Pfizer Research Grant Request for Proposals

Competitive Grant Program – Pfizer Internal Review Process

Pediatric Pneumococcal Disease and Serotype Distribution: Surveillance Studies in Saudi Arabia

Overview

Two decades since the introduction of the first pneumococcal conjugate vaccine in children, there are still many countries including Saudi Arabia with incomplete documentation of the burden of pneumococcal disease serotype epidemiology. This significant gap hinders the ability to make informed evaluations of disease burden and evolving epidemiology.

Geographic Scope

Saudi Arabia

Project Types and Area of Interest

Potential applicants are encouraged to address pneumococcal disease epidemiology in the pediatric population utilizing surveillance methods (prospective or bidirectional cohort). This may include:

- Surveillance studies addressing invasive and non-invasive pneumococcal disease serotype distribution in pediatric population less than 5 years of age.Sample sources should be obtained between 2023 till end of 2029 and include, but are not limited to, sterile sites such as blood, cerebrospinal fluid, and pleural fluid in children with suspected invasive pneumococcal disease as well as middle ear specimens from ear tube placement or eardrum rupture, used to assess circulating serotypes.
- Genetic evolution of pneumococci following immunization programs with PCV.
- Antibiotic sensitivity information of S. pneumoniae in children less than 5 years of age.

Key Milestones

Submission Deadline	Anticipated Grant Award Notification	Anticipated Project Start Date/Duration
1 JUN 2026	SEP 2026	NOV 2026

Funding Range and Project Length

Individual projects requesting up to 400,000 USD will be considered. Projects costing higher than this may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The maximum project length is 3 years.

I. Eligibility

Geographic Scope:

- Saudi Arabia

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- The institution and Principal Investigator (PI) must be based in Saudi Arabia as noted above.
- Only organizations are eligible to receive grants. Multicenter collaboration is encouraged.
- Individuals or medical practice groups (i.e., an independent group of physicians not affiliated with a hospital, academic institution, or professional society) are not eligible to receive grants.
- If the project involves multiple departments within an institution and/or between different institutions / organizations / associations, all institutions must have a relevant role and the requesting organization must have a key role in the project.
- The 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.
- The applicant must be the PI or an authorized designee of such individual (e.g., PI's research coordinator).
- The 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

Primary Area of Interest:

- Vaccines

General Area of Interest for this RFP:

- Potential applicants are encouraged to address pneumococcal disease epidemiology in the pediatric population utilizing surveillance methods (prospective or bidirectional cohort). These studies should focus on integration of advanced diagnostic techniques and understanding local pneumococcal serotype distribution in disease. This may include:
  - Surveillance studies addressing invasive and non-invasive pneumococcal disease and serotype distribution in the pediatric population less than 5 years.

    Sample sources should be obtained between 2023 till end of 2029 and include, but are not limited to, sterile sites such as blood, cerebrospinal fluid, and pleural fluid in children with suspected invasive pneumococcal disease. As well as middle ear specimens from ear tube placement or eardrum rupture, used to assess circulating serotypes.
  - Genetic evolution of pneumococci following immunization programs with PCV.
  - Antibiotic sensitivity information of S. pneumoniae in children less than 5 years of age.
  - Projects submitted should be based on (1) Retrospective serotyping data analysis available from records and/or (2) data that will be obtained by serotyping of laboratory samples currently under cold storage in addition to (3) proposals for prospective surveillance of IPD, non-IPD with serotyping.
- The serotyping data available from records can include:
  - National- or subnational-level data (including local language data).
  - Publicly available surveillance reports at the national- or subnational- level, which includes hospitals, public health organizations, or academic settings (such as universities or educational institutions).

- With respect to serotyping of laboratory samples currently under cold storage.
  - Serotyping methods could be performed using conventional (Quellung) or molecular (PCR or whole genome sequencing) methods.
  - The proposal should include costs for serotyping (including reagents) and/or costs of contracting with a third-party laboratory with corresponding transportation of samples if any.
- The submission should include a brief description of the intended statistical analysis of serotyped isolates based on, for example, stratification by age, gender, vaccination history, clinical source of the specimen, clinical presentation or patient diagnosis, or antibiotic resistance.
- Priority will be given to studies with definitive plans for publishing the results in public forums (i.e, presentations at conferences / congresses, abstracts / posters, publications in local or international journals).

