

TRDRP 2026 Core Call Applicant Informational Webinar

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Webinar Overview

Programmatic Overview

- TRDRP's Mission
- Keys Dates
- Updates to 2026 Call for Applications
- Grant Types, and Scoring Criteria
- Key Guidance to Applicants

Q & A (end of this webinar)

Pre-recorded SmartSimple Application Overview:

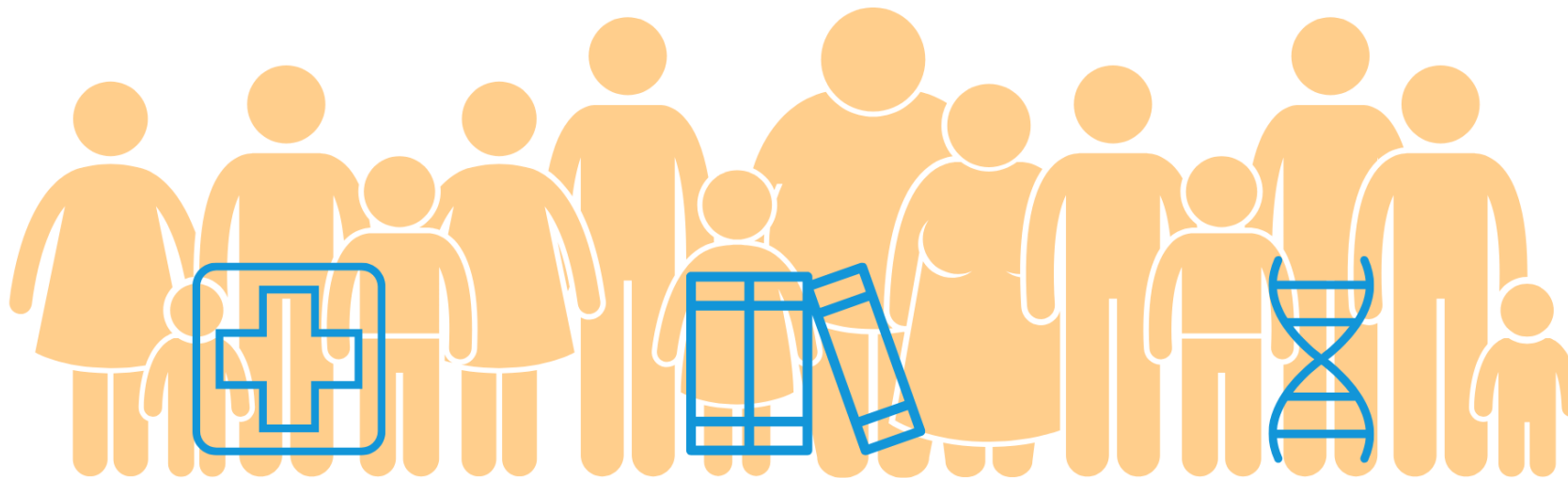
- How to Submit a Proposal in SmartSimple (LOI and Full Application)

Recordings will be available on TRDRP's website:

<https://www.trdrp.org/what-we-fund/>

Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program

A part of California's comprehensive tobacco control program



Health

Promotion/Treatment

CA Tobacco Prevention
Program (CTPP)
CA Dept of Public
Health

Prevention

Tobacco Use
Prevention Program
(TUPE)
CA Dept of Education

Research

Tobacco-Related Disease
Research Program (TRDRP)
Research Grants Program
Office (RGPO)
University of California



Funded through
tobacco product
excise taxes



Focused on research
with the highest
likelihood of
impacting current
and former
commercial tobacco
product users

Tobacco Priority Populations

- disproportionately targeted by the tobacco industry,
- use tobacco at higher-than-average rates,
- experience greater exposure to secondhand or thirdhand smoke and vape aerosol, or
- have higher rates of tobacco-related disease.



