TRDRP 2026 Call for Applications
Smoke- and Vape-Free Scholars Initiative (SVFSI)
Applicant Informational Webinar

July 23, 2025

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TOBACCO-RELATED DISEASE
RESEARCH PROGRAM

Webinar Overview

Programmatic Overview

- About TRDRP
- 2026 SVFSI Initiative
- Program Award, Scoring Criteria, and Key Dates
- Additional Guidance to Applicants

Q & A

Pre-recorded Partnered Award SmartSimple Application Webinar:

- How to Submit your LOI and Full Application in SmartSimple

    https://trdrp.org/what-we-fund/

Recordings will be posted on the TRDRP website!

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About TRDRP

Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program

*A Part of California's Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program*

TRDRP Mission: *Transform tobacco excise taxes into cutting-edge research to reduce commercial tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases and to inform public policy that benefits all Californians.*

These taxes were legislated by 2 propositions passed by CA voters in 1988 and 2016

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Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program

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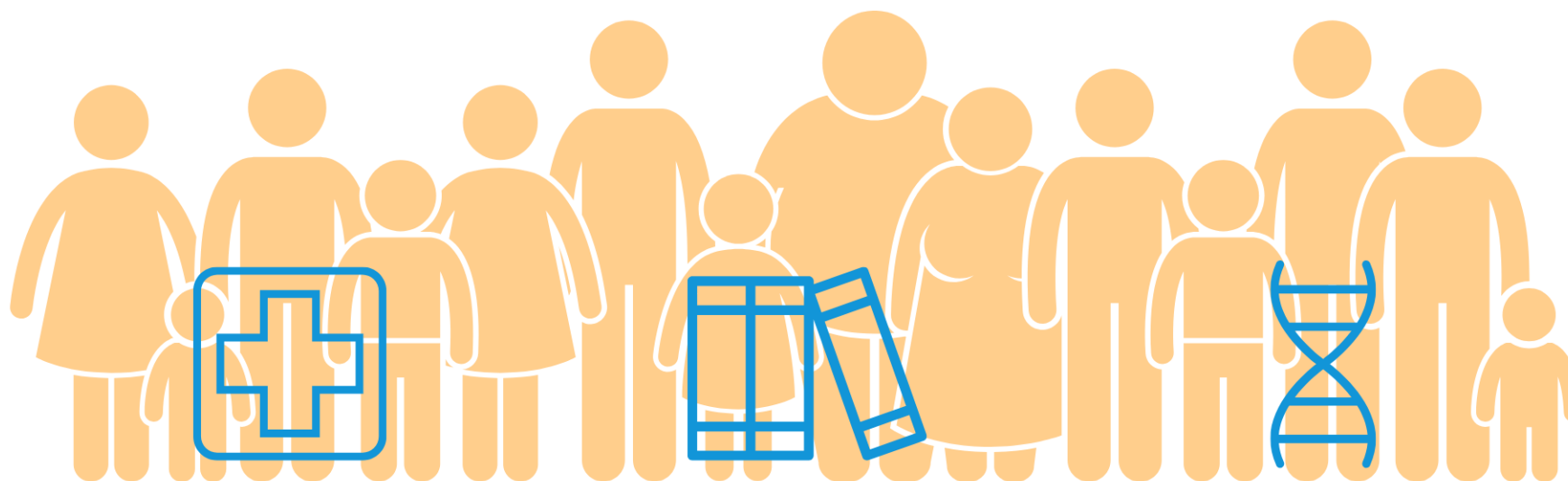
Health Promotion/Treatment
CA Tobacco Prevention Program (CTPP)
CA Dept of Public Health

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

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2026 Smoke- and Vape-Free Scholars Initiative

The Smoke- and Vape-Free Scholars Initiative

- Funded awards support mentorship and training activities that include enabling undergraduate, post-bac and master's-level students from CSU/CCCs to conduct tobacco-related research projects in a mentor's laboratory or team, while also engaging in local tobacco control activities and participating in other educational activities.

