



SRNT

The SRNT 2025 Strategic Review is a 15 month-long process that the Board of Directors has undertaken in order to identify and address factors that we believe will impact the Society over the next 7 - 10 years. The goal is to arrive at member-informed conclusions, recommendations, and ultimately, Board actions that will set the stage for SRNT's future relevance, integrity, and sustainability.

• 2025 Strategic Review **MEMBERSHIP SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Forward.....	2
Survey Notes.....	3
Respondent Demographics.....	4
Purpose & Role Key Findings.....	5
Global Presence Key Findings.....	7
Industry Participation Key Findings.....	8

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Forward

The SRNT 2025 Strategic Review is a 15 month-long process that the Board has undertaken in order to identify and address factors that we believe will impact our Society over the next 7 - 10 years.

The Board of Directors engaged JFB & Associates to lead SRNT through this comprehensive strategic review.

SRNT 2025 kicked off in October, 2018, with an issues survey sent to a small but diverse cross-section of the SRNT membership (research disciplines, career stage, geography, etc.). That representative survey was followed by leadership interviews and two dedicated Board meetings, which resulted in the identification of three overarching areas of concern: Purpose & Role, Global Presence, and Industry Participation. The Board then seated three corresponding Work Advisory Groups, which were chaired or co-

chaired by three current and one former Board member. The Work Advisory Groups began the initial discussions of a full membership survey. A complete timeline of SRNT 2025 work can be found [here](#).

The Membership Survey, commissioned by the Board in late spring of 2019, was undertaken by Corona Insights, the professional consulting agency engaged by SRNT for its 2012/2013 Strategic Planning Process. The Membership Survey became the centerpiece of the SRNT 2025 Strategic Review.

The purpose of this Executive Summary, compiled by JFB & Associates based on data provided by Corona Insights, with minimal clarifying comments from Work Advisory Group members, is to report on and put into context the results of the 2019 Membership Survey.

The 2019 Membership Survey is one piece of the SRNT 2025 puzzle. Survey responses informed the deliberations of Work Advisory Groups and are reflected in the Guiding Principles and Recommended Boundary Standards, ***which are the key documents to come out of the SRNT 2025 Strategic Review.***

The goal of this work is to arrive at member-informed conclusions, recommendations, and ultimately, Board actions that will set the stage for SRNT's future relevance, integrity, and sustainability.



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Survey Notes

SRNT members received advance notification of the Membership Survey in May, 2019 and two invitations to complete the survey over the course of three weeks. A total of 503 members out of 1,144 (44%) started the survey; 448 (39%) completed it. It should be noted this response rate was comparable to the response rate of the SRNT member survey undertaken by the same consulting group during the 2012/2013 strategic planning process (38% completion).

Survey responses were generally representative of the membership demographics (see following page). Of note, the number of Full/Voting Members participating in the survey was greater than that group's number as a percentage of

membership (74% of respondents compared to 60% of the membership); the percentage of Student Members responding was one point greater than the percentage of Student Members (19% of respondents compared to 18% of the membership); and far fewer Affiliate Members participated in the membership survey (7% of respondents compared to 22% of the membership). Also of note, the percentage of non-US members participating in the survey was the same as the percentage of non-US members (17%).

According to Corona Insights, the survey response rate was more than acceptable for an opinion survey sent to an association

membership audience (their experiential average is 30%), and is sufficient to achieve a maximum margin of sampling error of $\pm 3.5\%$ at the 95% confidence level, meaning that SRNT members can be 95% confident that the values reported are within 3.5 percentage points of the true value among all members that received an invitation. Alternatively, accounting for the full population of SRNT's membership at the time (1,240) yields a margin of error of $\pm 3.7\%$. The difference between the total number of members (1,240) and the number of emails provided to Corona Insights (1,144) represents 96 SRNT members who had specifically chosen to be on SRNT's "Do Not Email" list.



