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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY  
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Competitive Quality Improvement Grant Program  
**Improving Metastatic Breast Cancer (mBC) Quality  
of Care and Equity in Latin America**

Request for Proposals  
*January 17, 2023*

**Spanish and Portuguese versions of this RFP are available**

## INTRODUCTION

Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation and Pfizer Global Medical Grants are collaborating to offer a quality improvement grant funding opportunity to improve the quality of care and address inequities for metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients. This grant program will support innovative approaches to diagnose inequities and improve the quality mBC patient care in Latin America. This program was purposefully developed with the Latin America Regional Council of ASCO expressly for Latin America.

Conquer Cancer is the lead organization for the review and evaluation of applications. Grant funding will be provided directly from Pfizer. Collectively, up to **\$1 million** is available to fund **quality improvement projects** under this RFP. The grant term is for **18 months**.

Successful applicants to this RFP will be expected to share the initial results of their project with ASCO's Latin America Regional Council at a future grantee meeting to be convened by Conquer Cancer in 2024.

### About Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation

Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation, funds research for every cancer, every patient, everywhere. Since 1984, its Grants & Awards program has awarded more than \$158 million through more than 2,600 grants and awards to improve cancer care and accelerate breakthroughs in clinical and translational oncology research. Conquer Cancer's EveryGrant® program is an end-to-end, white label solution, helping organizations develop and deliver grants programs that attract the brightest researchers and make a difference for people with cancer everywhere. For more information, visit [CONQUER.ORG](https://www.conquer.org)

### About ASCO Latin America Regional Council

The Latin America Regional Council works to address the specific needs and challenges faced by oncology professionals in the region. Council members serve as voices for their respective countries, facilitate engagement in ASCO's global programs, and work with Society leadership and staff to tailor ASCO programs to best support members in the region.

### About Pfizer Global Medical Grants

The mission of Pfizer Global Medical Grants is to accelerate the translation of science into quality patient care through independent grants, partnerships, and collaborations. Pfizer Global Medical Grants 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. 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.



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## ADDRESSING GAPS IN MBC PATIENT CARE

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in Latin America. Despite significant advances in the detection, management, and treatment of breast cancer, patients in Latin America face significant challenges. These challenges include a shortage of oncologists, insufficient training of health care providers, and lack of access to the latest therapies. Moreover, there are significant disparities in access to care in Latin America, including between those utilizing public and private health care. These factors are particularly critical for stage IV, or metastatic breast cancer (mBC) patients.

The goal of this program is to improve the quality of mBC patient care by understanding and addressing gaps in the care that contribute to disparities in mBC patient outcomes in Latin America. These may include:

- Gaps in clinical practice, such as the ability or competencies of the health care professionals themselves, the abilities, or competencies of the systems in which they work to promote or allow proper management, or other factors related to the external environment or patient population.
- Gaps in patient education, including factors that contribute to delays in seeking care and impediments to shared decision making.
- Gaps in the coordination of mBC patient care across the healthcare system, including primary care and the utilization of patient navigation.
- Gaps in real world evidence needed to diagnose the contributors to disparities in care.

This RFP seeks to provide funding to projects that are aimed at addressing these and other relevant gaps, ultimately helping health care providers deliver the best treatment to each patient at the optimal time.

## SCOPE

This RFP is open to investigators from **Latin American** institutions. Collaboration between institutions across countries is encouraged to foster the interactive sharing of knowledge and expertise, and to utilize the combined strengths of the investigators and their institutions. Also, partnerships between clinically focused academic centers/departments with centers of health policy, healthcare management and health economics skills and patient advocacy groups are also encouraged. Please note: all partners must have a relevant role. Investigators can be of any health care professional background.

Proposals in the following areas of interest are strongly encouraged, but are not limited to:

- Addressing disparities between public and private health systems, with respect to the care and outcomes of mBC patients.
- Equity and access to care, including disparities arising from practice setting (i.e., academic versus community, rural versus urban) and demographics (i.e., race, age, gender, etc.).
- Access to, and utilization of, cancer supportive care. This may include palliative, psychosocial, and other forms of supportive care.
- Access to, and utilization of, appropriate mBC treatment, including standard of care, novel drugs, and clinical trials.
- Coordination of mBC patient care across multidisciplinary teams, including engagement of primary care physicians, nurses, and patient navigators.
- Addressing gaps in the education of health care professionals with respect to managing the care of mBC patients throughout the continuum of care.
- Understanding and improving patient education and attitudes regarding breast cancer care and shared decision making.