- The Initiative aims to stimulate student enthusiasm for tobacco-related research and foster engagement and persistence of the next generation of researchers that represent the different tobacco priority populations.

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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.

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Applicants will propose a theme and SVFSI research experiences relevant to tobacco control issues for one or more tobacco priority populations

Current TRDRP research priorities:

- Research in Support of the California Endgame Initiative;

- Social and Behavioral Prevention and Treatment;

- State and Local Tobacco Policy Research;

- Tobacco-Related Diseases;

- Environmental Exposure and Toxicology; and

- Neuroscience of Nicotine Addiction and Treatment.

See Appendix A of the 2026 Core Call for Applications for additional details on Research Priorities

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Program Award, Scoring Criteria, and Key Dates

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SVFSI Award Mechanism

	Max Award (Direct Costs)	Max Award Duration (Years)	Purpose of Award
Program Award	$1,150,000	4	To support the development and administration of **partnered mentor & training programs** that enable undergraduate, post-bac and master's-level students from CSU/CCCs to conduct tobacco-related research projects in a mentor's laboratory or team, while also engaging in local tobacco control activities and participating in other educational activities.

See the 2026 SVFSI RFA for additional details on cost and expense guidelines

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SVFSI Program Award: A Partnership

Smoke and Vape Free Scholars Initiative

Overview of Program Awards

CSU/CCC Co-Principal Investigator
(CSU/CCC Co-PI)

Research Co-Principal Investigator
(Research Co-PI)

CSU/CCC Institution

- Administer program
- Oversee process for selecting students to become SVFSI Scholars
- Oversee the tobacco control and advocacy education

Collaboration

- Match scholars & research mentors
- Provide mentor training
- Identify tobacco control projects and mentors*
- Collaborate with TRDRP on Kick-Off and Scholar Meetings

Research Institution

- Oversee process for identifying research mentors
- Provide mentored research experiences for SVFSI Scholars

CSU: California State University
CCC: California Community College

*Projects and mentors may be based at other organizations such as public health departments or community-based organizations

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SFVSI Program Award Partnership Considerations

- **The CSU/CCC* Institution will be officially responsible for submitting grant materials**

- SVFSI Program Awards are **one project with two budgets**:

  - One budget will be prepared by, and awarded to, the CSU/CCC Co-PI's institution

  - A second budget will be prepared by, and awarded to, the Research Co-PI's Institution.

  - When preparing your Full Application budget(s), please be mindful of the overall caps on the Administrative, Scholar and Mentor budget categories (*Award Table, p.10*)

- Subcontracts are allowed for each Co-PI institution and must be fully justified.

- All out-of-state subcontracts and collaborations must be well-justified. *Please note that funding for out-of-state expenses are extremely limited and TRDRP does not encourage such expenses.*

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*CSU: California State University
CCC: California Community College

Peer Review of Applications: Scoring
Rating scale consistent with the 1-9 NIH scale

SCORE	DESCRIPTOR	Strengths/Weaknesses
1	Exceptional	Extremely strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong with at least one moderate weakness
6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
9	Poor	Very few strengths and a few major weaknesses

SVFSI Program Award
Peer Review Scoring Criteria

Each application is scored on these three criteria:

Criteria Set-1: **Impact** **(30% scoring weight)**
- Impact on Research Pipeline
- Impact on Scholars

Criteria Set-2: **Program Quality** **(50% scoring weight)**
- Scholar Recruitment Plan
- Tobacco Control/Advocacy Projects & Educational Programming
- Mentoring Plan
- Administration & Evaluation – Collaboration, Communication Plans

Criteria Set-3: **Feasibility** **(20% scoring weight)**
- Team/Institution Qualifications
- Student Access
- Letters of Support