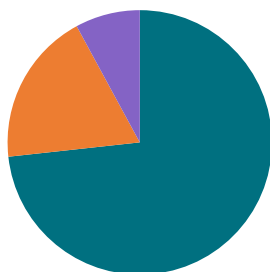
MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Membership Status

74% Full Member
(published, PhD-level
Researcher)

7% Affiliate & Retired

19% Student/Trainee
Member



Length of Membership (in years)

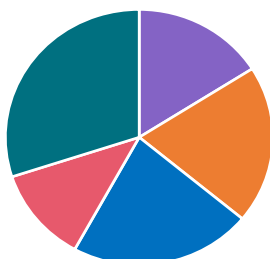
16% 0-1 (2018-2019)

20% 2-4 (2015-2017)

22% 5-9 (2010-2014)

12% 10-14 (2005-2009)

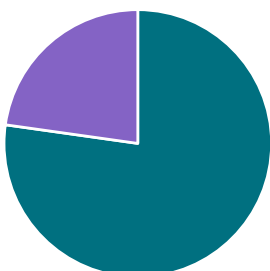
30% 15+ (2004 or before)



Frequency of Renewal

78% Always (I renew every
year)

22% Less Frequently



Network Membership

4% Genomics & Omics

10% Basic Science

18% Global Research

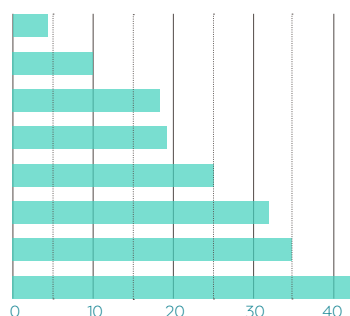
19% Trainee

25% Adolescents

32% Policy Research

35% Treatment

44% Health Disparities



Career Stage

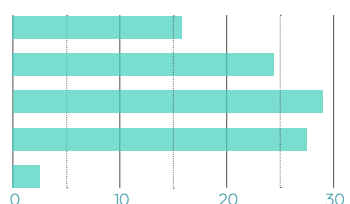
16% Student/Trainee

24% Early Career

29% Middle Career

28% Later Career

3% Retired



Community Identity

92% Research/Scientific

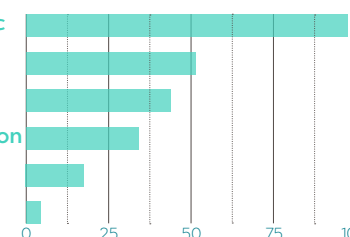
52% Public Health

43% Tobacco Control

34% Treatment/Cessation

18% Harm Reduction

4% Vaping



Gender



Female
42%



Male
55%



Prefer to
Self-Describe
4%

Current Country of Residence



United States
80%



All Other
Countries
17%



No Reply
3%



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Purpose & Role Key Findings

Finding: Members responding agreed the primary purpose of SRNT is research.

Nearly all respondents (96%) agreed that SRNT's primary role is to be "a research society involved in the presentation and sharing of pre-clinical, clinical, public health, and policy research related to nicotine and tobacco." Of those that responded, 85% agreed that SRNT's top priority is to be a voice for the scientific community. A majority (80%) also indicated a desire for SRNT to be a voice for adjacent communities (e.g., tobacco control community, clinical community) based on availability of resources and priorities.

Consultant's Note: Put into context with the expectation that SRNT's primary role is a scientific one, SRNT's engagement with adjacent communities would primarily be around the sharing of evidence, with a focus on advocating for the science, rather than taking sides on or positions advocating for others' agendas. Therefore, the connection between SRNT's primary role as a research society and the voice of the scientific community, and the desire to also be a voice for adjacent communities (such as the treatment/cessation and tobacco control communities), must be through SRNT's role as a scientific organization, as resources allow.

For additional information about how and when SRNT should engage with adjacent communities, please refer to the white paper, "SRNT and The Edge Zone," which can be found [here](#).

Finding: Members responding did not reach consensus about SRNT's role in other areas.

Overall, respondents had a slight preference for SRNT to take an inward focus on members rather than focusing on the broader community/general public (39% inward versus 34% outward; 27% no reply or neutral response). Respondents were also divided between wanting SRNT to act as an independent facilitator of scientific debates, on one end of the continuum, or preferring that SRNT act as an authority that takes sides, on the other end of the continuum (40% independent facilitator versus 42% take positions; 18% no reply or neutral response).

