

Pfizer Quality Improvement - Request for Proposals (RFP)

Innovative Digital Health Projects to increase the Quality of Life (QoL) of Multiple Myeloma (MM) patients

Competitive Grant Program – using Expert Review Panel (ERP)



Overview

The intent of this RFP is to support innovative proposals in the field of digital health and healthcare, including artificial intelligence, to enhance the management of patients living with MM in order to improve their QoL.



Geographic Scope

Italy



Project Types and Area of Interest

Potential grantseekers are encouraged to identify and address the educational needs, barriers, and gaps for optimizing MM patient management, incorporating innovative approaches into future hematology practice.



Key Milestones

- Application submission deadline: **February 17, 2025**
- Anticipated decision notification date: **April 14, 2025**
- Anticipated project start date: **From April 2025 onwards**



Funding Range and Project Length

Funding support is available up to 70,000 Euros for projects that will be completed within 24 months.

However, for large-scale and/or particularly innovative digital projects, the ERP may consider requests for higher budget amounts but the rationale and details of this should be clearly outlined in the proposal.

I. Eligibility

Geographic Scope:

- Italy

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- Only organizations are eligible to receive grants, not individuals or medical practice groups.
- The following may apply: public healthcare bodies (hospitals, Aziende Sanitarie Locali [ASLs], universities, Istituti di Ricovero e Cura a Carattere Scientifico [IRCCS] or accredited private hospitals that are involved in the care of multiple myeloma patients.
- Collaborations within institutions (e.g., between departments and/or inter-professional), as well as between different institutions / organizations 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 of the requesting organization.

Requesting organizations must be legally able to receive award funding directly from Pfizer International LLC. 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 International LLC may be subject to rescission.

II. Requirements

Date RFP Issued

- November 4, 2024

Clinical Area

- Oncology – Hematology – Multiple Myeloma

Specific Area of Interest for this RFP:

- It is our intent to support projects that focus on improvement of quality of life of MM patients through innovative digital solutions including artificial intelligence.

This might include a critical look at current practice patterns and at the development of new algorithms and work processes.

There will be different types of digital projects that will be considered:

1. Digital projects aimed at improving patient care (for example patient management and telehealth programs.)
2. Digital projects aimed at healthcare professional (HCP) decision making support (for example diagnosis and patient management)
3. Projects, including artificial intelligence application, to enable healthcare systems being smarter, faster, and more efficient in providing care to patients.

Further information:

- Existing digital projects that are looking to expand or scale-up into substantial new phases or stages of the project can be considered.
- 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 proposal 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.

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

- Oncologists and other healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients with Multiple Myeloma

Disease Burden Overview

- MM is a hematological B-cell malignancy characterized by dysregulated proliferation of bone marrow (BM) plasma cells. Globally, there are approximately 160,000 new cases and 106,000 deaths per year attributed to MM (Bray et al, 2018).
- In Italy MM represents 1.6 percent of all cancers diagnosed in men and 1.5 percent of those diagnosed in women. It is a more common disease among men than among women: in Italy on average 11.1 new cases per 100,000 men and 7.7 new cases per 100,000 women are diagnosed each year (Fondazione AIRC per la Ricerca sul Cancro).
- The 2020 Italian epidemiological data show 5.759 new diagnosis of MM [[2020 Numeri Cancro-operatori-web.pdf \(aiom.it\)](#)].
- Despite recent advances in treatment, MM remains an incurable disease and almost all patients, even those who initially respond to treatment, are expected to relapse. Even for patients who receive Autologous Stem-Cell Transplantation (ASCT), the median time to relapse is only 17.2 months (Jimenez-Zepeda et al, 2015). Similarly, for patients who are treated with novel PI-based or IMiD-based combination regimens as frontline treatment, the median time to relapse is 16.4 months (Lopez et al, 2015).

Moreover, MM patients typically cycle through many lines of treatment, having relapsed or become refractory to various therapeutic approaches.

Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:

- Individual projects requesting up to EUR 70,000 will be considered. The estimated total available budget related to this RFP is EUR 200,000.
- The amount of the grant Pfizer will be prepared to fund for any project will depend upon the expert review panel's evaluation of the proposal and costs involved, and will be stated clearly in the approval notification.

Key Dates:

- RFP Release Date: **November 4, 2024**
- Full Proposal Due Date: **February 17, 2025**
 - Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York, GMT -5).
- Review of Full Proposals by ERP: **March 24, 2025**
- Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: **April 4, 2025**
- Grants will be distributed following a fully executed agreement and submission of Final Protocol, documentation of IRB/IEC approval, regulatory approval (if applicable), exemption or waiver.

How to Submit:

Note: Please read this section carefully since applications submitted not following these instructions will not be accepted and will be cancelled.

- 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.]*
- Click the "Start a New Quality Improvement Application" button.
- In the application:
 - For the question "Competitive Grant?" select Yes
- Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: **2024 ONC IT: Innovative Digital Health Projects to increase the QoL of Multiple Myeloma patients**
 - Select the following Primary Area of Interest: **Oncology – Hematology – Multiple Myeloma**
- 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.

Questions:

- If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to the Grant Officer, Nicola Fenderico (nicola.fenderico@pfizer.com), with the subject line "**2024 ONC IT: Innovative Digital Health Projects.**"

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.
- Payment will only be made to requesting Institution.

Review and Approval Process

- A specific grant program RFP uses an expert review panel (ERP) to make final grant decisions.
- 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.

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.

References

- Bray F, Ferlay J, Soerjomataram I, et al. Global cancer statistics 2018: GLOBOCAN estimates of incidence and mortality worldwide for 36 cancers in 185 countries. *CA Cancer J Clin.* 2018;68(6):394-424.
- Fondazione AIRC per la Ricerca sul Cancro
- 2020_Numeri_Cancro-operatori_web.pdf (aiom.it)
- Jimenez-Zepeda VH, Reece DE, Trudel S, et al. Early relapse after single auto-SCT for multiple myeloma is a major predictor of survival in the era of novel agents. *Bone Marrow Transplant.* 2015;50(2):204-8.
- Lopez A, Mateos MV, Oriol A, et al. Patterns of relapse and outcome of elderly multiple myeloma patients treated as front-line therapy with novel agent combinations. *Leuk Res Rep.* 2015;4(2):64-9.

About Pfizer Global Medical Grants

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 expert 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.

Appendix

Specific RFP Submission Requirements

Applications will be accepted via the online portal listed in the [How to Submit](#) section. Project Proposals/Protocols should be single-spaced using Calibri 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Note there is a 15-page limit exclusive of references. When uploading your Full Proposal please ensure it addresses the following sections:

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 and does not violate the laws in force, including data privacy laws, and/or the rights of third parties.
- 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 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 Detail

- The budget amount requested must be in EUR.
- While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind:
 - 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.
 - The inclusion of these costs cannot cause the amount requested to exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP.
 - It should be noted that grants awarded through GMG cannot be used to purchase Pfizer therapeutic agents (prescription or non-prescription).
- Pfizer maintains a company-wide, maximum allowed overhead rate of 28% for independent projects. Please [click here](#) for details.