

Foundation for a Smoke-Free World

This page was last edited on 28 September 2022, at 11:51 am.



The Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW) describes itself as “an independent, non-profit organization”¹ that was established and is “operated free from the control or influence of any third party”, which “makes grants and supports medical, agricultural, and scientific research to end smoking and its health effects and to address the impact of reduced worldwide demand for tobacco”.^{2 3}

It was established in September 2017 and formally launched at the [Global Tobacco and Nicotine Forum 2017](#), a tobacco-industry funded event.^{4 5}

FSFW’s tax return covering the calendar year 2021 was filed on 16 May 2022, shows that its funding from PMI was cut from US\$80 million (in 2019) to US\$45 million in 2020. It was further cut to US\$40 million in 2021, and then to US\$35 million in 2022, a figure due to be maintained until 2029.⁶ [Philip Morris International](#) (PMI) remains the sole funder of the Foundation.

The 2020 tax return, filed on 17 May 2021, showed that despite publicly claiming to focus funding on low and middle-income countries (LMICs), in reality less than 10% (approx. US\$2.5 million) was granted to LMICs in 2020. Approximately 75% (approx. US\$30 million) of funding went to organisations based in the US and UK.^{7 8} In the 2021 tax return this trend has increased, with only 3% of grants going to LMIC’s, while 96% went to the UK, USA and EU countries.⁹

For more analysis of FSFW’s tax returns to 2021, see the [***STOP INDUSTRY BRIEF FSFW tax return 2021***](#)

FSFW’s tax returns, show that it remains solely funded by [Philip Morris International](#) (PMI).^{10 7 6} (In June 2020, FSFW’s website’s

page on funding changed from “is seeking and expects to receive funding from other sources as well” to that it “may seek funding from other sources”, see below for details).

Furthermore, analysis reveals that grants and contributions are not primarily focused on funding scientific research but rather appear to be in line with the Foundation’s public relations and advocacy strategies. Only one in six of the grantees listed in the 2019 tax return appeared to be based within academic institutions.^{10 11} For more information on the new grantees and issues around the lack of transparency of FSFW on its award granting, go to [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World Grantees](#). For a briefing on the [top 10 takeaways](#) from the Foundation’s 2019 tax return see [exposetobacco.org](#).

Its 2018 tax return showed US\$7.6 million of spending on “communications.”¹²

There is detailed background information on the Foundation’s staff, grants, how it frames itself and counter arguments in the [Tobacco Tactics Resources section](#).

Visit the [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: Research Database](#) to find out more about its research outputs

Main Staff at the Foundation

In September 2020, FSFW updated its [website](#) to reflect that it has lost 14 staff members, which represented 38% of its total staff the previous week.¹³

In October 2021 FSFW announced that President and Board Director Derek Yach would be leaving the organisation. He was replaced by Heidi Goldstein and David Janazzo as Interim Co-Presidents.¹⁴

An up-to-date listing of FSFW staff can be found on [its website](#).

Management

- **David Janazzo** is Interim Co-President as well as Executive Vice President and Operations and Finance Chief Financial Officer. Janazzo’s background is in finance and he formerly worked for investment firm Merrill Lynch and in telecommunications.¹³

- **Heidi Goldstein** is Interim Co-President, Executive Vice-President and Chief Legal Officer.¹³
- **Carolyn “C.B.” Blanckmeister** is the Foundation’s Chief Health Science Technology Officer. Blanckmeister previously worked for Pfizer and GSK and is trained as an immunologist.¹³
- **Amy Curry** is the Foundation’s Chief of Staff.¹³
- **Ehsan Latif** is the Foundation’s Vice President for Grant Management and Development (previously Program Director Health and Smoking Control). Latif formerly worked for the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.¹⁵
- **Candida Nakhumwa** is Country Director, Malawi for FSFW. She is responsible for managing strategic partnerships in Malawi’s agricultural sector. Nakhumwa previously worked for the Farmers Union of Malawi and the National Smallholder Farmers Association. Her profile was moved from “Staff” to “Executive Team” in September 2020.¹³
- **Brian Erkkila** is the Foundation’s Vice President for Health, Science and Technology. Prior to that he spent seven years at the US Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products.¹³
- **Nicole Bradley** is the Foundation’s Vice President for Communications (formerly Director for Communications). Bradley spent six years at Pepsi managing its media relations.¹³

The Board has no known direct tobacco industry links. In [an open letter](#), Yach stated that the appointed Board of Directors are “subject to stringent conflicts of interest policy. No Board member can have ties to tobacco companies. The Directors will receive reimbursement for their expenses and a modest honorarium for their service”.¹⁶

Relationship with the Tobacco Industry

Funded by Philip Morris International but Claims Independence

The Foundation was established with funding from PMI. The tobacco company agreed to contribute US\$80 million annually for the next 12

years starting from 2018, with specific contributions depending on the Foundation's "requirements and operations".¹⁷