Key Dates

Call Opened	Thursday, July 3, 2025
Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission Deadline	Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON Pacific Time
Invitation to submit a Full Application Announced	Monday, September 8, 2025
Due date for all Full Applications including resubmissions	Thursday, October 30, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON Pacific Time
Applicants Notified	April 2026
Awards Start	July 1, 2026

Open Calls

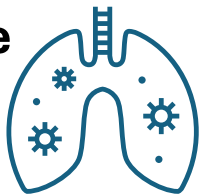
1. Core Call (investigator initiated)
2. Community-Based Participatory Research Awards (CPPRA)
3. Maternal Smoking Cessation Initiative (MSCI) Award
4. Smoke- and Vape-Free Scholars Initiative (SVFSI)

2026 Call for Applications: Key Changes

- Basic and preclinical studies of tobacco-related diseases must study **one or more of the commercial tobacco products or usage patterns** listed under Eligibility Criteria to be deemed eligible for TRDRP funding.
- Eligible studies aiming to produce results that can **immediately be used to inform California's efforts to end the tobacco/nicotine epidemic in California** will be prioritized for invitation to full application. Some eligible studies **may not be invited to Full Application** if the study goals do not directly impact California's tobacco control efforts, as outlined in the TERO C Plan and California Endgame Policy
www.trdrp.org/about/ca-endgame-resources
- Predoctoral Award and Postdoctoral Award applicants must submit an **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** as part of their application. Review the requirements and discuss with mentors in advance of the Full Application deadline.
- Applicants are required to follow all instructions and submit ALL required forms to avoid administrative rejection. In particular, the current application templates for grant documentation must be used. **Reviewers will evaluate to what extent the application is appropriately formatted, on the correct template, and free from errors.**

Scientific Eligibility Criteria ***New Criteria for 2026***

1. Basic and preclinical science studies of tobacco-related diseases must study **one or more of the following commercial tobacco products or usage patterns**.
 - a. products exempted from the California flavored tobacco ban (i.e. hookah, loose leaf tobacco and premium cigars)
 - b. non-combusted nicotine products (e.g. vapes)
 - c. oral nicotine products
 - d. heated tobacco products
 - e. addictive nicotine analogs (e.g. nicotinamide and 6-methyl nicotine)
 - f. synthetic cooling agents (e.g., WS-3 and WS-23)
 - g. inhaled tobacco/nicotine co-used with other substances of abuse, including inhaled cannabis/THC (e.g., blunts or vapes)
2. Due to the strong risk for small cell lung cancer (SCLC) among smokers and the dearth of information on methods to treat this disease, **studies of SCLC will be exempt from the above eligibility requirements**.



Letter of Intent Impact Review

- TRDRP will assess both **eligibility** and **impact** of submitted LOIs and will invite no more than **200** letters of intent to submit a full application
 - For reference, TRDRP invited more than 300 letters of intent to full application in each of the past 3 years.
- Some eligible studies may not be invited to Full Application if the study goals do not **directly impact California's tobacco control efforts**
 - See the TEROC Plan and California Endgame Policy Platform [here](#).
- Eligible studies aiming to produce results that can immediately be used to inform California's efforts to end the tobacco/nicotine epidemic in California **will be prioritized for invitation to full application.**

Core Call 2026-Current Research Priorities

- Research in support of the California Endgame Initiative
- Social and behavioral prevention and treatment
- State and local tobacco control policy research
- Tobacco related diseases
 - Cancer treatment and biology
 - Cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases
 - Oral diseases and dental health
 - Pulmonary biology and lung diseases
 - Other tobacco-related health effects
- Environmental exposure and toxicology
- Neuroscience of nicotine addiction and treatment
- Maternal and fetal impacts of smoking

TRDRP Grant Types: Independent Researchers

Grant Mechanism	Maximum Award/Year (Direct Cost)	Maximum Award Duration (Years)	Purpose of Award
Research Award	\$300,000	3	To conduct research based on preliminary data that will achieve or advance work of high impact within one or more stated research priorities
Pilot Award	\$250,000	2	To gather preliminary data or demonstrate proof-of-principle with potential for high impact within one or more stated research priorities
New Investigator Award	\$200,000	3	To support and enable new investigators to initiate an independent research program with potential for high impact within one or more stated research priorities

