

TRDRP 2026 MSCI Call Applicant Informational Webinar



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Danyetta D. Anderson, Ph.D., Program Officer, TRDRP

Tashelle Wright, Ph.D., Associate Program Officer, TRDRP

Webinar Overview

Programmatic Overview

- TRDRP's Mission
- Key Dates
- The MSCI Initiative and Awards - *Partnered and Single-Investigator*
- Updates to 2026 MSCI Call for Applications
- Key Guidance to Applicants

Q & A (end of this webinar)

Pre-recorded SmartSimple Application Overview

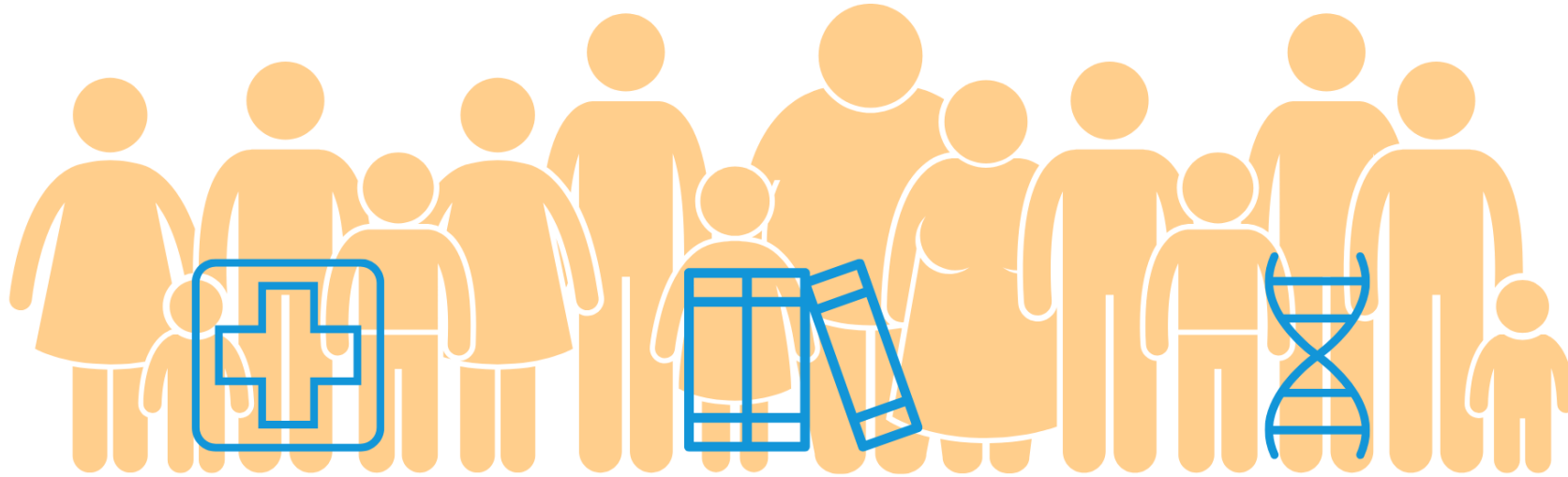
How to Submit a Proposal in SmartSimple (LOI and Full Application)

Recording of both overviews available on our 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

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)

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.



2026 MSCl: Key Changes

- The 2024 Surgeon General's report, *Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities*, emphasizes the fundamental need to develop and cultivate access to proven **smoking cessation treatments that are responsive to pregnant individuals in communities disproportionately impacted by structural barriers to health equity**.
- The 2024 Surgeon General's Report underscores that **addressing these inequities through tailored, accessible, and evidence-based cessation interventions is critical to improving maternal and infant health outcomes**.
- *MSCI award* prioritizes research dedicated to developing, implementing, and evaluating culturally-tailored commercial tobacco cessation interventions specifically designed to improve health outcomes for **pregnant individuals who reside in communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes**.
- The core objective is to cultivate sustainable interventions that effectively address the unique needs and challenges faced by these communities.