However, an updated version of the Pledge Agreement between PMI and FSFW dated September 2020 showed that PMI had decreased the Foundation's funding. In 2020, it paid out only US\$45 million, with plans to contribute the same amount again in 2021. From 2022–2029, PMI pledged to contribute US\$35 million per year, a more than 50% reduction from its initial contributions in 2018 and 2019.¹⁸

Although a large sum of money, US\$80 million represents only 0.1% of PMI's revenues and 1% of the company's profits.¹⁹ It is an insignificant sum compared to PMI's annual spending on its longstanding sponsorship deal with Formula One racing giant Ferrari, which was quietly renewed in September 2017, and has previously been estimated to cost PMI in the region of US\$160 million annually.^{20 21}

The day after the Foundation's launch, film director Aaron Biebert (whose production company, Attention Era, was commissioned to launch the Foundation^{22 23}) claimed that "PMI will not be the only donor the Foundation. [Yach] will have other big donations coming from traditional sources like the Gates Foundation or Bloomberg Charities, but decided to get going now despite the potential reputational risk he faces".²⁴ This claim was swiftly rebutted by both the Gates Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies.^{25 26} Prior to June 2020, the Foundation asserted that it was "seeking and expects to receive funding from other sources as well".²⁷ In June 2020, the language on the Foundation website's "Funding" page changed to "The Foundation may seek funding from other sources as well".²⁸ The 2019 tax return confirms that FSFW remains wholly funded by PMI.¹⁰

The Foundation says that 'independence' and 'transparency' are its core values, and that the Foundation's bylaws prevent PMI and other tobacco companies "from having any influence over how the Foundation spends its funds or focuses its activities".²⁹ In a *BMJ* blog post³⁰ Yach reasserted that the Foundation operates independently from PMI, citing The Foundation's 'Certificate of Incorporation',³¹ 'Bylaws'³² and 'Pledge Agreement' between the tobacco company and the Foundation³³ as evidence of this independence. The Foundation itself said it would operate "in a manner that ensures the Corporation's freedom and independence from the influence of any commercial entity". However, two independent analyses of the constitutive documents suggest that this is not the case.^{34 35}

One, for example, noted that the governing documents have “multiple loopholes” adding that the Foundation “cannot be regarded as independent”.

The McCabe Centre critique of these constitutive documents argued that there were several ways in which PMI would be able to influence the Foundation’s research agenda and practice. You can see an extensive analysis using this critique by visiting [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: How it Frames Itself](#).

Further evidence casting the Foundation’s independence came to light in September 2020 when FSFW uploaded an amended version of its Pledge Agreement to its website (see above). The amended agreement changed wording from “free from influence” to “free from improper influence” with regards to the input of PMI, other donors and third parties. A sentence immediately following this change makes it clear that communication with PMI is not prohibited:

“Nothing in this section or elsewhere in this pledge agreement or Foundation’s bylaws shall be interpreted to prohibit the Foundation from exchanging information or interacting with any third party, including but not limited to the pledgor, or other donors, in order to advance the Foundation’s purpose.”¹⁸

On 13 January 2021, the former Director of Digital and Social Media at FSFW, Lourdes Liz, filed a civil complaint against the organisation, in a federal court in New York.^{36 37} An amended version of the complaint was filed on 5 May 2021.³⁸ On June 25 the case was settled out of court and discontinued.³⁹

Failed Attempts to Engage with Global Public Health

In January 2019, [a letter](#)⁴⁰ signed by a total of 279 global health organisations and public health leaders was sent to the Director General and the Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO). The letter urged the WHO to reject any affiliation with the Foundation.

This was in response to [a letter from FSFW](#)⁴¹ to the WHO’s Executive Board, published on 24th January 2019 within which Derek Yach argued for the “aligning...of...our goals to complement and support the WHO and the FCTC”. The Foundation’s letter to the WHO Executive Board talks of an “unprecedented opportunity to

give global tobacco control new energy and a new path” which requires “the ability to seize opportunities as we strive to end smoking together”.⁴¹

- Visit [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: How it Frames Itself](#) for an analysis of FSFW’s previous claims of support for the WHO FCTC.

At the same time, the Foundation’s sole funder, PMI, published [a statement](#)⁴² of their own in January 2019 to coincide with the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. This statement, entitled ‘Davos 2019 – Time to Take Action’ argued that “anti-tobacco lobbies” and the tobacco industry needed to work collaboratively, calling this “a once in a lifetime opportunity” and writing that “we must seize it – and seize it together”.⁴²

On 23rd January 2019, the day before FSFW’s open letter to the WHO was published, PMI posted [statement](#)⁴³ announcing the publication of a PMI [report](#)⁴⁴ entitled ‘Public health – much harder than rocket science’. The report concludes that a “collaborative approach” to global health issues, one which includes corporations, is “possible and needed”.

Visit [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: How it Frames Itself](#) for an analysis of FSFW’s previous claims of support for the WHO FCTC.

