Quality Improvement Grant Request for Proposals

The Enhancement of Management of breast cancer in French speaking Sub-Saharan African Countries

Overview

Pfizer and the L'Association Marocaine de Recherche et de Formation en Oncologie Médicale (AMFROM) are collaborating to offer a new grant opportunity seeking proposals for quality improvement initiatives to improve the quality of care and to help build capacity to address the needs of breast cancer (BC) patients in French speaking Sub-Saharan Africa.

Grants will be awarded in support of organizations/institutions working with the goal of optimizing the care of breast cancer patients to make a measurable and sustainable positive health impact.

This Pfizer competitive grant program involves a publicly posted general Request for Proposal (RFP) that provides detail regarding a general area of interest, sets timelines for review and approval. AMFROM will select the Expert Review Panel (ERP)] to make final grant decisions, create a community of practice for the selected Grantees and share existing knowledge and tools. Organizations are invited to submit an application addressing the knowledge gaps 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.

About AMFROM

AMFROM (Moroccan Association for Training and Research in Medical Oncology) is the leading scientific society that brings together all Moroccan oncologists. AMFROM goal is to enhance quality of cancer care at every stage, from diagnosis to palliative care. AMFROM is committed to educating healthcare professionals, on best practices and the latest developments in oncology. Furthermore, advocate for equitable access to high-quality cancer treatment for all patients.

About Pfizer

Pfizer 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.

Geographic Scope/Location of Project

Mali, Senegal, DRC, Togo, Benin

Key Milestones

Funding Range and Project Length

Individual projects requesting up to $50K will be considered.

Maximum project length is 2 years.

I. Eligibility

Geographic Scope/Location of Project

- Mali, Senegal, DRC, Togo, Benin

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 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.

II. Requirements

Primary Area of Interest

Oncology – Breast Cancer

Specific Area of Interest for this RFP

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

- It is our intent to support projects that focus on:
- Developing and implementing culturally appropriate provider and patient education, including addressing stigmas associated with breast cancer.
- Optimization of patient management and referral pathways to promote initiation, adherence, and completion of breast cancer care.
- Utilization of technology to improve access to care and communication with providers, including telehealth and mobile applications.
- Developing and/or disseminating practical screening programs tailored for rural and remote settings.
- Improving access to, and utilization of supportive care, and palliative care.
- Developing and training the non-oncology workforce (e.g. general practitioners, community health workers, etc.) to address the needs of breast cancer patients.
- Approaches to establish and sustain multi-disciplinary teams to support breast cancer patients
- Developing local expertise in breast cancer management to enhance long-term capacity and self-sufficiency.
- Strengthening post-treatment follow-up and survivorship programs to improve long-term patient outcomes.

Disease Burden Overview

- In French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women with more than 60,000 newly diagnosed women by 2022 (1).
- In this region, the five-year survival rate is slightly below 50% (1).
- The annual number of women diagnosed with breast cancer in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to almost double by 2040 due to demographic ageing and growth (1).
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Recommendations and Target Metrics

- Target metrics include recommendations from the assessment of breast cancer control capacities in the WHO African Region towards improving breast cancer health care infrastructure, workforce training, and access to essential health services. [2]

Barriers [3,4,5]

- Limited disease awareness and delay in seeking care where 50% to 90% of women are diagnosed with locally advanced or metastatic breast cancer
- Few saturated facilities for cancer care and long waiting times for access to chemotherapy and radiation therapy (if available)
- Referral difficulties and geographical distance to cancer care service.
- misconceptions and maladaptive beliefs about breast cancer.

Target Audience

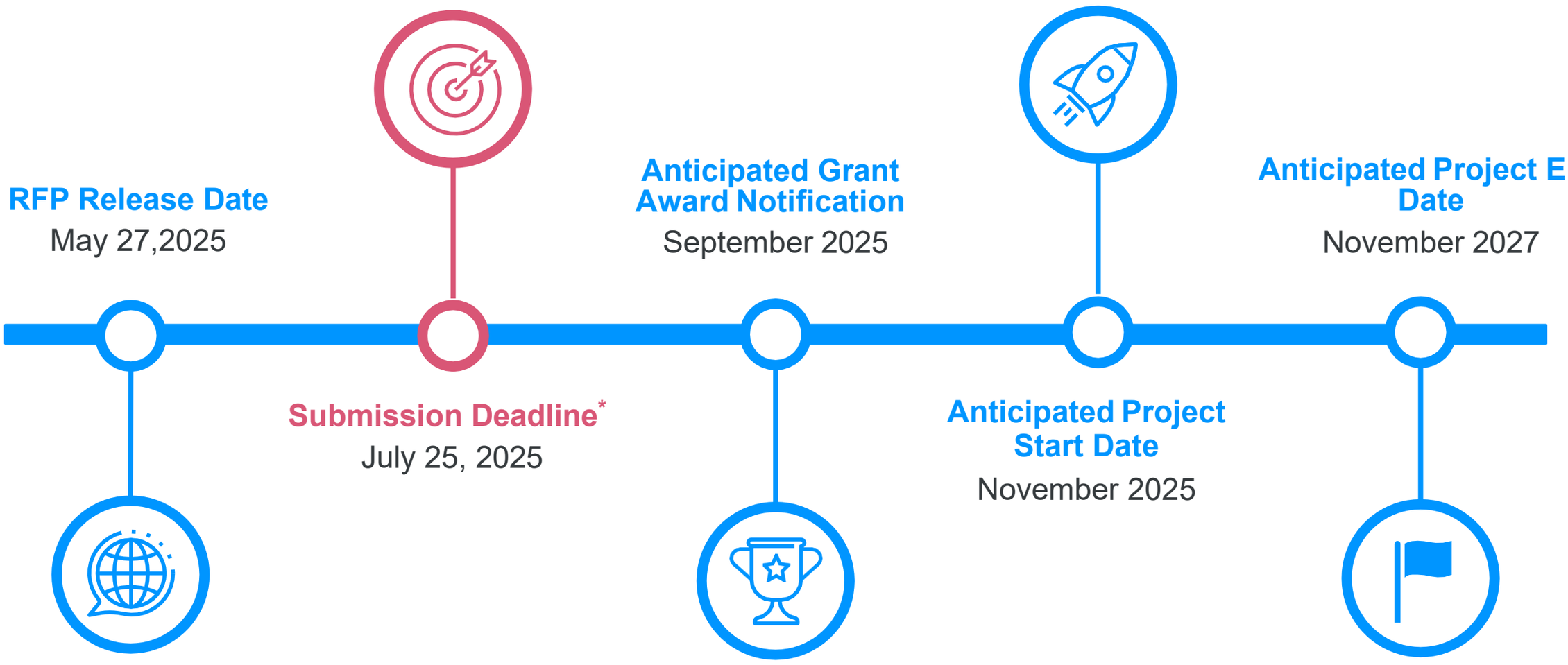
- Healthcare professionals working on the diagnosis and management of breast cancer (e.g., Oncologists, specialty nurses, pathologists, radiologists, patient educators, etc.)

Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:

- **Individual projects** requesting up to **$50K** will be considered. The estimated total available budget related to this RFP is $150K.
- 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.

IMPORTANT: 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.

Timeline



IMPORTANT: Be advised applications submitted after the due date will not be reviewed.

* Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York, GMT -5).

III. Submissions

How to Submit

IMPORTANT: 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.
    - Note: there are individual portals for each grant application type. Please be sure to use the URL above.
    - First-time users should click “Create your password”.
- Click the button **"Start a New Quality Improvement Application"**
- Requirements for submission:
    - **Complete all required sections of the online application** and **upload your project proposal** (see Appendix) in the Full Proposal Submission field.
- In the application:
    - For the question “**Competitive Grant?**” select “**Yes**”
    - Select the following **Primary Area of Interest**: **Oncology - Breast - QI**
    - Select the following **Competitive Grant Program Name**: 2025 ONC SSA AMFROM Breast Cancer QI

Questions

- If you encounter any technical difficulties with the website, please click here or the “Technical Questions” link at the bottom of the page in cybergrants.
- Please click here to view “Frequently Asked Questions” regarding the Competitive Grant Program.
- 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 “The Enhancement of Management of breast cancer in French speaking Sub-Saharan African Countries 2025.”

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.

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.

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.

About Pfizer Quality Improvement Projects

Quality improvement (QI) projects are systematic, data-guided, sustainable activities designed to bring about immediate, positive changes in the delivery of healthcare in particular setting [6,7]. Quality improvement seeks to standardize structure and processes to reduce variation, achieve predictable results, and improve outcomes for patients, healthcare systems, and organizations. Structure includes things like technology, culture, leadership, and physical capital. Process includes knowledge capital (e.g., standard operating procedures) or human capital (e.g., education and training) [8].

QI projects systematically apply what is already known into the local practice, intended to quickly improve patient care within a specific setting. The goal of QI projects is to close a gap in performance at a specific health care system. The "performance" is a standard in health care that is not efficiently/appropriately/consistently being done [9]. For these reasons, QI focuses on translating existing knowledge into programs or practices to immediately improve the quality of services to individuals and populations within a local institution or setting [10]. The risk of participation in QI is the same as the risk of receiving standard clinical care [11] since the standard of care remains the same for all patients.

In contrast, research projects use a systematic approach to discover something that is unknown. Research projects add new knowledge to what was previously unknown in literature through testing of a hypothesis or a scientific question [9]. Research aims to generate knowledge with broad applications, often through controlled studies. The subjects may or may not benefit directly from the knowledge gained. Research studies aim to evaluate an innovation, study something new, or analyze a process not yet rigorously studied [11].

References

1. Sung H, Ferlay J, Siegel RL, Laversanne M, Soerjomataram I, Jemal A, Bray F. Global cancer statistics 2020: GLOBOCAN estimates of incidence and mortality worldwide for 36 cancers in 185 countries. CA Cancer J Clin. 2021 Feb 4. doi: 10.3322/caac.21660. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 33538338
2. Assessment of breast cancer control capacities in the WHO African Region in 2022_Report_ENG
3. Breast Cancer Diagnostics, Therapy, and Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Population-Based Registry Study in: Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network Volume 19 Issue 13 (2021)
4. Âge du diagnostic des cancers du sein en République du Bénin (Afrique de l'Ouest) : pouvons-nous encore appliquer les standards occidentaux en matière de dépistage ? - ScienceDirect
5. Barriers to timely diagnosis and management of breast cancer in Africa: Implications for improved outcomes - ScienceDirect
6. Baily MA, et al., Hastings Cent Rep, 2006.
7. Lynn J, et al., Ann Intern Med, 2007.
8. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Page Last Modified: 09/10/2024.
9. Jackson C, Research Quality Manager, Office of Research and Scholarship University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Nursing.
10. Columbia University Institutional Review Board Guidance for the Classification of Quality Improvement Activities Versus Research with human Subjects, 2023.
11. Newhouse et al., J Nurs Adm, 2006.ibliography of relevant references.

Appendix

IMPORTANT: 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 [adjust as necessary] 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 these 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 Pfizer 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.