See <https://www.trdrp.org/what-we-fund/call-for-applications-faq.html> for more guidance

Overview: MSCI Award Mechanism

Partnered-MSCI

- Academic Co-PI, Community Co-PI
- Community Advisory Board
- Collaborative Agreement
- Dissemination Strategy

Single-Investigator MSCI

- Principal Investigator
- Open Access Tools

Details on MSCI Award Mechanism

- This RFA will support two award mechanisms:
 - The **Partnered-MSCI Award** provides up to **2-years** of support for a community-academic research partnership focused on the development and evaluation of *culturally-tailored interventions for smoking cessation among pregnant individuals residing in communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes*. TRDRP solicits applications that are grounded in an equitable partnership between Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs); one community Co-PI and one academic Co-PI.
 - The Single Investigator-MSCI award will support the investigation between **smoking behavior and its relationship to environmental, behavioral, and clinical factors that result in adverse maternal and perinatal health outcomes**, specific to communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness. The goal is to generate not only effective smoking cessation interventions:
 - ✓ robust epidemiological data that can *support* open access repositories
 - ✓ culturally responsive smoking cessation interventions
 - ✓ ongoing research in maternal and fetal health
 - ✓ Support evidence-based policymaking to reduce the adverse rates of maternal and fetal mortality and morbidity in the state of California

Partnered MSCI Award

The CPPRA Framework

- TRDRP has funded community-academic research partnerships for over **25 years**.
- Collaboratively developed and led by:
 - One Community Co-Principal Investigator
 - One Academic Co-Principal Investigator



Defining Community: (CPPRA)-MSCI

Community-> specifically to women residing in communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes.

Tobacco Priority Populations (*within MSCI*):

- Are disproportionately targeted by the industry;
- Use tobacco at higher-than-average rates;
- Experience greater exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke and vape aerosol; and/or have higher rates of tobacco-related disease.
- Have a higher rate of tobacco-related disease

Community & Academic Co-PIs collaborate on all aspects of the research process:

Identifying and developing the research questions

Transforming community concerns into research questions

Working closely with Community Advisory Board members

Writing and submitting the research proposal

Designing and implementing the research project

Analyzing and interpreting findings

Preparing and submitting progress reports to the funder

Co-authoring summaries for communities, scientific papers, presentations

Disseminating results to community and scientific audiences

Developing a plan for sustainability beyond the proposed project

Eligibility Criteria

Qualifications of a Community Co-PI	Qualifications of an Academic Co-PI
Affiliated with a California community-based organization.	Affiliated with a California academic or nonprofit research institution.
Affiliated with a community organization or a tribal organization/tribe that primarily provides services or resources to people in a community within California (i.e., they cannot be a lone person who is not connected to relevant community-based groups).	Has a university faculty appointment or a community research scientist designation with an appointment at a community-based research organization or private research institution. Research scientists and community-oriented academics working at a non-university research organization that is a nonprofit can serve in this role.
Committed to representing the views of the community of interest.	Committed to conducting long-term community-partnered participatory research.
Have organizational support to serve as a Co-PI for the project.	Must have PI status. PI status permits the academic applicant access to their institution's infrastructure support for managing research grants.
There is <u>no</u> degree requirement.	Committed to accurately depicting the state-of-the-science for the community's benefit.
U.S. citizenship is <u>not</u> a requirement.	U.S. citizenship is <u>not</u> a requirement.

*See p. 7 and Appendix C of the
2026 MSCIRFA
for additional details on
eligibility*

Award Mechanism

	Max Award/Year (Direct Costs)	Max Award Duration (Years)	Purpose of Award
Partnered- MSCI	\$500,000 (\$250,000/Co-PI)	2	Support development and evaluation of culturally-tailored interventions for smoking cessation among pregnant individuals residing in communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes.
Single Investigator- MSCI	\$250,000	2	Support the investigation between smoking behavior and its relationship to environmental, behavioral, and clinical factors that result in adverse maternal and perinatal health outcomes, specific to communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness.

Partnered MSCI

Goal: Support development and evaluation of culturally-tailored interventions for smoking cessation among pregnant individuals residing in communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes.