Calls to reject funding from, and indeed any kind of involvement with, the Foundation have also previously come from many sources, including the WHO themselves:

[World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), [The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Secretariat](#), [The International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](#) (The Union), [The World Heart Federation](#), [Deans from the School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University](#), [Environmental Rights Action and Friends of the Earth Nigeria](#) (who have asked the University of Nigeria Nsukka not to work with FSFW), [Polish Ministry of Health](#) (sent a letter to all Polish university medical schools urging them not to accept any funds from FSFW), [Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids](#) and other experts in public health.^{45 46}

Critics have specifically pointed out that PMI continues to actively oppose tobacco control policies aimed at reducing tobacco use and promotes cigarettes to children in Africa and Asia.⁴⁵

Funding Scientists with Tobacco Industry Links

The Foundation has funded researchers with tobacco industry links, such as [Riccardo Polosa](#), who has been previously funded by PMI, [Jed Rose](#), who has previously been funded by Philip Morris and Neil McKeganey, who is a grant recipient of the Centre for Substance Use Research (CSUR) which is in turn funded by PMI, [BAT](#), [Fontem Ventures](#) (a subsidiary of [Imperial Tobacco](#)), and [JUUL Labs](#) (which is majority owned by [Altria](#)).⁴⁷

Organisations Cut Ties with the Foundation

Several organisations who have received funds from the Foundation have decided to cut short or discontinue these links due to its ties to PMI. In 2019, BRAC Bangladesh (an NGO) announced that it would be returning the funding it had received from the Foundation in 2018.⁴⁸ The University of Cape Town also announced that it would not accept additional funding from the Foundation due to pressure from the university's faculty of health sciences staff.⁴⁹ Oglivy, the public relations consultancy which was contracted by the Foundation in 2017/2018 announced in it no longer worked with the Foundation, in part "to avoid any conflict with its health clients".⁵⁰

Difficulty in Publishing its Science

The Foundation has encountered difficulty in getting its own science published, despite Derek Yach, being on the review committees of several notable global public health journals.¹³ The Foundation sought to publish a special issue of a journal titled "15 years after the Framework Convention on Tobacco control's Adoption: Time for Greater Urgency and Focus" in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.⁵¹ However, once the journal's managing editors were made aware of the Foundation's tobacco industry ties in October 2019, the special issue was withdrawn.⁴⁷

Beginning in May 2020, FSFW published a "special issue" of articles in the journal *Drugs and Alcohol Today*. The articles in this issue are all authored or co-authored by FSFW grantees or employees and are critical of the efficacy of WHO FCTC. Most articles recommend tobacco [harm reduction](#).⁵² In February 2021 an "Expression of Concern" statement was added by the publisher, emerald insight, to all articles in the FCTC special edition "to inform readers that

credible concerns have been raised regarding the editorial process for this article”.⁵³

The journal is edited by Axel Klein.⁵⁴ Klein is a grantee of FSFW, through his consultancy A.C.K. Consulting.⁵⁵ A.C.K. received US\$100,000 from FSFW in 2018.⁵⁶ Sudhanshu Patwardhan was described as a “guest editor” of the issue.⁵⁷ Patwardhan is also a FSFW grantee through his company, the [Centre for Health Research and Education](#) (CHRE). See our page on [CHRE](#) for more details.

Alignment with PMI

Although the Foundation wants to be seen as a body that is entirely separate from its funder, its actions and affiliations indicate otherwise.

Strategy Alignment

On multiple occasions, both the Foundation and its funder PMI have appeared to synchronise their global and in-country public relations and lobbying activities.⁴⁷

Global Synchronization

- Announcement of funding for [Euromonitor](#): The Foundation and [PMI Impact](#), an anti-illicit tobacco initiative also solely funded by PMI, announced funding for market research company [Euromonitor](#) within one day of each other.⁵⁸
- Use of “Unsmoke” branding: The same branding associated with PMI’s “Unsmoke” campaign was used by the Foundation in a promotional video on World No Tobacco Day 2019.⁵⁹
- Statements on the need for collaboration: In January 2019, both PMI and the Foundation published statements to international organisations advocating the need for collaboration between tobacco control and the tobacco industry. These statements used strikingly similar wording^{41 42}
- Funding of the same media outlet: Both PMI and the Foundation are listed as funders of the Influence Foundation, owner of the online harm reduction magazine, *Filter*.^{60 61}

- Responses to the Eighth Session of the Conference of Parties to the WHO FCTC (COP8) in Geneva: Both PMI and the Foundation, through its grantee Knowledge-Action-Change, released publications to coincide with COP8. PMI published a position statement advocating tobacco [harm reduction](#) policy interventions and consultation between governments and commercial producers of “emerging” tobacco and nicotine products.⁶² The Foundation used the event to launch its “No Fire, No Smoke” report at a side event to the main COP summit.⁶³

In-Country Synchronization

- New Zealand: In 2019, the head of the Foundation-funded [Centre for Research Excellence: Indigenous Sovereignty & Smoking \(COREISS\)](#), Marewa Glover, said that higher tobacco taxes in New Zealand would punish Māori and argued that “the compassionate thing to do would be to free up access to risk-reduced alternatives such as vaping, snus and heat-not-burn products”.⁶⁴ Following this statement, Philip Morris New Zealand has offered discounted e-cigarettes to the Māori population.⁶⁵
- Lobbying for weaker regulation of [newer nicotine and tobacco products](#) in Hong Kong: In April 2019, as the Hong Kong government was considering initiating a ban on these products, both PMI⁶⁶ and Foundation-funded Knowledge-Action-Change submitted evidence arguing against a potential ban.⁶⁷

