



# The Union for International Cancer Control and Pfizer award new round of grants totalling US\$500,000 to organisations in 19 countries to address the needs of metastatic breast cancer patients worldwide

Friday, October 13, 2017 - 04:00am

Grants represent next phase of SPARC MBC Challenge, a first-of-its-kind initiative launched in 2015. Awardees of this second phase will benefit from mentorship and best practice sharing from previous grantees.

This Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day, the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and Pfizer Oncology are proud to announce the names of the organisations taking part in the second phase of the **Seeding Progress and Resources for the Cancer Community: Metastatic Breast Cancer Challenge (SPARC MBC Challenge)**. The 20 organisations from 19 countries that have been selected will receive grants amounting to US\$500,000 in funding provided by Pfizer to implement projects addressing the specific needs of women with metastatic breast cancer worldwide. Building on the success of the first phase of the SPARC MBC Challenge, this year's awardees will have the opportunity to benefit from mentorship and best practice sharing from the organisations awarded previously.

The call for applications generated significant interest with 83 submissions from organisations in 42 countries, an increase over the initial phase. Awardees were selected

through a competitive application process overseen by an external, multidisciplinary selection committee formed by UICC and chaired by Dr Fatima Cardoso, director of the Breast Unit of the Champalimaud Cancer Center in Lisbon, Portugal.

Each awardee will receive a grant to initiate projects to close the gap in information, support, awareness and policy between metastatic breast cancer and early disease, as well as help reduce the number of women diagnosed at the metastatic stage of breast cancer. In welcoming the expansion of this successful initiative, UICC President Professor Sanchia Aranda remarked: "There is an urgent need for greater access to comprehensive breast cancer services and support for women living with metastatic breast cancer, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where the majority of breast cancer cases are diagnosed at advanced stages of the disease. We are glad to support cancer organisations across the globe in initiating and developing projects that will have a real impact in their own settings."

The announcement to continue and further expand the initiative coincided with International Women's Day 2017. In addition to the US\$500,000 awarded to these 20 organisations, Pfizer Oncology is providing a further US\$30,000 to support the continuation of selected ongoing SPARC projects from the first round of grants issued in 2015. This brings Pfizer's total funding of the initiative to more than US\$1.3 Million.

"We're pleased to continue our partnership with UICC on this initiative that embodies our commitment to the hundreds of thousands of women worldwide who face the challenges of metastatic breast cancer every day," said Liz Barrett, global president and general manager, Pfizer Oncology. "We believe collaborations like the SPARC MBC Challenge represent an important step toward improving care for people living with metastatic breast cancer around the world, including those in low- and middle-income countries who may not have access to the care and support they need."

Awardees include advocacy groups, hospital networks, support groups and other cancer organisations. Among them is ICANSERVE Foundation in Pasig City, Philippines, whose project will serve to train patient navigators in cities that don't have any as well as strengthen their role in cities that do, and the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi, Ghana, looking at building a community-based structured patient network, navigation and breast health awareness programmes. Additional organisations to receive grants include:

• **Public Organization "Avesto" (NGO), Dushanbe, Tajikistan • University of Ibadan, Nigeria • Fundación Cáncer-Fuca, Buenos Aires, Argentina • Europa**

**Donna Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus • Canadian Breast Cancer Network, Ottawa, Canada • McGrath Foundation, St. Leonards, Australia • Caribbean Cancer Research Initiative, San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago • Cancer Patients Aid Association, Mumbai, India • Societatea Romana de Cancer (Romanian Cancer Society), Cluj Napoca, Romania • Hellenic Association of Women with Breast Cancer "Alma Zois", Athens, Greece • Clinique medical Camassistance, Yaounde, Cameroon • Run for a Cure Africa Breast Cancer Foundation, Ikoyi, Nigeria • Europa Donna - The European Breast Cancer Coalition, Milan, Italy • Public Foundation Ergene, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan • The Aga Khan University (Nairobi), Nairobi, Kenya • Fundação D. Anna de Sommer Champalimaud e Dr. Carlos Montez Champalimaud, Lisbon, Portugal • Rwanda Biomedical Center, Kigali, Rwanda • Alianza Mexicana por el Cáncer, AC, Mexico City, Mexico**

These awardees will have the opportunity to benefit from mentorship and best-practice sharing from the 2015 awardees, including organisations like Instituto Oncoguia, a non-profit that used their SPARC MBC Challenge grant to launch Network Plus Life (Rede + Vida), bringing together metastatic breast cancer patients from different regions of Brazil for training on how to provide support and information to other metastatic breast cancer patients, as well as the Butaro Cancer Center of Excellence (BCCOE) in Rwanda, which created its first support group for rural women fighting metastatic disease.

For more information on the SPARC MBC Challenge and the awardees, please visit: [uicc.org/SPARC](http://uicc.org/SPARC).