Background

- Despite the global use of pneumococcal conjugate vaccines (PCVs), gaps persist in country specific understanding of pneumococcal disease burden and serotype distribution in the post vaccination era. Global and regional evidence shows ongoing circulation of invasive and non invasive serotypes with geographic variability, while data from the Eastern Mediterranean and Gulf regions indicate continued public health impact but limited age specific surveillance, particularly among children under five years. Findings from other regions are not directly generalizable to Saudi Arabia due to differences in population, healthcare systems, and immunization programs. Collectively, these observations underscore the need for robust, locally conducted studies to characterize the burden and serotype distribution of pneumococcal disease in Saudi Arabia in the post PCV era, in order to better inform future prevention strategies.

Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications

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.

- Individual projects requesting up to 400,000 USD will be considered. Projects costing higher than this may be considered on a case-by-case basis. The maximum project length is 3 years.
- Award amounts include direct costs, institutional overhead costs (capped at 28% per Pfizer policy), and indirect costs.

Key Dates:

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)

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/Research 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 "**Start A New Research Grant Application**" button.
- Requirements for submission:
  - Complete all required sections of the online application
  - **IMPORTANT: Upload proposal (see Appendix) in the Proposal/Protocol field**.
- In the application:
  - For the question "**Competitive Grant?**" select "**Yes**"
  - Select the following Primary Area of Interest: **VAV - Pneumococcal - RES**
  - Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: **2026 VAC KSA Pneumococcal Disease in Children RES**

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, Neha Singhal (GlobalMedicalGrants@pfizer.com), with the subject line "Pediatric Pneumococcal Disease and Serotype Distribution: Surveillance Studies in Saudi Arabia – 1APR2026"

Review and Approval Process

- Grant requests received in response to a general RFP are reviewed by Pfizer to make final grant decisions.

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.

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.

References

- Fletcher M, Daigle D, Siapka M et al. Serotype distribution of invasive pneumococcal disease from countries of the WHO Africa, Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, South-East Asia, and Western Pacific regions: a systematic literature review from 2010 to 2021. Front. Public Health 2024 Jul 10;12:1402795
- Man MY, Shum HP, Yu JSY, Wu A, Yan WW. Burden of pneumococcal disease: 8-year retrospective analysis from a single centre in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Med. 2020;26(5):372-81

- Ben Ayed N, Ktari S, Jdidi J et al. Nasopharyngeal Carriage of Streptococcus pneumoniae in Tunisian Healthy under-Five Children during a Three-Year Survey Period (2020 to 2022). Vaccines 2024, 12 (393):1-12
- Mokaddas E, Al Jardani AK, Saeed NK, Doiphode S, Senok A, Joury J, et al. Invasive pneumococcal disease in the Gulf region: a narrative review of incidence, burden, and vaccine strategies. Front Public Health. 2025;13:1589366.

About Pfizer Grants

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.

Pfizer's 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, and uses an internal Pfizer review process to make final grant decisions. Organizations are invited to submit an application addressing the research gaps as outlined in the specific RFP.

For all Investigator Sponsored Research (ISRs) and general research 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. Pfizer must not be involved in any aspect of study protocol or project development, nor the conduct or monitoring of the research program. An ISR grant request cannot be submitted for a study that has already commenced and was not originally supported by Pfizer.

Appendix

IMPORTANT: 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

- 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.

Assessment of Need for the Project

- This should reflect your study rationale. Provide a brief description of the medical/scientific question and the rationale of how this trial or study addresses the question.

Target Audience

- Describe the primary audience(s) targeted for this project. For Investigator Sponsored Clinical Trials, please specify the age, gender and other demographic information for trial population.
- 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 concisely the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. For a clinical interventional study, include inclusion/exclusion criteria, treatment plan and statistical plan.

Innovation

- 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.

Evaluation and Outcomes

- Specify type and frequency of safety, efficacy, and/or outcome measures. Also indicate the method(s) used to assess measures.
- Provide a publication plan describing intended submission of abstracts to (a) congress(es) or intended submission of (a) publication(s) to peer-reviewed journals.

Anticipated Project Timeline

- Provide an anticipated timeline for your project including project start/end dates.
- An ISR grant request cannot be submitted for a study that has already commenced and was not originally supported by Pfizer.

Additional Information

- If there is any additional information you feel Pfizer should be aware of concerning the importance of this project, please summarize here.
- Early-career applicants: Letter(s) of support from mentor(s) and collaborators describing how the award will advance the applicant's career.

Organization Detail

- 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.

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 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.

Required Documents

- Project Plan or Proposal
- Initial Study Protocol