“Less as a Conflict of Interest than a Confluence of Interest”

In September 2017, Yach told UK newspaper *The Guardian* that “I have been working with PMI to establish a foundation to accelerate the end of smoking and tackle the consequences for tobacco farmers”.⁶⁸ Yach continued: “From the start, the intent has been to create an independent foundation that meets the very highest standards of legal and ethical norms”.⁶⁸

In January 2018, Yach gave an interview with the South African Broadcasting Corporation about the Foundation. When asked if PMI funding of FSFW represented a conflict of interest, Yach replied: “I see it less as a conflict of interest than a confluence of interest in

terms of trying to lower the public health impact (of tobacco products), which is really devastating at the moment”.⁶⁹

However, claims of a confluence of interest between PMI and public health goals are undermined by the tobacco company’s behaviour in other arenas. In July 2017, only one month before the establishment of the Foundation, news agency *Reuters* published internal PMI documents demonstrating the tobacco company’s attempts to subvert provisions in the [Framework Convention on Tobacco Control](#) (FCTC).^{70 71} Among other things, it showed the company had lobbied national governments to send non-health delegates to weaken FCTC provisions which usually require consensus to be adopted. The documents also showed that PMI was violating India’s anti-smoking regulations by promoting cigarettes in colourful adverts and handing out free cigarettes at nightclubs and bars frequented by young people.⁷¹

An open letter to PMI dated 14 September 2017 and signed by 123 health groups urged the company, if it were serious about ‘designing a smoke-free future’, to “immediately cease the production, marketing and sale of cigarettes”.⁷² PMI responded by an open letter claiming that if it were to stop selling cigarettes, smokers would not quit smoking but switch to its competitors’ brands.⁷³ “Indeed, our paramount business strategy is to replace cigarettes with less-harmful, smoke-free alternatives. That’s what we call a smoke-free future...”. A smoke-free future that is not based on smoking cessation, but on smokers switching from cigarettes to another tobacco product.

The WHO stated in 2017 that “research and advocacy funded by tobacco companies and their front groups cannot be accepted at face value. When it comes to the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World, there are a number of clear conflicts of interest involved with a tobacco company funding a purported health foundation, particularly if it promotes sale of tobacco and other products found in that company’s brand portfolio. WHO will not partner with the Foundation. Governments should not partner with the Foundation and the public health community should follow this lead.”⁷⁴

Used Third-Party Organisations with Long-Standing Links to Tobacco Industry

Many of the organisations the Foundation has worked with so far have long-standing links to the tobacco industry. For instance:

- **APCO:** Foundation board meeting minutes from May 2019 reveal that APCO Worldwide, a PR firm, was engaged by the Foundation to establish its presence in China.⁷⁵
- **Ogilvy Group:** From 2017 Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, has provided PR services to the Foundation.^{76 77} Initially worth US\$ 542,747,⁷⁶ the contract quickly grew to more than \$5 million in 2018.⁷⁷ However this contract appears to have ended by 2020.⁷
- **Mercury:** FSFW 2018 tax return shows that the Foundation paid Mercury US\$664,616 for PR services rendered in 2018.⁷⁸ Maria Alvarado, Vice President of Mercury's office in Austin, was listed as the main contact on FSFW press release for World No Smoking Day 2018.⁷⁹
- **Feinstein Kean Healthcare:** Tom Langford of PR consultancy Feinstein Kean Healthcare (FKH) was the spokesperson for the Foundation in September 2017.⁸⁰ FKH is part of the **Ogilvy Group**⁸¹, a large PR firm which has had long-standing links with the tobacco industry, including running advertising and PR campaigns for the tobacco industry from the 1950s.⁸² In the Foundation's inaugural meeting of the board of directors in November 2017, it was stated that Ogilvy FKH would be responsible for the Foundation's "website launch, media outreach, stakeholder engagement and the global poll development and execution".⁸³
- **Kantar Public:** Is part of **Kantar**, the consultancy and research group that conducted the Foundation's 2018 'State of Smoking Survey'. The group has regularly worked for the tobacco industry, and is also linked to the tobacco industry through its parent company **WPP** group.
- **McKinsey:** The Foundation employed management consultants **McKinsey** in organising an October 2017 stakeholder event in London, despite the management consultancy being implicated in a 2017 corruption scandal in South Africa.^{84 85} **McKinsey** has also helped tobacco companies with business planning going as far back as the 1950s, when McKinsey was advising Philip Morris on its research program.⁸⁶ In the 1980s, the firm advised **Philip Morris USA** how to optimise its cigarette sales

and marketing processes.^{87 88} In the 1990s, McKinsey worked with [British American Tobacco](#).⁸⁹

