

## 6 Time to Update—Requesting Inclusive Submission Categories for Oncology Research

### TO THE EDITOR:

International oncology societies, such as the European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) and ASCO, have committed themselves with pride to promoting equitable cancer care across the globe over the past few years. Initiatives have included adaptation of the ESMO/ASCO global curriculum with a new section on equity principles and global cancer control, studies on the accessibility and availability of antineoplastic drugs, and the development of the ESMO

Magnitude of Clinical Benefit Scale and ASCO Value Framework.<sup>1-4</sup>

However, these initiatives have not been reflected in abstract submission categories for Annual Meetings. The abstract categories for the annual ESMO congress have been largely unchanged for the past 7 years and are based predominantly on traditional site-based topics (Table 1). Our attempts to submit global health research abstracts that crossed multiple

**TABLE 1.** Abstract Submission Tracks for Key Cancer Congresses From 2015 to 2024

ESMO 2016 <sup>a</sup> -2024	ESTRO 2016 <sup>b</sup> -2024 <sup>c</sup>	ASCO 2015-2024
Common tracks		
Biomarkers—multiple categories	Biomarkers (CLIN) 2022-2024	
Developmental therapeutics		Developmental therapeutics—multiple categories
Health economics 2016-2017	Health services research/health economics (CLIN) 2016-2021; Health economics & health services research (ID) 2022-2024	
Immunotherapy of cancer 2016-2019; Investigational immunotherapy 2020-2024		Incorporated in “Developmental therapeutics—multiple categories”
Miscellaneous	Other (CLIN) 2016-2021; Other (ID) 2022-2024; Mixed sites/palliation (CLIN) 2022-2024	
Palliative care	Palliation 2016-2021; Mixed sites/palliation (CLIN) 2022-2024	Symptom science and palliative care
Prevention and screening 2016-2017 then incorporated to Public Health policy (see below)		Prevention, risk reduction, and genetics 2015-2024
Public health 2016-2017; Public health policy 2018; Public policy 2019-2022; Policy and preventive strategies 2023-2024	Incorporated in “Health economics & health services research”	Health services research 2015-2016; Quality care/Health services research 2017-2024
Site-specific (multiple categories)	Site-specific (multiple categories)	Site-specific (multiple categories)
Supportive care		Symptom science and palliative care; Patient and survivor care 2015-2018; Care delivery/models of care 2020-2024
Tumor biology and pathology	Radiobiology	Tumor biology 2015-2018
	Pediatric tumors (CLIN)	Pediatric oncology
	Communication (CLIN) 2016, 2018-2021; Education in radiation oncology (ID) 2022-2024	Medical Education and Professional Development 2018-2024
Unique tracks		
Basic science; Cancer nursing 2018-2024; New diagnostic tools 2016-2024; Psycho-oncology; SARS-CoV-2 and cancer 2020-2021; Translational research 2016-2019; Translational research (agnostic) 2020-2023	Elderly (CLIN) 2016-2021; Global health (ID) 2024	

Abbreviations: CLIN, clinical track; ESMO, European Society of Medical Oncology; ESTRO, European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology; ID, interdisciplinary track.

<sup>a</sup>2015 not included as there was a combined European Cancer Congress-ESMO Congress.

<sup>b</sup>2015 not included as abstract book not available online.

<sup>c</sup>Radiation-specific streams also offered: brachytherapy; physics; radiotherapy technologists.

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tumor types and did not fit in to the biomarker, developmental therapeutics, or other broad categories resulted in the relegation of global health and equity research to the Miscellaneous category, undervaluing this important and emerging field.<sup>5,6</sup> ASCO introduced the tracks Disparities/Health Equity and Global Health for educational sessions and case-based panels during their Annual Meeting since 2021. These tracks have, however, not been open for abstract submission (Table 1). Furthermore, although Global Health was included as a primary track in 2022 and 2023, this has been removed in 2024. The European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO), by contrast, has introduced the submission topic Global Health for 2024 (Table 1).

Researchers submitting global oncology research to ESMO journals encounter similar limitations. It is required to specify a Section/Category related to the manuscript from a prespecified list that does not contain specific terms associated with global health research. Incorporating categories such as Global Health or Health Equity would enhance the profile of global oncology research. ASCO, conversely, inaugurated a journal dedicated to this field in 2015, known initially as the *Journal of Global Oncology* and later renamed to *JCO Global Oncology*.

We urge the international oncology societies for inclusive abstract and manuscript submission and scientific symposia for Global Health and Equity/Disparity research. Only with this recognition can their key mission be fulfilled.

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## AUTHORS' DISCLOSURES OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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