Scoring & Review Criteria: Research Award; Pilot Award; New Investigator Award

Standard NIH scoring system that is based on the 1-9 scale
Each application is scored on these criteria:

Criteria Set-1 (30% scoring weight)

- Responsiveness to intent of the award type
- **Responsiveness to the needs of California's Tobacco Control Community *NEW***
- Innovation

Criteria Set-2 (50% scoring weight)

- Significance
- Approach
- Near-term leveraging potential (Pilot & New Investigator Awards)

Criteria Set-3 (20% scoring weight)

- Investigators (New Investigator Awards: status & research team)
 - **application is appropriately formatted, on the correct template, and free from errors *NEW***
- Environment
- Community engagement

See Appendix E of the 2026 Call for Applications for detailed instructions to assist applicants in communicating clearly with peer reviewers

Community Engagement

- A community engagement and communications plan is expected to be integrated into all Core award mechanisms at a level appropriate to the type of research being proposed
- Scientific Meetings \neq Community Engagement
- Include physically distanced, contract-free, or virtual options
- Funds may be included in the project budget
- Review Appendix E of 2026 Core Call for examples



TRDRP Grant Types: Postdoctoral Award

Grant Mechanism	Max Stipend /Year	Institutional Allowance* /Year	Max Award Duration (Years)	Purpose of Award
Postdoctoral Award	Up to \$70,000 at least 75% effort	\$38,000	3	Support the mentored training of postdoctoral investigators with clear and direct commitment to and potential for contributing to the advancement of one or more stated research priorities.

**to help defray the cost of expenses such as health insurance, medical liability or other special insurance, research supplies, equipment, courses and educational materials, project related travel, and travel to scientific meetings*

Scoring & Review Criteria: Postdoctoral Award

- Standard NIH scoring system that is based on the 1-9 scale
- Each application is scored on these criteria:

Criteria Set-1 (40% scoring weight)

- **Responsiveness to the needs of California's Tobacco Control Community**
- Approach
- Community Engagement Plan

Criteria Set-2 (40% scoring weight)

- Training Plan and **Individual Development Plan *NEW***
- Qualifications of the applicant

Criteria Set-3 (20% scoring weight)

- Mentor's qualifications and commitment
 - **application is appropriately formatted, on the correct template, and free from errors *NEW***
- Environment

See Appendix E of the 2026 Call for Applications for detailed instructions to assist applicants in communicating clearly with peer reviewers

TRDRP Grant Types: Predoctoral Award

Grant Mechanism	Max Stipend /Year	Institutional Allowance* /Year	Max Award Duration (Years)	Purpose of Award
Predoctoral Award	Up to \$60,000 at least 75% effort	\$4,400	3	Support the mentored training of predoctoral students with clear and direct commitment to and potential for contributing to the advancement of one or more stated research priorities.

**to help defray the cost of expenses such as health insurance, medical liability or other special insurance, research supplies, equipment, courses and educational materials, project related travel, and travel to scientific meetings*

Note: Predoctoral applicants may budget for full tuition and fee costs up to \$50,000 per year, consistent with relevant collective bargaining agreements. Documentation should be included in the budget justification.

Scoring & Review Criteria: Predoctoral Award

- Standard NIH scoring system that is based on the 1-9 scale
- Each application is scored on these criteria:

Criteria Set-1 (50% scoring weight)

- Training plan and **Individual Development Plan *NEW***
- Qualifications of the applicant

Criteria Set-2 (30% scoring weight)

- Mentor's qualifications and commitment
 - **application is appropriately formatted, on the correct template, and free from errors *NEW***
- Environment

Criteria Set-3 (20% scoring weight)

- **Responsiveness to the needs of California's Tobacco Control Community**
- Approach
- Community engagement

*See Appendix E of the 2026
Call for Applications for
detailed instructions to assist
applicants in communicating
clearly with peer reviewers*



Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Award Updates

What?



Individual Development Plan

Applicant's specific research and professional development needs are described in the IDP. Details on the IDP and Training Plan may overlap but must not be identical as they differ in scope and required information.