- **Baker and Hostetler LLP:** In 2015, law firm Baker and Hostetler LLP represented tobacco companies Philip Morris, [RJ Reynolds](#), Liggett and Lorillard in arbitration over proposed adjustments to the payments from the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement^{90 91 92} In 2018, the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World stated that this same law firm had offered them ‘guidance and input’ but in the 2020 tax return they were not listed.⁷
- **Ernst & Young:** Auditors^{10 7 6} Ernst & Young have tobacco links stretching back years, mainly with British American Tobacco, and have advised on lobbying as well as providing reports which support industry policies in key areas. Ernst & Young not only audits the Foundation, a subsidiary of the audit firm is also a [grantee](#).
- **Ruder Finn:** In September 2020, Ruder Finn Asia conducted outreach to institutions including the Centres for Disease Control to promote FSFW’s Tobacco Transformation Index.⁹³ It was paid just over US\$2m for public relations services in 2020.⁷

Other Contractors

In addition to using companies with established tobacco-industry links, the Foundation has, according to its tax returns,⁹⁴ contracted other firms:

- [MarketKonnnect](#), a subsidiary of [APCO](#), was paid US\$1,137,992 in 2019 for consulting services but little has been revealed about the exact nature of this work which did not appear to continue in 2020.^{10 7}
- [Signals Analytics](#) was paid US\$2.1m in 2019 and a further US\$2m in 2020⁷ to develop ways of monitoring information around harm reduction. It was also asked to look at three specific language groups: English, Japanese and Mandarin. In 2021 Signals Analytics received US\$1,527,278 for “data platform development”.⁶
- A-Connect provided unspecified management consultancy work in 2018 worth US\$610,508 while Cross My Heart

Productions, a California media company, was employed the same year for US\$770,073 to produce videos.⁹⁵

- New York-based Transperfect Translations was paid US\$324,000 for website translations in 2020 while Ferguson Cardo, based in Scotland, founded by former FSFW advisor Richard Ferguson, was paid US\$326,000 in 2020 and helped produce a report on tobacco trends.^{96 7}
- CSDConsulting in Switzerland was paid US\$240,376 in 2020 for unspecified consulting services.⁷ CSD consulting was founded by Chitra Subramaniam, a journalist and FSFW consultant who has co-authored articles critical of the WHO FCTC alongside Derek Yach.^{97 98}
- Feng Insight consulting company run by Jeanne-Marie Gescher, a lawyer, ⁹⁹ received US\$720,393 in 2021.⁶ In 2019 Feng Insight produced research on “Industry Transformation” in China for FSFW. Gescher is an honorary advisor to British Ambassadors in China and two-time chair of the British Chamber of Commerce.¹⁰⁰
- Glassman Enterprises received £210,000 in 2021 for a report for the International Commission to Reignite the Fight Against Smoking, which is funded by the FSFW.⁶ Glassman Enterprises is run by James Glassman, a journalist, author and former Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.^{101 102} Glassman is chair of the International Commission.. The organisation’s report in September 2021 says that: “Despite bad actions in the past, the tobacco industry is well positioned to contribute to tobacco control through innovation in THR [tobacco harm reduction] products, just as the pharmaceutical industry innovated with vaccines and therapeutics to fight COVID.”¹⁰³ In 2003 a profile in *Washington Monthly* described Glassman as the inventor of “journio-lobbying”, a lobbying method that attempts to “dominate the entire intellectual environment in which officials make policy decisions, which means funding everything from think tanks to issue ads to phony grassroots pressure groups.”¹⁰⁴

Commissioning Evidence

The Foundation funds work through three main streams, or **“core pillars”**: Health, Science and Technology (HST); Agriculture and

Livelihoods; and Industry Transformation.¹⁰⁵ Recipients have included [International Network of Nicotine Consumers](#) (INNCO), [Knowledge Action Change](#) and several [“Centres of Excellence”](#), located globally. For a full list of third-party grant recipients, visit our page on the Foundation’s [grantees](#).

The Foundation has also produced its own [reports](#) and [working papers](#), which can be found on its website.

Reports

A full list of the Foundation’s published reports can be found on its website [here](#).

2021

- In June 2021, the private social media network SERMO was granted an unspecified amount to recruit doctors for an eight-month international study “related to cessation and tobacco harm reduction around the world”.¹⁰⁶ SERMO describes itself as the “World’s leading social platform for physicians”.¹⁰⁷ It purportedly makes money by selling user data and advertising pharmaceuticals to doctors.¹⁰⁸

2020

- “Smoky Horizons: Tobacco and Empire in Asia, 1850-2000” by FSFW grantee Asia Public History Foundation examines the history of colonialism and tobacco growing in Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries.¹⁰⁹
- “Phasing Out Combustible Cigarettes” advocates for tobacco [harm reduction](#) to be a primary goal of tobacco control and warns against “misinformation” on [newer nicotine and tobacco products](#). It was authored by Derek Yach.¹⁰⁹
- “Contradictions and Conflicts” by FSFW grantee [Daniel Malan](#) was launched as part of the lead up to the [Tobacco Transformation Index](#). It outlines how state ownership of tobacco companies creates a “conflict of interest” with public health policymaking, and advocates for tobacco harm reduction.¹⁰⁹

