform an independent and confidential peer review of all in scope LOIs and applications. The SRC's collective recommendations will define which proposals are awarded funding. Funding allocations are at the discretion of the SRC and based upon their expert knowledge of relevant implementation factors.



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## REQUIREMENTS

<b>Date RFP Issued:</b>	<b>September 6, 2023</b>
<b>Clinical Area:</b>	<b>Oncology – Metastatic Breast Cancer</b>
<b>Applicant Eligibility Criteria:</b>	<p>To be eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The institution, principal investigator (PI) and focus of the submission must be based in the following geographies:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indonesia</li><li>• Malaysia</li><li>• Burma (Myanmar)</li><li>• Philippines</li><li>• Singapore</li><li>• Thailand</li><li>• Vietnam</li><li>• Papua New Guinea</li><li>• Solomon Islands</li><li>• Hong Kong</li><li>• Taiwan</li></ul></li><li>• While applications must be submitted from the geographies noted above, collaborations with institutions outside of the region are permitted. Please note all partners must have a relevant role and the requesting organization must have a key role in the project.</li><li>• Only organizations are eligible to receive grants, not individuals or physician-owned medical group practices.</li><li>• The applicant must be the Project Lead/Principal Investigator (PI) or an authorized designee of such individual (e.g., Project Lead/PI's grant/research coordinator)</li><li>• The Project Lead/PI must be an employee or independent contractor of the requesting organization.</li><li>• Requesting organization must be legally able to receive award funding directly from Pfizer Inc. We strongly recommend that applicants confirm this with their organization or institution prior to submitting an application. Grants awarded to organizations that are subsequently found to be unable to accept funding directly from Pfizer Inc. may be subject to rescission.</li><li>• Eligible institutions include Academic Cancer Centers, Healthcare Delivery Networks, large and small hospitals, academic medical centers, community hospitals, ambulatory care settings, and other healthcare facilities.</li><li>• The applicant (PI) must have a medical or postdoctoral degree (MD, PhD, or equivalent), an advanced nursing degree (BSN with a MS/PhD), or a degree in Pharmacy, Pathology, Physiotherapy, Psychology, or Social Work.</li></ul>



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<p><b>Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:</b></p>	<p>The estimated total available funding for this RFP is <b>\$750,000</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual projects requesting up to <b>\$80,000</b> not exceeding <b>18-months</b> will be considered.</li> <li>• The maximum indirect (overhead) rate is <b>28%</b> and must be included in the total grant request amount.</li> <li>• Amount requested may not exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP and the budget submitted must be within fair market value.</li> <li>• No funding for capital equipment is allowed.</li> <li>• <b>Travel costs directly related to conducting the project or presenting the results may be included in the budget.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Letter of Intent Requirements</b></p>	<p><b>The LOI is a brief summary that describes the project at a high level</b> covering the following topics. Please refer to Appendix A for more information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and Objectives</li> <li>• Assessment of Need for the Project</li> <li>• Target Audience</li> <li>• Project Design and Methods</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Evaluation and Outcomes</li> <li>• Anticipated Project Timeline</li> <li>• Organization Detail</li> <li>• Budget Detail</li> </ul>
<p><b>Estimated Key Dates:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFP release date: <b>September 6, 2023</b></li> <li>• Letter of Intent due date: <b>November 6, 2023</b></li> <li>• Invitations for Full Application: <b>January 5, 2024</b></li> <li>• Full Application due date: <b>March 4, 2024</b></li> </ul> <p>Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York, GMT -5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Full Proposals by Expert Review Panel: <b>May 2024</b></li> <li>• Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: <b>July 1, 2024</b></li> <li>• Grants will be distributed following a fully executed agreement.</li> <li>• Anticipated Project Start and End Dates: <b>August 1, 2024, to January 31, 2025.</b></li> </ul>