Provides up to **2 years** of support for the initial phase of a project, including (*but not limited to*):

- Developing and strengthening collaborative relationships
- Transforming community concerns into research questions
- Evaluation of existing tobacco cessation programs to address MSCI objectives
- Collecting preliminary data on adverse maternal smoking outcomes
- Developing a plan for sustainability for culturally tailored smoking cessation

Unique Features of Partnered-MSCI Applications

Partnered-MSCI awards require applications to include sections describing:

- *Collaborative Agreements*
- *Community Advisory Board (CAB)*

Partnered and Single-Investigator MSCI Application instructions and templates for the Research Plan will be made *available in SmartSimple once LOI has been approved*.

Collaborative Agreements

- Collaboratively prepared by the Community and Academic Partners informed by their respective perspectives, needs, and constraints.
- Describes how the proposed Partnered-MSCI team will work together and share power, budget, resources, and outcomes with each other in:
 - ☐ Ownership of data
 - ☐ Handling disagreements
 - ☐ Plans for broader community involvement in all phases of the research project
 - ☐ Team communication plan
 - ☐ Decision-making process for community and academic Co-PIs
 - ☐ Plans for turn-over of personnel
 - ☐ Plans to evaluate the strength of the research partnership
 - ☐ Plans for dissemination of findings
 - ☐ Plans to sustain the research partnership beyond the life of the grant

Community Advisory Board

- Describes the composition of recruited CAB members at the time of application submission and members/expertise for future recruitment.
- The CAB should be comprised of individuals with expertise in tobacco control and other areas relevant to the project who can provide helpful feedback to the team on both community and scientific aspects of the project.
 - Recruited CAB members must be named with a description of their organizational affiliation and proposed contribution for the project in relation to their role on the CAB.
 - If designating CAB roles are yet to be determined (TBD), please describe areas of expertise your team will seek to recruit at a future time during the project.

MSCI Peer Review Criteria Sets

- Standard NIH scoring system that is based on the 1-9 scale

Criteria Set-1 (40% scoring weight) – “Research”

- Statement of Goals, Research Questions, and Specific Aims
- Background, Significance, and Relevance to a Tobacco-Related Area
- Research Plan: Research Design, Conceptual Framework, and Data Analysis Plan

Criteria Set-2 (40% scoring weight) – “Partnership”

- Partnership Collaboration Plan and Team Communication Process
- Potential for the Proposed Work to Benefit the Community and Lead to an Intervention
- Community Engagement and Capacity Building
- Dissemination Approaches and Sustainability Plan
- Statement of Future Goals

Criteria Set-3 (20% scoring weight) – “Resources”

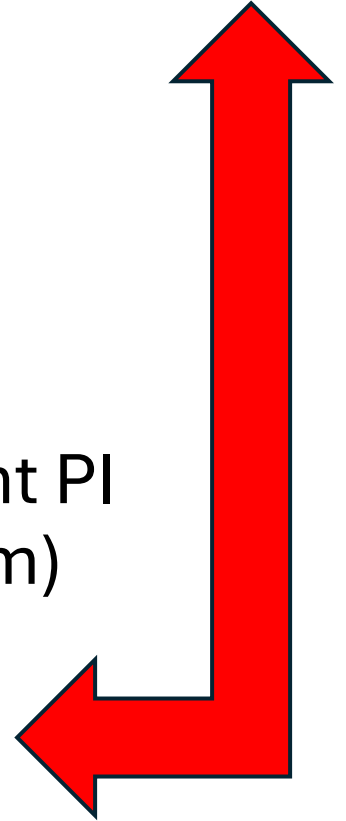
- Investigative Team
- Environment, Facilities, and Resource Availability
- Community Assets

MSCI: Submit a Letter of Intent (LOI)

Please refer to pre-recorded SmartSimple Application Overview for further instructions:

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

- ☐ A letter of intent (LOI) is required for both the Partnered-MSCI and the Single-Investigator MSCI grant types to assess the application against TRDRP eligibility requirements.
- ☐ The Community Co-PI or Academic Co-PI must be identified at time of LOI submission; Designate Applicant PI submitting LOI and Full Application on behalf of the team)
- ☐ The LOI must be submitted electronically using the SmartSimple system.