- “Dubrovnik Consultation Summary” summarised the findings of the “2020 Dubrovnik Consultation”, which was due to take place in Dubrovnik, Croatia in mid-2020, but was postponed by the [COVID-19 pandemic](#). This report draws on “expert contributions” submitted on the taxation of newer products, called “tobacco harm reduction products” in the report. Its foreword is authored by Derek Yach, Ayda Yurelki and Patricia Kovacevic, a former employee of [PMI](#), Lorillard and Nicopure.^{110 111}
- “India Country Report” was released in July 2020 and concerns the healthcare implications, economy, regulation and use of tobacco products in India. Its foreword includes endorsements from Drs Pooja and Sudhanshu Patwardhan, directors of the UK-based grantee [Centre for Health Research and Education](#).¹¹²
- “Watching Briefs: Hungary” by FSFW employee Ayda Yurelki documents the “past, present and future of smoking in Hungary”.¹⁰⁹
- “COVID-19 State of Smoking Poll”: FSFW conducted an online poll in April 2020 Italy, India, South Africa, UK and the US (New York and California) to assess the impact of [COVID](#) on product use and smoking behaviours. Although it found “virtually no change in reported product consumption” and increased quit attentions and attempts, FSFW focussed on stockpiling behaviours of cigarette smokers.¹¹³
- “Global Perceptions of Tobacco and Nicotine Products” was commissioned as a follow-up to the 2017 report. Nielsen, a FSFW grantee, conducted a survey in seven countries on demographic data, habits and perceptions of tobacco, and users of newer products.¹⁰⁹
- “Insurer Perspectives on Smoking Risks” was conducted by Marsh & McLennan Advantage Insights and Oliver Wyman (both consultancies). This report argued that insurers needed to “rethink how they quantify and reduce smoking risks”. It recommended “potential solutions leveraging emerging technologies, products, and processes to address these barriers”.¹⁰⁹ The Foundation’s focus on insurers here tallies with PMI’s efforts, through its subsidiary insurance group, [Reviti](#), to connect with smokers and promote [its newer nicotine and tobacco products](#) through price and policy discounts.

2019

- “Global Trends in Tobacco Production and Trade” was authored by Romita Shah, a Research Manager at the Foundation¹³; Dianna Bartone, a former Research Analyst at the Foundation¹¹⁴ and Richard Ferguson, Investment Advisor for the Foundation.¹¹⁵ It concerned the tobacco manufacture supply chain and emphasised the shift in tobacco production away from high-income and towards low- and middle-income countries. The report was intended to be the first in a series analysing trends in tobacco production and trade.¹⁰⁹
- The 2019 update to the “Global Trends in Nicotine” (2018) report highlighted the growth of the e-cigarette and heated tobacco sectors. It was authored by David Janazzo, the Foundation’s Chief Financial Officer.¹⁰⁹

2018

- “Business Transformation: An analysis of case studies relevant to achieving a smoke-free world” was prepared by Framework LLC for the Foundation. This report presented six cases of companies that have undertaken “significant business transformations” to demonstrate how corporate transformation can be successfully achieved. This aligned well with the stated goal of the Foundation to “foster discussion on the transformational possibilities of achieving a smoke-free world” – which itself echoes the stated goals of its funder.^{109 116}
- “Global Trends in Nicotine” marked the first report solely authored by the Foundation. It was one of a series intended to lay the groundwork for the Foundation’s “Industry Transformation” stream, and thus the Tobacco Transformation Index. It mainly analysed companies involved in nicotine delivery device manufacture, their geographic focuses and quantifying their output.¹⁰⁹
- Knowledge-Action-Change, founded by [Gerry Stimson](#), published “No Fire, No Smoke: The Global State of Tobacco Harm Reduction 2018”. The “No Fire, No Smoke” report, which was launched in Geneva to coincide with the eighth WHO FCTC Conference of the Parties (COP8), warned against “over-prescriptive regulation and control” in tobacco control.⁶³

- In August 2018, the Foundation published a report prepared by EY-Parthenon called “Smoking Cessation Products and Services: Global Landscape Analysis”. The report was widely criticised by the public health and tobacco control community as biased, for not adding anything new to science and for “providing market research for PMI.”¹¹⁷
- In March 2018 the Foundation published its first research output, a survey called “The State of Smoking”¹¹⁸ by industry-linked [Kantar](#). The survey focused on smoking prevalence rates across 13 different countries. Although ostensibly about understanding smoking in different countries, as the first step towards reducing smoking prevalence rates, it was criticised by experts in public health, who claimed that it worked as a tool with which to gauge the market for harm reduction products and provide “market research for PMI”.¹¹⁹

Working Papers

Intended to “provide preliminary and timely access to ongoing research being generated by, or closely relevant to, the Foundation’s work”, the Foundation’s “Working Paper Series” are a series of articles posted on the Foundation’s website. Papers published here are not subject to an academic journal level of peer review. Rather, they undergo “at least one double blind peer review by an external expert.”¹²⁰ As of February 2020, the only working paper posted to the FSFW website is one funded through its own Agriculture and Livelihoods workstream:

- FSFW Working Paper No. 1: “Rural Perspectives on Alternatives to Tobacco Farming and Environmental Degradation in Malawi”¹²⁰

Initiatives

Below is a list of other Foundation initiatives and work projects. Although it does not attempt to be comprehensive, it does highlight the ways in which the Foundation has sought to orient itself as a legitimate funder and creator of independent research, and an expert on issues including tobacco control, agriculture and industry transformation. For more information on organisations that have received grants from the Foundation, visit our page on the [grantees](#).