An important factor noted by 85% of respondents desiring SRNT to be a voice for the scientific community (reflected in the first Finding), and by those concerned about the presence of the Tobacco Industry at the Annual Meeting, was for SRNT to consider taking a position only when there is clear, verifiable science that SRNT can disseminate on behalf of its membership, and otherwise act as an independent facilitator of scientific debates.

There were also group differences in response to this series of questions. Late-career members responding (28% of the sample) were more conservative, preferring a more 'inward' focus on benefitting SRNT membership, and had no strong preference for SRNT to take public positions. This compares to early/mid-career

members responding (53% of the sample) who expressed more of a preference for SRNT to take public positions based on the science. Additionally, the respondents who were concerned about the presence of the Tobacco Industry at the Annual Meeting (please refer to Section 3 of this document for detail) were more likely to want SRNT to take positions in scientific debates, again with focus on the availability of the science.

Responding members who considered themselves part of the Harm Reduction Community (18% of the sample) were more likely to have a strong preference for SRNT to be an independent facilitator.

Consultant's Note: Ultimately, member responses suggest that being a leader in the field means providing a forum for, and facilitating the distribution of, the highest quality science and research related to nicotine and tobacco.

Purpose & Role Key Findings, continued 



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Purpose & Role Key Findings, continued

Finding: Members responding want SRNT to be more active in supporting early career researchers, and to focus on promoting the science.

The vast majority of respondents agreed they wanted to see SRNT be more active (39%) or much more active (31%) in “providing resources and opportunities to early career researchers.” There is clear support for SRNT to consider doing more to support early career researchers, and specifically to provide more resources/opportunities for researchers to present and/or share research.

Only 11% of respondents wanted SRNT to be much more active in “influencing public health advocacy groups related to nicotine and tobacco.” There was not an articulated preference for SRNT to expend time and/or resources to influence public health advocacy groups related to nicotine and tobacco issues. This supports the preference of those members responding for SRNT to focus on promoting the science and the development of scientists, and to not engage in the individual agendas of adjacent communities or take sides without clear and compelling scientific evidence.



Purpose & Role Summary Learning

SRNT is a scientific society, whose role is to promote unbiased science and the development of nicotine and tobacco scientists. SRNT should engage with adjacent communities from a scientific standpoint. Public positions should be taken by the Society only when there is clear, verifiable evidence. SRNT leads the field by providing an open forum for the presentation and discussion of science.

Divisions noted in responses underscore the importance of SRNT repeatedly seeking membership perspectives on its role as a Scientific Society comprised of individual members, especially as individual viewpoints change over time. There is a need for SRNT to be flexible and transparent in responding to changing membership viewpoints in order to accurately reflect and support the majority membership view.

[The Guiding Principles and Boundary Standards for Section 1, Purpose & Role, can be found here.](#)



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Global Presence Key Findings

Finding: Members responding favor SRNT finding ways to support researchers in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

While around 70% of respondents agreed that they desire SRNT to have a global presence, and that the Society had a responsibility to do so, less than half agreed (35%) or strongly agreed (13%) that they would be willing to pay higher dues and fees for SRNT to accomplish this.

Responses generally noted a desire to support LMIC researchers in some capacity but did not necessarily link that support to promoting membership, or increasing dues across the membership.

Consultant's Note: The implication of members' response—a desire for SRNT to have more global presence but unwillingness to pay higher dues—translates to SRNT investigating other methods to provide support through technology, SRNT University, and local collaborations (all cited by members in their responses).

Finding: Members responding are in favor of an increased focus on LMICs.

Of those responding, 50% wanted an increased focus on LMICs, and 22% wanted to focus on high-income countries (HICs). About 30% of respondents wanted SRNT to become more active in influencing public policy in LMICs, but with considerations of how SRNT might realistically influence public policy in LMICs based on the available science and SRNT's resource capacity to do so.



Global Presence Summary Learning

Responding members support SRNT having more of a global presence and generally supporting LMIC researchers, though most are not willing to pay higher dues in order to do so. A minority of respondents support SRNT actively working to influence public policy in LMICs. More research is required in this area, particularly to ascertain specific needs of LMIC researchers and how SRNT can best respond within limited financial and volunteer constraints.