- Empower patients in care planning and shared-clinical decision making, including available patient resources, education, and support tools, as well as mechanisms for dissemination of information to patients and caregivers.
- Approaches to optimize access to clinical trials and evidence-based treatment.
- Improving use of precision medicine and/or alternative diagnostic tools (e.g., liquid biopsy, next-generation sequencing), imaging and/or genetic consulting to improve patient outcomes.
- Projects with the maximum likelihood to directly impact patient care and with a robust, sustainable plan will be given high priority.
- Projects focused in implementing interventions must provide sufficient real-world evidence (e.g., data and literature review, need assessment, etc.) as part of the project to support the approach.

## FRAMEWORK

While the ultimate goal of this program is to affect change that will impact patients, it is understood that in some cases, there is insufficient data to develop meaningful interventions. Thus, proposals may be focused on the generation of real-world evidence to better understand a specific gap impacting mBC patient care, with the interest of developing evidence-based interventions to address these gaps.

The funding is intended to be available for Quality Improvement projects to help solve issues identified above, and other gaps impacting the quality of mBC patient care. It is expected that projects will be evidence-based and follow generally accepted scientific principles. Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework in designing their projects.

Project recommended duration up to **18 months**, which should include: development, need assessment, execution (e.g., gap analysis, evidence collection, validation, implementation, etc.), evaluation of impact (e.g., outcomes, improvements, solutions, etc.) and communication/publication plan to share results.

All proposals must ensure that the project reflects the needs of patients with mBC, particularly those from underserved communities in Latin America therefore participation and input from local patient advocates is encouraged.

The Project must be **executed** in **Latin America** with a focus on Academic Cancer or Medical Centers, large and small hospitals, community hospitals, ambulatory care settings, and other healthcare facilities. Multi-disciplinary collaborations or partnerships with global healthcare organizations, local health agencies, academia, advocacy groups and medical societies aligned with the mission to improve oncology care in the development of this proposal are encouraged, as well as the design and implementation of potential solutions, although all partners must have a relevant role and should be described in the application.

Proposals can be submitted in English or/and in native language (Spanish or Portuguese).

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



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## REVIEW PROCESS

Conquer Cancer and Pfizer have agreed upon a formalized review procedure to accept applications and select the Quality Improvement projects of highest scientific merit. Pfizer and Conquer Cancer will initially review all proposals to determine if applicants meet eligibility criteria and the proposed projects are in the scope.

Conquer Cancer will convene a Scientific Review Committee (SRC) composed of **Latin America** subject matter experts who will perform an independent and confidential peer review of all in scope applications. The SRC's collectively recommendations will define which proposals are awarded funding. Funding allocations are at the discretion of the SRC and based upon their expert knowledge of relevant implementation factors.

## REQUIREMENTS

<b>Date RFP Issued:</b>	January 17, 2023
<b>Clinical Area:</b>	<b>Oncology – Metastatic Breast Cancer</b>
<b>Applicant Eligibility Criteria:</b>	<p>To be eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The institution and principal investigator (PI) must be based in Latin America.</li><li>• Eligible institutions include Academic Cancer Centers, Healthcare Delivery Networks, large and small hospitals, academic medical centers, community hospitals, ambulatory care settings, and other healthcare facilities.</li><li>• Only organizations are eligible to receive grants, not individuals or physician-owned medical group practices.</li><li>• The applicant (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, Physiotherapy, Psychology, or Social Work.</li><li>• <b>The principal investigator (PI) must be affiliated with the applicant institution.</b></li></ul>
<b>Expected Approximate Monetary Range of Grant Applications:</b>	<p>The estimated total available funding for this RFP is <b>\$1,000,000</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual projects requesting up to <b>\$150,000</b> not exceeding <b>18-months</b> will be considered.</li><li>• The maximum indirect (overhead) rate is <b>28%</b> and must be included in the total grant request amount.</li><li>• Amount requested may not exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP and the budget submitted must be within fair market value.</li><li>• No funding for capital equipment is allowed.</li></ul> <p>Travel costs directly related to conducting the project or presenting the results may be included in the budget.</p>



## REQUIREMENTS

### Estimated Key Dates:

- RFP release date: **January 17, 2023**
- Grant Application due date: **March 6, 2023**  
Please note the deadline is 23:59 Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York, GMT -5).
- Review of Full Proposals by Expert Review Panel: **April 2023**
- Anticipated Full Proposal Notification Date: **June 2023**
- Grants will be distributed following a fully executed agreement.
- Anticipated Project Start and End Dates: **July 1, 2023, to December 31, 2024.**

Investigators Meeting to take place in late 2024 to present projects outcomes and impact.