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Key Dates

Letter of Intent Deadline	**August 21, 2025** **12:00 p.m. (noon) PT**
Invitation to Full Application Announced	September 8, 2025
Full Application Deadline	October 30, 2025 12:00 p.m. (noon) PT
Applicants Notified	April 2026
Award Start Date	July 1, 2026

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Additional Guidance to Applicants

Becoming Familiar with the RFA
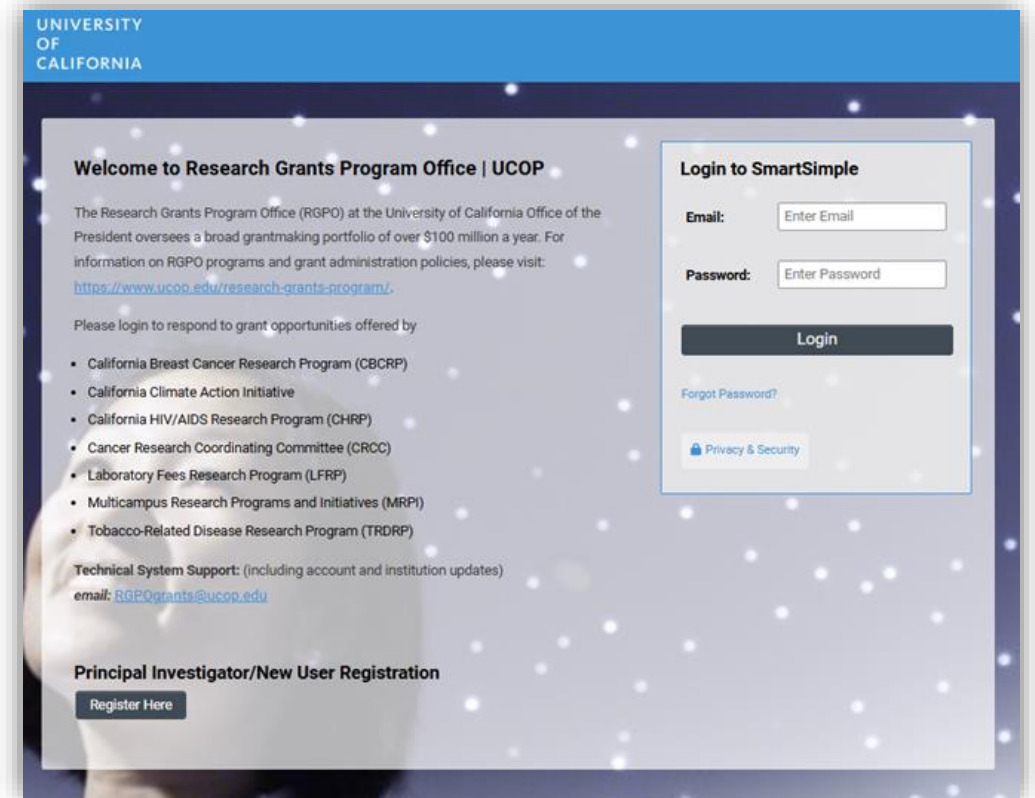
- Please read the RFA and become comfortable with all its details

- The different RFA sections and appendices include important details on what information to include in your LOI and in the different sections of your Full Application

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Resubmissions

- An SVFSI resubmission is an unfunded SVFSI application that was submitted to TRDRP as a new application in the 2023 (T33…) cycle and is resubmitted under the current 2026 Call for Applications (T36…).

- Resubmitted applications are allowed to include a 2-page resubmission statement immediately preceding the SVFSI Program Plan.