- In September 2020, the Foundation released its [Tobacco Transformation Index](#) (TTI). Read more on our dedicated page on the TTI.
- In 2019, the Foundation began publishing quarterly newsletters, first through its Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) and later adding a Health, Science and Technology version.¹²¹
- In September 2018, the Foundation issued a request for proposals for an annual ‘Index of Industry Actions to End Smoking in this Generation’.¹²² The Foundation stated that the index would “critically evaluate industry progress toward achieving a smoke-free world and assess actions taken to undermine that progress.” This announcement was made at the [Global Tobacco and Nicotine Forum 2018](#). In March 2019, the Foundation announced that it had contracted [Euromonitor](#), a market research organisation, and SustainAbility, a think tank and consultancy, to develop “the first ever Smoke-Free index” to monitor and assess the actions made by tobacco companies to change from traditional combustibles to alternative “smoke-free” products. This work was also the first commissioned in the Foundation’s “Industry Transformation” initiative, one of its core pillars through which it funds grants.¹²³ However, the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) has published a Smoke-Free Index since 2016. SEATCA’s Smoke-Free Index was developed to assess the alliance of smoke-free policies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with the WHO FCTC. In July 2019, SEATCA posted an official complaint on its website with a statement from its Executive Director, Dr Ulysses Dorotheo to say that “[the Foundation’s] use and trademarking of the term “Smoke-Free Index” is misleading, potentially confusing, and tantamount to wrongful appropriation of SEATCA’s intellectual property”.¹²⁴ Since November 2019, the Foundation has instead referred to its index as the “Tobacco Transformation Index” and released its first report in September 2020.^{125 126}
- In August 2018, the Foundation announced the publication of its preliminary Health, Science and Technology (HST) Agenda.¹²⁷ The Agenda outlined the Foundation’s research priorities including its focus on product development research in order to bring more ‘reduced risk’ products to market.
- Also in August 2018, the Foundation announced the launch of a [Centre of Research Excellence on Indigenous Sovereignty and Smoking \(COREISS\)](#) in New Zealand,¹²⁸ headed by public

health researcher, Dr. Marewa Glover. This centre is one of a number proposed by the Foundation in different countries.¹² The Foundation has stated that by funding these research centres it “aims to develop the next generation of leaders and institutions that will accelerate the end of smoking”.¹²⁹ Two of the grantees receiving funds to set up ‘Centres of Excellence’, [Riccardo Polosa](#) and Neil McKeganey, have previous, direct financial links to PMI. Full details on the research centres, their purposes and the people involved can be found at [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World Centres of Excellence](#).

- Alongside the HST Agenda, the Foundation launched a request in August 2018 for proposals on research concerning ‘Biomarkers of Nicotine Product Use.’¹³⁰ Here, the Foundation outlined a 3-year, nearly US\$10 million plan to fund research on biomarkers of exposure to different types of tobacco products.
- The [Global Forum on Nicotine](#) (GFN) and [Knowledge Action Change](#) (KAC) launched the Tobacco Harm Reduction Scholarship programme in 2018, to fund research into tobacco [harm reduction](#). This programme is sponsored by FSFW. The programme awarded 15 projects up to a value of \$7,500 each.¹³¹ For more information on KAC and its scholarship programme see its dedicated page: [Knowledge-Action-Change](#).
- In May 2018, it was reported that the Foundation was “in talks” to work in collaboration with the International Centre for Biotechnology (a UNESCO Category II Centre) at the University of Nigeria Nsukka.¹³²
- In March 2018, the Foundation launched its Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) in Malawi, headed by Jim Lutzweiler.¹³³ In July 2018, it was announced that ATI would fund a US\$10 million, 5-year project to set up a [Center for Agricultural Transformation](#) in Malawi to “contribute to the transformation of the agricultural sector and development of a knowledge economy in one of the world’s least developed countries.”¹³⁴
- In November 2017, the Foundation’s Board gave staff approval to make grants up to US\$2 million up to March 2018 without Board approval.⁸³ The Foundation received 60 proposals in response to their first Call of Interest for Projects, and the Foundation was “to convene with grant-making experts and the strongest grant candidates in February 2018”.¹³⁵