<p><b>How to Apply:</b></p>	<p>Please go to <a href="http://www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/loi">www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/loi</a> and sign in. First-time users should click “REGISTER NOW”. <i>[Note: there are individual portals for each grant application type (e.g., knowledge, LOI, research full proposal, and QI full proposal). Please be sure to use the URL above.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Click the “Start A New LOI” button.</li> <li>• For the question “Competitive Grant?” select Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: <b>2024 ONC APAC ASCO CCF mBC QI</b></li> <li>• Select the following Primary Area of Interest: Oncology – Breast Cancer</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Requirements for submission: Complete all required sections of the online application (see Appendix).</li> <li>• If you encounter any technical difficulties with the website, please click the “Technical Questions” link at the bottom of the page.</li> <li>• <b>IMPORTANT: Be advised applications submitted through the wrong application type and/or submitted after the due date will not be reviewed by the committee.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review Criteria:</b></p>	<p>Applications will be peer reviewed based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of the project focus in addressing the needs of mBC patients in the region.</li> <li>• Strength of the proposal, feasibility, and likelihood of improving the quality of mBC care in South East Asia.</li> <li>• Appropriateness, feasibility, and adequacy of the proposed project design.</li> <li>• Availability of environmental and institutional resources to support the proposed project, including appropriate collaborations.</li> <li>• Prior research experience and accomplishments of the applicant, research team and collaborators.</li> <li>• Projects that are both measurable and have sustainable impact will be favored by the selection committee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to Conquer Cancer Scientific Review Officer, Andrew L. Smith, PhD (<a href="mailto:Andrew.Smith@conquer.org">Andrew.Smith@conquer.org</a>) or Pfizer Grant Officer, Renee Yip (<a href="mailto:Renee.Yip@Pfizer.com">Renee.Yip@Pfizer.com</a>) with the subject line: <b>2024 ONC APAC ASCO Improving Metastatic Breast Cancer (mBC) Quality of Care in Asia Pacific.</b></li> <li>• Please click <a href="#">here</a> to view Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Competitive Grant Program.</li> </ul>





<b>Grant Agreements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your grant is approved, your institution will be required to enter into a written grant agreement with Pfizer. Please click <a href="#">here</a> to view the core terms of the agreement.</li> <li>• Under Pfizer's competitive grant program, modifications to grant agreements will not be reviewed unless a genuine conflict exists as between applicable law and the terms of the relevant grant agreement. Applicant is encouraged to share the core terms with counsel for approval prior to submitting an application.</li> <li>• Except where prohibited by applicable law and, in any case, subject to review by Pfizer Legal, payment of grant funding may only be paid to the grantee organization.</li> <li>• This RFP is supported by Pfizer Inc. and, if approved, payment will be sent from the United States.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanism by which Applicants will be Notified:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All applicants will be notified via email by the anticipated dates noted above.</b></li> <li>• Applicants may be asked for additional clarification, if needed, during the review period.</li> </ul>



## Appendix A

### Quality Improvement Project LOI

Applications will be accepted via the online portal. The Letter of Intent (LOI) will be accepted via the online application. When answering the LOI questions in the application please keep the following in mind:

<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide the main goal of the study and the study population (if applicable). Provide a detailed definition that is directly linked to the primary objective.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of Need for the Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This should reflect your study rationale. Provide a brief description of the medical/scientific question and the rationale of how this study addresses the question.</li> </ul>
<b>Target Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the primary audience(s) targeted for this project. For studies focused on a specific patient population, please specify the relevant age, gender and other demographic information.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Design and Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe concisely the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Please include any relevant inclusion/exclusion criteria, analysis plans, and statistical plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain what measures you have taken to assure that this project idea is original and does not duplicate other projects. 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation and Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specify type and frequency of safety, efficacy, and/or outcome measures. Please describe how disparities will be defined and identified within the datasets. Also indicate the method(s) used to assess measures.</li> <li>Provide a publication plan describing intended submission of abstracts to (a) congress(es) or intended submission of (a) publication(s) to peer-reviewed journals. All publications must follow ICH guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how the interventions proposed will be sustained beyond the funding period of the grant. This should include how the program could be funded as well as how the interventions will be incorporated into future strategic plans to improve patient care.</li> </ul>



<b>Anticipated Project Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an anticipated timeline for your project including project start/end dates.</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is any additional information you feel Pfizer should be aware of concerning the importance of this project, please summarize here.</li> <li>• Early-career applicants: Letter(s) of support from mentor(s) and collaborators describing how the award will advance the applicant's career.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization Detail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This information is used to assess the capability of the organizational resources available to perform the effort proposed. Identify the facilities to be used [laboratory, animal, clinical and "other"]. If appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity and extent of availability to the project.</li> </ul>
<b>Budget Detail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>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.</b></li> <li>• The budget amount requested must be in U.S. dollars (USD).</li> <li>• While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General organizational running costs such as insurances, heating, lighting, rent, building maintenance may be included. Pfizer does not provide funding for capital purchases (infrastructure expenses such as equipment, purchases of software or software licenses, technology or bricks and mortar). Equipment hire/leasing is acceptable and may be included in project budget.</li> <li>○ The inclusion of these costs cannot cause the amount requested to exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP.</li> <li>○ It should be noted that grants awarded through GMG cannot be used to purchase Pfizer therapeutic agents (prescription or non-prescription).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pfizer maintains a company-wide, maximum allowed overhead rate of 28% for independent studies and projects. Please <a href="#">click here</a> for details.</li> </ul>