Start Application Process with Setting up your SmartSimple Account

- SmartSimple
  - Set-up account
  - Watch pre-recorded webinar
  - Familiarize yourself with the SmartSimple Submission Instructions PDF (*linked in RFA on pages 12 and 26*)

https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu

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SVFSI Resources on our Website

https://www.trdrp.org/our-impact/svfsi-resources.html

Frequently Asked Questions on our Website
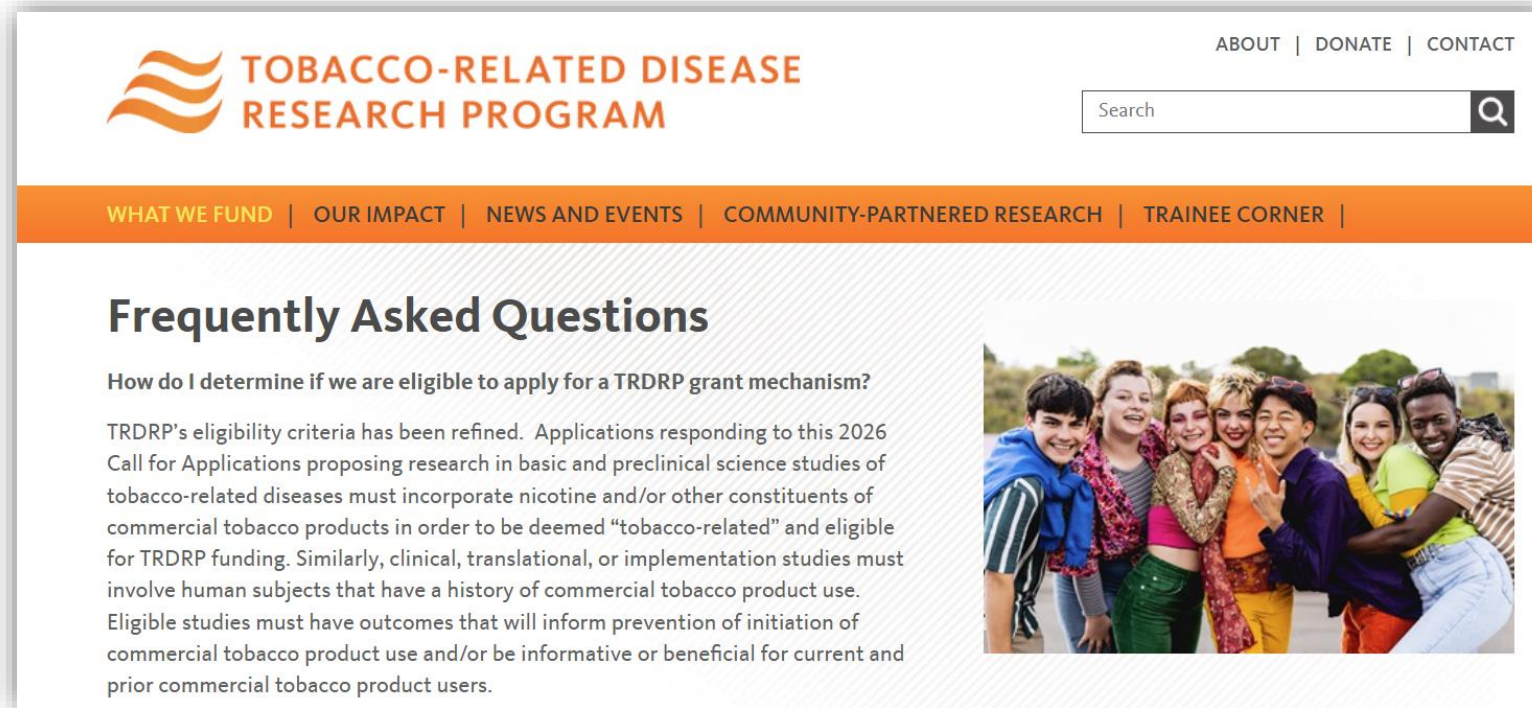
trdrp.org/what-we-fund/call-for-applications-faq.html

Q & A

SmartSimple Questions:

RGPOgrants@ucop.edu

Programmatic Questions:

maggie.kulik@ucop.edu

joanne.d'silva@ucop.edu

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