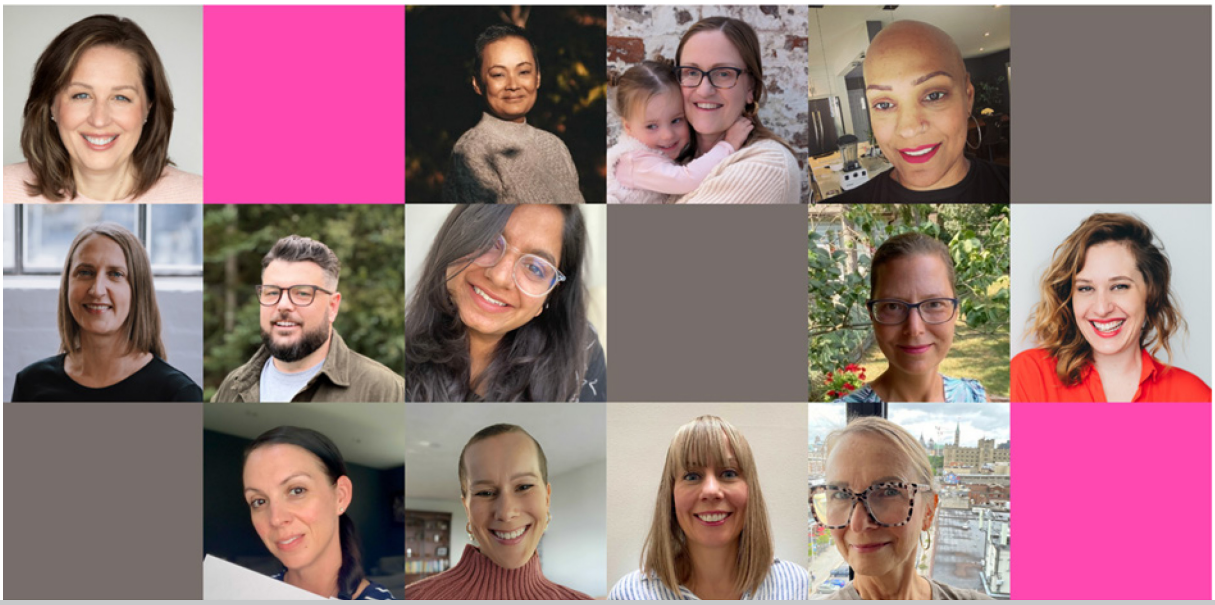
Request for Proposal (RFP) - Quality Improvement Grants



Improving the Care of Persons 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 (mBC) 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.

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. 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.

Rethink's Metastatic Breast Cancer Program was started in 2015 with a goal of helping double the median overall survival of people living with mBC by 2025. Rethink addresses MBC issues through community building, resources, support, research and advocacy.

At Pfizer, we apply science and our global resources to bring therapies to people that extend and significantly improve their lives. Beyond treatments, Pfizer works hand-in-hand with the broader cancer community to best support people 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 and care 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 persons with mBC. Projects should use optimal measures to improve care for persons with mBC, where treatment goals focus on improving quality and length of life as there is, to date, no known cure. **We welcome a diversity of projects that will improve the outcomes of persons with metastatic breast cancer including pilot projects** that could lead to larger efforts that could potentially impact clinical care. Well thought out and tested modifications allow for more efficient and effective patient care**.**

Providing appropriate resources and education to people with mBC, their caregivers, and family members is crucial to help ensure they are informed and can participate in the shared clinical decision-making process. While the digital delivery of care can provide persons with mBC with flexibility and health care providers with further reach, submissions that underscore the importance of person-to-person care are also appreciated.

III. RFP SCOPE

RFP SCOPE

Rethink and Pfizer are especially interested in 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, sexuality, gender identity, accessibility, or other factors.
- Use real world evidence to improve quality of care for persons with mBC
- Facilitate healthcare systems and providers to engage persons with mBC, their caregivers and families in shared decision-making
- Optimize patient care by improving access to precision medicine and/or diagnostic tools, including access to clinical trials and evidence-based treatment throughout the person's cancer experience.
- Include persons with mBC as members of the project planning team with evidence of how the project will incorporate engagement best practices.
- Promote a team that is comprised of diverse perspectives and experiences.
- Provide sustainable, scalable, and/or transferable solutions that improve the quality of care for persons with mBC.
- Demonstrate the importance of person-to-person interactions and care in the patient experience.