### How to Apply:

Please go to [www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/QI](http://www.cybergrants.com/pfizer/QI) and sign in. First-time users should click "REGISTER NOW". *[Note: there are individual portals for each grant application type (e.g., knowledge, LOI, research full proposal, and QI full proposal). Please be sure to use the URL above.]*

- Click the "Start A New Quality Improvement Application" button.
- For the question "Competitive Grant?" select Yes
  - Select the following Competitive Grant Program Name: **2023 ONC LATAM ASCO CCF mBC QI**
  - Select the following Primary Area of Interest: Oncology – Breast Cancer
- Requirements for submission:  
Complete all required sections of the online application (see Appendix).
- 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 through the wrong application type and/or submitted after the due date will not be reviewed by the committee.**

<b>Review Criteria:</b>	<p>Applications will be peer reviewed based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of the proposal in addressing the needs of mBC patients in the region.</li> <li>• Strength of the proposal, feasibility, and likelihood of improving the quality of mBC care in Latin America.</li> <li>• Appropriateness, feasibility, and adequacy of the proposed study design.</li> <li>• Availability of environmental and institutional resources to support the proposed project.</li> <li>• Prior experience in project execution and delivering outcomes by the requesting organization.</li> </ul>
<b>Questions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have questions regarding this RFP, please direct them in writing to Conquer Cancer Scientific Review Officer, Andrew L. Smith, PhD (<a href="mailto:Andrew.Smith@conquer.org">Andrew.Smith@conquer.org</a>) or Pfizer Grant Officer, Miguel Briceno, MD (<a href="mailto:MiguelAngel.Briceno@Pfizer.com">MiguelAngel.Briceno@Pfizer.com</a>) with the subject line: <b>2023 ONC LATAM ASCO Improving Metastatic Breast Cancer (mBC) Quality of Care in Latin America.</b></li> <li>• Please click <a href="#">here</a> to view Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Competitive Grant Program.</li> </ul>
<b>Grant Agreements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your grant is approved, your institution will be required to enter into a written grant agreement with Pfizer. Please click <a href="#">here</a> to view the core terms of the agreement.</li> <li>• Pfizer has drafted the terms of these agreements to be balanced and reasonable and to further the goals of both parties. Negotiating grant agreements requires significant resources, so please ensure that your institution (including your legal department) is able and willing to abide by these terms before proceeding with submission of your application as they will need to be accepted in their entirety.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanism by which Applicants will be Notified:</b>	<p>All applicants will be notified via email by the anticipated dates noted above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants may be asked for additional clarification, if needed, during the review period.</li> </ul>

**REFERENCE SECTION:**

1. **A review of breast cancer care and outcomes in Latin America;** Oncologist; 2013;18(3):248-56.



## Appendix A

### Quality Improvement Project Full Proposal

Applications will be accepted via the online portal. Full Proposal documents should be no longer than 10-15 pages in length (12-point font and 1-inch margins) excluding Organization Detail and References. When uploading your Full Proposal please ensure it addresses the following\*:

<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of Need for the Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This should reflect your study rationale. Provide a brief description of the medical/scientific question and the rationale of how this study addresses the question.</li> </ul>
<b>Target Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the primary audience(s) targeted for this project. For studies focused on a specific patient population, please specify the relevant age, gender and other demographic information.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Design and Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe concisely the project design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Please include any relevant inclusion/exclusion criteria, analysis plans, and statistical plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation and Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specify type and frequency of safety, efficacy, and/or outcome measures. Please describe how disparities will be defined and identified within the datasets. Also indicate the method(s) used to assess measures.</li> <li>Provide a publication plan describing intended submission of abstracts to (a) congress(es) or intended submission of (a) publication(s) to peer-reviewed journals. All publications must follow ICH guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how the interventions proposed will be sustained beyond the funding period of the grant. This should include how the program could be funded as well as how the interventions will be incorporated into future strategic plans to improve patient care.</li> </ul>

<b>Anticipated Project Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an anticipated timeline for your project including project start/end dates.</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is any additional information you feel Pfizer should be aware of concerning the importance of this project, please summarize here.</li> <li>• Early-career applicants: Letter(s) of support from mentor(s) and collaborators describing how the award will advance the applicant's career.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization Detail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Budget Detail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While estimating your budget please keep the following items in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 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.</li> <li>○ The inclusion of these costs cannot cause the amount requested to exceed the budget limit set forth in the RFP.</li> <li>○ It should be noted that grants awarded through GMG cannot be used to purchase Pfizer therapeutic agents (prescription or non-prescription).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pfizer maintains a company-wide, maximum allowed overhead rate of 28% for independent studies and projects. Please <a href="#">click here</a> for details.</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibliography of relevant references.</li> </ul>

\*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.