**About metastatic breast cancer** Metastatic breast cancer is the most advanced stage of breast cancer and occurs when cancer spreads beyond the breast to other parts of the body, including the bones, lungs, liver and brain.<sup>1</sup> While the majority of women are diagnosed early, in developed countries up to one-third of women diagnosed with early breast cancer will go on to develop metastatic disease<sup>2,3</sup> while 5-10% of women present with metastatic disease at initial diagnosis.<sup>4</sup> Initial diagnosis at a more advanced stage of the disease, with associated poorer prognosis, is more common in less developed countries.<sup>5,6</sup> There is currently no cure for metastatic breast cancer and fewer patient and community resources are available compared to early-stage disease. <sup>7, 8</sup>

### **About the Seeding Progress and Resources for the Cancer Community (SPARC): Metastatic Breast Cancer Challenge**

The SPARC MBC Challenge aims to address critical issues for people at risk of, or living with metastatic breast cancer. An independent, external steering committee, consisting

of leading experts in the fields of cancer care and advocacy on behalf of metastatic breast cancer patients and chaired by globally renowned oncologist and leading breast cancer advocate, Dr Fatima Cardoso, awards grants to organisations globally in support of programmes that address the following challenges in metastatic breast cancer:

- Close the gap on patient communication and navigation of care options;
- Raise awareness of the specific needs and challenges that face women with metastatic breast cancer;
- Ensure metastatic breast cancer is embedded in national breast cancer policies;
- or • Reduce the incidence of metastatic breast cancer at first diagnosis.

### **About the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**

UICC is the largest international cancer-fighting organisation, with over 1,000 member organisations across 164 countries representing the world's major cancer societies, ministries of health, research institutes, treatment centres and patient groups. The organisation is dedicated to taking the lead in convening, capacity building and advocacy initiatives that unite the cancer community to reduce the global cancer burden, promote greater equity, and integrate cancer control into the world health and development agenda. UICC and its multisectoral partners are committed to encouraging governments to look towards the implementation and scale-up of quality and sustainable programmes that address the global burden of cancer and other NCDs. UICC is also a founding member of the NCD Alliance, a global civil society network that now represents almost 2,000 organisations in 170 countries. For more information, please visit: [www.uicc.org](http://www.uicc.org)

**About Pfizer Oncology** Pfizer Oncology is committed to pursuing innovative treatments that have a meaningful impact on those living with cancer. As a leader in oncology speeding cures and accessible breakthrough medicines to patients, Pfizer Oncology is helping to redefine life with cancer. Our strong pipeline of biologics, small molecules and immunotherapies, one of the most robust in the industry, is studied with precise focus on identifying and translating the best scientific breakthroughs into clinical application for patients across a wide range of cancers. By working collaboratively with academic institutions, individual researchers, cooperative research groups, governments and licensing partners, Pfizer Oncology strives to cure or control cancer with its breakthrough medicines. Because Pfizer Oncology knows that success in oncology is not measured solely by the medicines you manufacture, but rather by the meaningful partnerships you make to have a more positive impact on people's lives.

Learn more about how Pfizer Oncology is applying innovative approaches to improve the outlook for people living with cancer at

[http://www.pfizer.com/research/therapeutic\\_areas/oncology](http://www.pfizer.com/research/therapeutic_areas/oncology).

*Pfizer Oncology's Breast Cancer Vision: Transcending Boundaries, Transforming Care*

Pfizer Oncology is deeply committed to advancing scientific innovation and transforming the current state of breast cancer care for the millions of people around the world who face its challenges every day. Through Breast Cancer Vision, Pfizer is helping to change the future of breast cancer as we innovate through scientific endeavours that aim to improve outcomes, educate to enhance knowledge of evolving patient needs, and activate the global community to develop solutions that improve patient care. For more information, visit [www.BreastCancerVision.com](http://www.BreastCancerVision.com).

1 American Cancer Society. Detailed Guide: Breast Cancer.

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/cid/documents/webcontent/003090-pdf.pdf>. Accessed July 29, 2015.

2 O'Shaughnessy J. Extending survival with chemotherapy in metastatic breast cancer. *Oncologist*. 2005;10:20-29.

3 Dowsett M, et al. Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group (EBCTCG). Aromatase inhibitors versus tamoxifen in early breast cancer: patient-level meta-analysis of the randomised trials. *Lancet*. 2015;386(10001):1341-1352.

4 Cardoso F, Costa A, Norton L, et al. 1st International consensus guidelines for advanced breast cancer (ABC 1). *Breast*. 2012;21(3):242-252.

5 CancerMPact®. Kantar Health. Available from [www.cancermpact.com](http://www.cancermpact.com). Accessed on January 12, 2015

6 Coleman MP et al. (2008). Cancer survival in five continents: a worldwide population-based study (CONCORD). *Lancet Oncol*, 9, 730-56.

7 American Cancer Society. Detailed Guide: Breast Cancer.

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/cid/documents/webcontent/003090-pdf.pdf>. Accessed July 29, 2015.

8 Mayer M, Grober S. Silent Voices: Women with Advanced (Metastatic) Breast Cancer Share Their Needs and Preferences for Information, Support, and Practical Resources. <http://www.lbbs.org/sites/default/files/LBBCsilentvoices.pdf>. Accessed September 14, 2015.

UICC Media Contact Patricia Galve +41 (0)22 809 18 16 [galve@uicc.org](mailto:galve@uicc.org) Pfizer Media Contact Sally Beatty +1 (212) 733-6566