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 the side effects of treatment
- Communicating with persons with mBC, caregivers and family members about quality-of-life and end-of-life decisions and other obstacles patients face when living with the disease, and
- Access to best treatment, diagnostics, and clinical research

ELIGIBILITY

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	Canada
APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	• 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. • Only organizations are eligible to receive grants, not individuals or medical practice groups (i.e., an independent group of physicians not affiliated with a hospital, academic institution, or professional society). • Candian 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. • 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). • The Project Lead/PI must be an employee or contractor of the requesting organization. • 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. • **Inclusion of persons with mBC as members of the project team is encouraged.**

REQUIREMENTS

DATE RFP ISSUED	**January 22nd, 2024**
CLINICAL AREA	**Oncology – metastatic breast cancer**
OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS RFP	• 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 persons with mBC 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). • All projects selected for award will be asked to deliver a "summary of findings, outcomes, and lessons learned" presentation to the Rethink/Pfizer review panel within 6-12 months following the conclusion of the project period. • It is not 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 persons with mBC**
DISEASE BURDEN OVERVIEW	Last estimates from the Canadian Cancer Society[1], projected that 29,700 Canadian, including women and men, would be newly diagnosed with breast cancer and that close to 5,500 Canadians would die from breast cancer in 2023; representing 13% of all cancer deaths in women. There are currently insufficient data collected on the incidence and prevalence of mBC in Canada. However, by extrapolation of data sources from other countries like the US[2], it is estimated that 5-10% of new breast cancers are metastatic at diagnosis and this rate is higher in young women. As well, 20-30% of those diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer will go on to develop metastatic breast cancer in their lifetime. Despite significant advances in treatment in recent years, mBC has a significant impact on functioning, quality of life, work productivity and remains an incurable disease associated with a shortened overall survival. References: 1. Canadian Cancer Statistics 2023 - 2023pdfen.pdf (cancer.ca) 2. Wang et al. - The Clinicopathological features and survival outcomes of patients with different metastatic sites in stage IV breast cancer - *BMC Cancer* (2019) 19:1091

EXPECTED APPROXIMATE MONETARY RANGE OF GRANT APPLICATIONS	• Individual projects requesting up to a total amount of **$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 awarded by Pfizer and Rethink 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 22nd, 2024** • Full proposal due date: **March 21st, 2024** Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Time (New York, GMT -5) • Review of Full Proposals by Review Panel: **April/May 2024** • Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date**: by May 31st, 2024** • Grants will be distributed following a fully executed agreement • Anticipated approximate Project Start and End Dates: **September 2024 to September 2026 (2-year project maximum length)**

HOW TO SUBMIT	• Please go to **www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/QI** and sign in. First-time users should click "Create your password". *[Note: there are individual portals for each grant application type. Please be sure to use the URL above.]*
	• 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: **2024 ONC CAN Rethink Metastatic Breast Cancer QI**
	  • Select the following Primary Area of Interest: **Oncology - Breast- QI**
	• 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.

QUESTIONS	If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to the Grant Officer, **jacqueline.waldrop@pfizer.com**), with the subject line "**2024 ONC CAN Rethink Metastatic Breast Cancer QI and 22 January 2024**."
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. • 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. • 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

REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS	• 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 (persons with mBC and medical experts) and Pfizer medical affairs personnel.
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 during the review period.

Appendix A
Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal

Applications will be accepted via the online portal listed in the How to Submit section. 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	• 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	• 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. • Detail the methods through which persons with mBC will be engaged with the project. • 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.

Appendix A
Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal (cont'd)

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.

BUDGET DETAILS	• The budget amount requested must be in Canadian dollars (CAD).
	• While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind:
	  ◦ General organizational running costs such as legal fees, insurances, heating and lighting, etc should be included in an Institutional Overhead (if required). These costs are not specific to a grant request and therefore, should not appear as line items in budgets. However, costs that are specific to the study (e.g., some countries require insurance to be taken out on a per-study basis for clinical research) would be acceptable to be included as line items.
	  ◦ 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.
	  ◦ It should be noted that grants awarded through GMG cannot be used to purchase therapeutic agents (prescription or non-prescription).
	• Pfizer maintains a company-wide, maximum allowed overhead rate of 28% for independent studies and projects. Please click here for details.

*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.