Establishing Shared Mentoring Expectations

Helps establish expectations between mentors and mentees which is key for a productive training environment. Part of the IDP template.

Why?*



People who develop and implement strategies to pursue career-specific goals achieve greater career success as measured by salary, promotions, and level of responsibility.



A nationwide study of 7600 postdoctoral researchers found that postdocs who developed training plans with their advisers at the start of their appointments reported greater satisfaction, published more papers, and experienced fewer conflicts with those advisers.





Additional Trainee Resources

Check out
our new
Trainee
Corner!



The screenshot shows the TRDRP website with the 'Trainee Corner' section highlighted. The page includes a navigation bar with links to 'ABOUT', 'DONATE', and 'CONTACT'. The 'Trainee Corner' section is titled 'TRAINEE CORNER' and features a description of the program's commitment to preparing the next generation of tobacco control researchers and advocates. It also lists resources for trainees, including 'APPLYING FOR AND MANAGING GRANTS', 'CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT', and 'TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT'. A yellow arrow points from the 'Trainee Corner' section to a detailed view of the 'APPLYING FOR AND MANAGING GRANTS' page.

TRAINEE CORNER

TRDRP is committed to preparing the next generation of dedicated tobacco control researchers and advocates.

TRDRP defines trainees as mentored individuals supported by TRDRP grants. This includes recipients of Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Awards, as well as individuals supported on TRDRP Independent Investigator Awards. A subset of early career trainees may be supported by a Student Research Supplement or a Cornelius Hopper Disparities Award Supplement. Most recently, TRDRP established the Smoke- and Vape-Free Scholars Initiative to develop a pipeline of dedicated tobacco control researchers and advocates in California.

Trainees are supported by their mentors as well as through TRDRP-led programs to help them not only discover their professional purpose but also energize their career journeys through skill-building and meaningful connections.

If you are a TRDRP-funded trainee interested in sharing what you have accomplished

APPLYING FOR AND MANAGING GRANTS

Guidance for early-career investigators and their mentors

Whether you're preparing your first application or closing out a funded project, use the links below for helpful tips on navigating each stage of the TRDRP grant process: Letter of Intent, Full Application, Pre-Award, Annual Progress Reports, and Closeout. These best practices are designed for early-career investigators and their mentors to clarify expectations, reduce confusion, and help you confidently manage the administrative side of your award—so you can stay focused on your research.

[Submitting a grant application to TRDRP](#)

[Managing a TRDRP Award \(coming soon\)](#)

[Individual Development Plan and Establishing Shared Mentoring Expectations Template](#)

TOBACCO-RELATED DISEASE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Applying for a TRDRP Research Grant: *A guide for early career investigators*



Read the Call for
Applications

July 1, 2025

[Find the 2025 Calls](#)



Attend an Applicant
Webinar

July 15-23 2025

[Register for webinars](#)



Submit a Letter of
Intent (LOI)

Thursday, August
21, 2025, 12 p.m.
(noon) Pacific
Time

[Submit via
SmartSimple](#)



Submit a Full
Application (FA)

Thursday, October
30, 2025, 12 p.m.
(noon) Pacific
Time

If invited, work with
your institution's
SPO to submit

Review Criteria: Other Considerations



- Budget: Appropriate level, overlap and any out-of-state expenses



- Protection of Human Subjects from Research Risk
- Inclusion of Women, Minorities and Children in Research



- Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals in Research



- Biohazards

Key Guidance to Applicants

- ***LOI Submission Deadline:***

- Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON PT

- ***Invited Application Due:***

- Thursday, October 30, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON PT

- LOIs are required for ALL applications

- Please review criteria for assessing **eligibility** and **impact**

www.trdrp.org/about/ca-endgame-resources

- Contact trdrp@ucop.edu with any programmatic questions

- Contact rgpogrants@ucop.edu with any SmartSimple questions

The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping collage of colorful sticky notes in shades of blue, green, yellow, and pink. Each sticky note features a large, bold, black question mark. In the center of the image, there is a white rectangular box with a thin grey border.

Thank you!
Questions?