

# Pfizer Quality Improvement Request for Proposals

## *Optimizing maternal immunization practice in Saudi Arabia*

Competitive Grant Program – using Expert Review Panel



### Overview

This competitive program seeks to support Quality Improvement (QI) initiatives that focus on optimizing the quality of care of maternal immunization practice and the access to vaccination during pregnancy in Saudi Arabia



### Geographic Scope/Location of Project

Saudi Arabia



### Project Types and Area of Interest

Potential applicants are encouraged to utilize QI programs to address the different barriers and gaps for maternal immunization practice. This may include:

- Optimizing and streamlining information to health care community and pregnant women on maternal immunization role to prevent respiratory infections in newborns.
- Novel clinical pathways and multidisciplinary approaches to optimize immunization practices during pregnancy.
- Equitable access to maternal immunization services.
- Integrating Digital health solutions to improve immunization coverage and monitoring in pregnant women.
- Addressing vaccine hesitancy in pregnant women.



### Key Milestones

- Application submission deadline: **8 June 2025**
- Anticipated decision notification date: **August 2025**
- Anticipated project start date: **October 2025**



### Funding Range and Project Length

- Individual projects requesting up to \$75,000 will be considered.
- The estimated total available budget related to this RFP is \$300,000
- Project duration: up to 18 months

## I. Eligibility

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### Geographic Scope/Location of Project:

- Saudi Arabia

### Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- The following may apply: medical, dental, nursing, allied health, and/or pharmacy professional schools; healthcare institutions (both large and small); professional organizations; 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).
- 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.
- Requesting organization 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

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### Date RFP Issued

- 9 April 2025

### Clinical Area

- Vaccines – Maternal Immunization

### Specific Area of Interest for this RFP:

- It is our intent to support projects that focus on:
  - Optimizing and streamlining information to health care community and pregnant women on maternal immunization role to prevent respiratory infections in newborns.
  - Novel clinical pathways and multidisciplinary approaches to optimize immunization practices during pregnancy.
  - Equitable access to maternal immunization services.
  - Integrating Digital health solutions to improve immunization coverage and monitoring in pregnant women.
  - Addressing vaccine hesitancy in pregnant women.

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

## Disease Burden Overview

- The disease burden of RSV, Pertussis, influenza, and COVID-19 in newborn infants in Saudi Arabia is significant and varies for each disease:

### Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV):

- RSV represents a considerable burden on the healthcare system in Saudi Arabia. It leads to a high number of hospitalizations, including pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) admissions and mechanical ventilation (MV) episodes. Annually, RSV results in approximately 17,179–19,607 hospitalizations, 57,654–191,115 emergency room visits, and 219,053–219,970 primary care visits among infants. <sup>(1)</sup>

### Neonatal Tetanus:

- Neonatal tetanus (NT) is a potentially life-threatening disease. It leads to significant mortality among affected patients: up to 80% of affected babies die, particularly in areas where pregnant women have poor access to the health care system. Since 2009, both the total number of tetanus and NT cases in Saudi Arabia have been regularly reported to the WHO, and NT patients have accounted for 40–66% of the total <sup>(2)</sup>

### Influenza:

- In Saudi Arabia, influenza-associated severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) hospitalization rates are high, with the highest burden observed in children aged 0–4 months. The average annual influenza-associated SARI hospitalization rate is 48 per 100,000 population. <sup>(3)</sup>

### COVID-19:

- COVID-19 has also impacted newborns and infants in Saudi Arabia. Many infants with COVID-19 symptoms required hospital admission, and a significant proportion had a history of contact with COVID-19-positive cases. <sup>(4)</sup>

## Recommendations and Target Metrics

- As per the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), pregnant women should be vaccinated with inactivated influenza vaccine during pregnancy. <sup>(5,6)</sup> The Tdap vaccine is recommended during each pregnancy, preferably between 27 and 36 weeks of gestation. <sup>(5,6)</sup> COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for pregnant women, and (RSVpreF vaccine only) is recommended for vaccination against RSV during gestational weeks 32-36. <sup>(5)</sup>

## Gaps Between Actual and Target, Possible Reasons for Gaps

- There is a significant gap in the maternal immunization practices across the kingdom, evidence estimates the maternal acceptance for vaccines to be ranging from 3.8% to 14% at its best due to several factors including but not limited to lack of Awareness, accessibility Issues, cultural and social factors and logistical challenges. <sup>(7,8)</sup>

## Target Audience

- Medical, nursing, and allied health professionals (including midwives) from healthcare institutions (large and small), professional associations and medical societies, and other entities with a mission related to healthcare professional education and/or healthcare improvement.

## Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:

- Individual projects requesting up to \$75,000 will be considered. The estimated total available budget related to this RFP is \$300,000
- Award amounts include direct costs, institutional overhead costs (capped at 28% per Pfizer policy), and indirect costs.
- 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 grant agreement.

## Key Dates:

- RFP Release Date: **9 April 2025**
- Full Proposal Due Date: **8 June 2025**
  - Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York, GMT -5).
- Review of Full Proposals by ERP: **June-July 2025**
- Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: **August 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](http://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: 2025 VAC Saudi Arabia Maternal Immunization QI
  - Select the following Primary Area of Interest: VAV - RSV - Maternal Immunization - 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.

## Questions:

- If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to the Grant Officer, Rehab Elsaie (rehab.z.elsaie@pfizer.com), with the subject line "Optimizing maternal immunization practice in Saudi Arabia April 2025".

## 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

- 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.

### About Pfizer Global Medical Grants & Partnerships

Pfizer Global Medical Grants & Partnerships (GMGP) 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 GMGP 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.

### References:

1. Alharbi A, Yousef A, Zubani A, Alzahrani M, Al-Hindi M, Alharbi S, et al. Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Burden in Infants in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Impact of All-Infant RSV Protection: A Modeling Study. *Advances in Therapy* [Internet]. 2024 Feb 15 [cited 2024 Mar 28]; Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10960893/>
2. Epidemiological and clinical aspects of neonatal tetanus from a tertiary care hospital - PMC
3. Shati A, Ali A, Al-Hakami A, Asseri A, Al-Qahatani S, Ayed A, et al. Pediatric viral respiratory infections in Saudi Arabia: Narrative and descriptive revisits for the etiology, epidemiology and clinical phenotypes with diagnostic challenges highlights ABSTRACT KEY WORDS: children, Middle East, respiratory infections, Saudi Arabia, viruses. *Kuwait Medical Journal* [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2025 Mar 24];52(2):118–28. Available from: [https://applications.emro.who.int/imemrf/Kuwait\\_Med\\_J/Kuwait-Med-J-2020-52-2-118-128.pdf](https://applications.emro.who.int/imemrf/Kuwait_Med_J/Kuwait-Med-J-2020-52-2-118-128.pdf)
4. Albuali WH, Alghamdi A, Aldossary SJ, Alharbi S, Majed A, Alenizi A, et al. Clinical profile, risk factors and outcomes of pediatric COVID-19: a retrospective cohort multicentre study in Saudi Arabia. *BMJ Open*. 2022 Mar 1;12(3):e053722–2.
5. Guidelines for Vaccinating Pregnant Women | Pregnancy & Vaccines | CDC
6. WHO-HIS-2014.07-eng.pdf
7. Maternal Health & Child Immunization WORLD HEALTH SURVEY SAUDI ARABIA (KSAWHS) [Internet]. 2021 [cited 2025 Mar 24]. Available from: <https://www.moh.gov.sa/en/Ministry/Statistics/Indicator/Documents/Maternal-Health-Child-Immunization.pdf>
8. الصحة فريق بوابة وزارة. Ministry Of Health Saudi Arabia [Internet]. Ministry Of Health Saudi Arabia. Available from: <https://www.moh.gov.sa/en/Ministry/Statistics/Indicator/Pages/Indicator-1440.aspx>

## Appendix

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### 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.
- 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.

## Budget Detail

- The budget amount requested must be in U.S. dollars (USD).
- While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind:
  - General organizational running costs such as legal fees, insurance, 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.
    - The inclusion of overhead costs cannot cause the amount requested to exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP.
  - 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 GMGP 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 studies and projects. Please [click here](#) for details.