

# EIGHT CRITERIA FROM COHEN, ET AL.<sup>1</sup> FOR ACCEPTING TOBACCO INDUSTRY FUNDING, COMPARED TO THE GOVERNANCE OF THE FOUNDATION FOR A SMOKE-FREE WORLD

## COHEN, ET AL. CRITERION

### 1 Transparency and Independence

The funding mechanism should be transparent and independent.

### 2 Competitive Funding Process

A competitive funding process should be in place to ensure high-quality science.

## FOUNDATION FOR A SMOKE-FREE WORLD GOVERNANCE

The Foundation's **funding agreement** is publicly available on its website and fully disclosed in public materials. The Foundation's funders are legally prohibited from influencing or directing how funds are used, and have no involvement whatsoever in the Foundation's operations.

The Foundation employs a competitive funding process in soliciting, screening, reviewing and awarding grants and other distributions. Submissions are open to anyone in the research community. An independent advisory committee of experts in public health and science will ensure grant selection is fully transparent, follows clearly defined **grant policies and procedures**, and is based on explicit, well-established scientific criteria.

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### 3 Ownership of Data and Freedom to Publish

Research endeavors should have scientific integrity to enable data and results to be used broadly.

To safeguard the integrity of each research endeavor, the Foundation ensures grant recipients are free to publish their findings, studies and results as submitted to the Foundation. Furthermore, to the extent legally possible, the Foundation will require grant recipients to make their raw research data available for secondary analyses and review on an open-access platform.

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### 4 Independent Research Agenda

To ensure unbiased and relevant research results, the research agenda should be set independently of the tobacco industry and other interested parties.

The Foundation's research agenda is being developed through a public process that includes widely solicited input from the tobacco control community and an open public comment period. It is subject to review and approval by the Foundation's independent scientific advisory committee and board of directors.

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### 5 Governance

The credibility of a funding entity is enhanced when there is a transparent and effective governance structure. A Board of Directors would oversee the operation of all aspects of the funding agency and programs, without requiring approval from the sponsor.

As described in the Foundation's **bylaws**, all aspects of the Foundation's activities and research programs are overseen by an independent board of directors. The staff and board function completely independently of the Foundation's funders, with no industry representation on the board. No aspect of our operations or actions require approval from funders, and funders are specifically precluded in our bylaws and funding agreement from seeking to influence any such actions.

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### 6 Protection Against Conflict of Interest

There should be a written conflict of interest policy and mechanisms for enforcement.

The Foundation maintains a written and enforceable conflict of interest and **anti-corruption policy**. Both are publicly available on the Foundation's website. Further, the funder has no involvement in or influence over the governance, activities or operations of the Foundation.

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## 7 Industry Public Relations Gains that Counteract Public Health

Industry public relations gains realized from the funding of research that counteract public health should be minimized.

The Foundation's **bylaws** specifically prohibit the Foundation's funders from citing the existence of the Foundation or its work as part of public relations or reputation programs. In addition, the Foundation plans to publish independent assessments of the tobacco industry's activities in relation to tobacco control and is free to be critical in doing so.

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## 8 Feasibility

Short-term and long-term feasibility of achieving the various models should be disclosed in order to have a realistic vision of what might be possible.

The Foundation will regularly commission third-party reports on progress towards reducing deaths and harm from smoking and eliminating smoking worldwide. The Foundation has already commissioned a **global survey** on smoking trends and perceptions, and released results and data for consideration regarding the impact of existing programs, potential barriers to success and areas for further exploration and progress.

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1. <sup>i</sup> Cohen JE, Zeller M, Eissenberg T, Parascandola M, et al. Criteria for evaluating tobacco control research funding programs and their application to models that include financial support from the tobacco industry. *Tob Control* 2009; 18(3): 228-34. Published online June 2009. DOI:10.1136/tc.2008.027623 (Accessed October 27, 2017). <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/18/3/228>.
  2. In a 2012 publication, The National Academies of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) also called for a similar independent third-party research foundation structure for tobacco control research. This report can be accessed at: Institute of Medicine. 2012. *Scientific Standards for Studies on Modified Risk Tobacco Products*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/13294>.