- Since 2017, the Foundation has funded The Conrad Spirit of Innovation Challenge (in collaboration with the Conrad Foundation), a program which invites high-school students (aged 13-18 years old) to “design 21st century solutions to re-purpose global farmland that is currently used for tobacco production, especially in African countries”.^{136 137} The 2019 focus of the program was on India, Malawi and China.¹³⁸ The Tobacco Control Research Group at the University of Bath contacted the Conrad Foundation to seek clarification of the nature of its sponsorship agreement with FSFW, but did not receive a reply.¹³⁹ For the 2019-2020 round, the Conrad Foundation added a special category, called “Re-purpose Farmlands & Tobacco Crops”, another challenge especially funded by the Foundation.¹⁴⁰ Registration for the 2020-21 Conrad Challenge opened 21 August 2020.¹⁴¹

Speaking at Conferences & Events

Examples of events at which the Foundation presented, or was scheduled to present:

- In September 2020, a new event website called “15 Years Conference” was launched. It streamed a two day conference sponsored by FSFW on the FCTC and “the challenges and opportunities in tobacco control from the lenses of diversity, development and tobacco harm reduction”.⁵⁷ Almost all speakers were [FSFW grantees](#).¹⁴² The event sought to highlight the FSFW-authored special issue in the journal *Drugs and Alcohol Today* (DAT). The conference organising team included Axel Klein (ACK Consultants)⁵⁵ and Sudhanshu Patwardhan ([CHRE](#)), both FSFW grantees.⁵⁷ Klein, is also the Editor of DAT.⁵⁴ The University of Kent’s logo appears at the bottom of the “15 Years” website, alongside Emerald Publishing (who publish DAT).⁵⁷ Klein is listed as a member of the University of Kent Centre for Biocultural Diversity.¹⁴³ The nature of affiliation of this event with the University of Kent is, however, unclear. Klein’s public LinkedIn profile does not refer to the University of Kent.¹⁴⁴
- Also in September 2020, FSFW hosted a booth at the virtual Global Forum on Tobacco and Nicotine (GTNF). This is the same event at which the Foundation was launched three years previously. During the event, FSFW launched its [Tobacco Transformation Index](#), as well as a new website called

“Understanding Nicotine”

(<https://www.understandingnicotine.org/>).¹⁴⁵ The website lacks any explicit reference to or branding for FSFW.

- In November 2019, the Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) hosted the second Agricultural Transformation Summit in Malawi.¹⁴⁶
- In November 2018, the Agricultural Transformation Initiative hosted the Agricultural Transformation Summit (ATS) in Malawi. The ATS was attended by Prince Kapondamgaga, CEO of Farmers Union of Malawi, a Foundation grantee, and Dr Alexander Bulirani, Controller of Agriculture Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, among others. The Foundation announced the launch of a Malawi-based [Center of Excellence](#), the [Center for Agricultural Transformation](#), at the event, as well as the opening of new funding and a scholarship fund endowed by the Foundation at Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Events.¹⁴⁷
- In February 2018, the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) (whose self-stated aim is to ‘promote the role of business in development’) collaborated with FSFW, holding ‘consultative meetings’ in Malawi where stakeholders including government officials were due to meet with the Vice President of FSFW, Dyborn Chibonga, who also holds a role on the Board of Directors of AICC.^{148 149 150}
- The Brocher Foundation’s ‘Ethics of Global Population Health’ event: Yach was scheduled to speak at this five-day event hosted by the Brocher Foundation, from 28 May to 1 June 2018.¹⁵¹ The Brocher Foundation states the event accepted “no funds from the tobacco industry or from any organizations supported by it”. On 29 May 2018, Yach was no longer listed as speaker on the Brocher Foundation’s website.¹⁵²
- Food Prize October 2017: FSFW hosted a session at the World Food Prize (an event that Yach has spoken at previously¹⁵³) called ‘An Exploration Into Food/Cash Crop Alternatives to Tobacco in Africa’. A website description of the event states that: “Foundation for a Smoke-Free World was founded in part to identify and promote alternate market-driven agricultural supply and value chains, as well as fundamental livelihood alternatives for current smallholder tobacco farmers in Africa. To be successful, this will require a new vision grounded in emerging science-based research, collaboration among corporate and civil society stakeholders based on the formation

of new business relationships, change of market and political incentives, alignment of interest with the tobacco industry, and support of governments.”¹⁵⁴

- Food and Drug Law Institute Annual Conference October 2017: Yach gave a keynote address on ‘designing the future of tobacco control’.^{155 156}
- E-Cigarette Summit November 2017: Yach participated in a discussion about FSFW during a session by Prof. Jean Francois Etter titled ‘The good, the bad and the ugly about the foundation for a smoke-free world’.¹⁵⁷ (Professor Etter noted he consulted Yach in preparation for his presentation)¹⁵⁸

TobaccoTactics Resources

- [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World People](#)
- [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World Centres of Excellence](#)
- [‘Foundation for a Smoke-Free World Grantees](#)
- [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: How it Frames Itself](#)
- [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World: Research Database](#)
- [Philip Morris International](#)
- [Front Groups](#)
- [Ogilvy](#)
- [Kantar](#)
- [MarketKonnnect](#)
- [Signals Analytics](#)
- [Influencing Science](#)
- [Influencing Science: Funding Scientists](#)

TCRG Research Blog