Cornelius Hopper Disparities Supplements (CHDS)

- **Purpose:** Support trainees and California residents who wish to pursue careers in research focused on tobacco priority populations.
- During the pre-funding process, MSCl awardees will be invited to apply for a supplement via CHDS.
- Supplements are funded above the MSCl budget cap.
 - Maximum supplement amount per year: \$20,000 (direct costs)
 - Maximum duration: 2 years

Single Investigator MSCI Award

Single Investigator MSCI

See p. 27 and Appendix C of the
2026 MSCI RFA
for additional details on review criteria

Goal: Support the investigation between smoking behavior and its relationship to environmental, behavioral, and clinical factors that result in adverse maternal and perinatal health outcomes, specific to communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness.

Provides up to **2 years** of support for the pilot phase of a project, including:

- Defining the study population what includes communities disproportionately impacted by tobacco-related illness and adverse maternal outcomes
- Identification and evaluation of modifiable risk factors that result in adverse maternal health outcomes from smoking
- Developing as well as testing tools and methods for intervention
- Proposing methods to establish novel relationships among adverse maternal and perinatal health outcomes that fill existing gaps within maternal smoking literature, clinical practice or policy
- Is the study design (including methods and analyses) adequately developed and appropriate to contribute to a data repository (& sustainable)

Single Investigator MSCI Overview

- **Maximum award amount per year:** \$250,000 (direct costs)
- **Maximum duration:** 2 years
- **Allowable direct costs:** Salaries, fringe benefits, supplies, publishing, sub-contracts*, equipment (costing more than \$5,000), and travel.
- **Travel:**
 - **Project-related travel:** As needed (must be fully justified)
 - **Travel to TRDRP conference:** \$750 (mandatory)
 - **Scientific conference travel:** Up to \$2,000 per year (excluding a mandatory allocation of \$750 in one year of the project for travel to the TRDRP conference)
- **Indirect costs:** Full indirect costs are allowed to non-UC institutions. Indirect costs to UC campuses are capped at 35 percent, or 25 percent for projects conducted off-campus.
- **Letter of Intent Requirement:** A Letter of Intent is required for the Single Investigator Award mechanism. It will be used to assess the application eligibility requirement of tobacco-relatedness.
- **Award requirements:**
 - Applicants must have a PI-status at the sponsoring institution.
 - Awardees are required to commit at least 10 percent of their effort each year to activities supported by this award.
 - U.S. citizenship is not a requirement.

*See p. 26 and Appendix C of the
2026 MSCI RFA
for additional details on review criteria*

Scoring & Review Criteria

- 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
- Tobacco-relatedness
- Innovation

Criteria Set-2 (50% scoring weight)

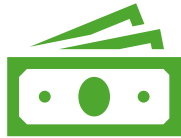
- Significance
- Approach
- Near-term leveraging potential (Pilot & New Investigator Awards)

Criteria Set-3 (20% scoring weight)

- Investigators (New Investigator Awards: status & research team)
- Environment
- Community engagement

Please visit <https://www.trdrp.org/what-we-fund/call-for-applications-faq.html> for detailed award criteria.

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

Resubmit? SURE!

See p. 39 and Appendix C of the
2026 MSCI RFA
for additional details on resubmission
requirements.

- Cycle 35 MSCI applicants can resubmit for the 2026 Call for Applications.
- Provide a two-page convincing statement at the beginning of your Research Plan:
 - *How does your research address prior reviewers' comments?*
 - *Provide a thorough summary detailing any substantial additions, deletions, and changes made to the proposal.*

Please refer to pre-recorded SmartSimple
Application Overview for further
instructions:

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

Key Guidance to Applicants

- ***LOI Submission Deadline:***
 - **Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON PT**
- ***Invited Application Due:***
 - **Monday, September 8, 2025 at 12 p.m. NOON PT**
- LOI are required for *ALL* applications/award mechanisms
- Please refer to the MSCI RFP throughout the LOI and application process
- Contact trdrp@ucop.edu with any questions

Thank you!
Questions?