The Guiding Principles and Boundary Standards for Section 2, Global Presence, can be found [here](#).



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Consultant's Notes: Current SRNT policy states that Tobacco Industry employees are ineligible for membership in SRNT; employees of the E-Cigarette Industry and pharmaceutical industries are eligible for membership if they meet membership criteria as stated in the SRNT Bylaws. There are no exclusion criteria for attending the SRNT Annual Meeting, at present.

The singular issue of Tobacco Industry participation was approached from several different angles, which are put into context in these summary comments.

Industry Participation Key Findings

Finding: Members responding were concerned about Tobacco Industry participation, but split on resolution.

71% of member respondents agreed that they were “concerned” about “the presence of Tobacco Industry and its participation in the SRNT Annual Meeting.” Yet, based on responses to subsequent questions it became clear that “concern” does not equate to a “ban,” as detailed below.

- Attendance at Annual Meeting: 54% of members responding were in favor of Tobacco Industry employees attending all or some of the Annual Meeting compared to 41% of respondents who stated that Tobacco Industry employees should be excluded from attending altogether.

- Presentation at Annual Meeting: 57% of members responding supported allowing presentations with clear disclosures and higher level of peer review, while 43% of respondents favored total exclusion of Tobacco Industry employees presenting at the Annual Meeting.

Consultant's Note: While Tobacco Industry participation in SRNT's Annual Meeting raised concerns for the majority of members responding, the distinct division in member responses necessitates compromise concerning Tobacco Industry participation in SRNT's Annual Meeting. It is the responsibility of SRNT leadership to establish clear guidelines and boundaries for participation and attendance by employees of the Tobacco Industry at the Annual Meeting.

These findings also make clear it will be difficult to satisfy the entire membership regarding this important but polarizing issue.

Finding: Members responding viewed the E-cigarette and Tobacco Industries similarly.

Similar to the responses concerning Tobacco Industry participation, 65% of respondents agreed they were concerned about “the presence of E-cigarette Industry and its participation in the SRNT Annual Meeting.”

However, 62% of members responding were supportive of representatives from the E-cigarette Industry attending all or some of

the Annual Meeting, regardless of E-cigarette company ownership, thus highlighting a comparable division of opinion regarding prohibiting participation or allowing participation with restrictions, as was seen with the Tobacco Industry.

Consultant's Note: There were no clarifying factors that made ownership or non-ownership of the E-cigarette company by the Tobacco Industry (of which the majority are) more acceptable than the other, pointing to a possible conclusion that E-cigarette companies should be treated similarly to those in the Tobacco Industry. The SRNT leadership needs to set clear guidelines for participation by the E-cigarette Industry at the Annual Meeting, regardless of ownership.

Industry Participation Key Findings, continued 



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Industry Participation Key Findings, continued

Finding: Members responding welcomed non-Tobacco Industry funded private foundations and consumer groups.

Clear disclosure of funding sources was cited as having the greatest relevance for participation at the Annual Meeting and membership in SRNT regardless of industry. In terms of private foundations funded by the Tobacco Industry, 72% of respondents were in favor of individuals presenting, but noted the need for clear disclosure (45%) and higher peer review (27%). 80% of respondents said individuals funded by consumer advocacy groups should be eligible for SRNT membership and participation.

Finding: Members responding were split on how to treat Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry consultants.

There was not an overwhelming majority stance regarding consultants. While just over half (56%) of respondents said they saw no difference between employees and those consulting for/accepting research funds from Tobacco and E-cigarette companies, the other half responded that consultants should be considered differently. This dichotomy of responses underscores the necessity for SRNT to consider the impact of excluding those accepting research funds from or consulting with Tobacco

or E-cigarette Industries, in particular noting comments that members who saw a difference said consulting for/accepting research from an industry had more existing checks and balances (via agreement declarations) than direct employment.

Consultant's Note: Due to the lack of agreement on the level of engagement with SRNT that Industry consultants should be allowed, it becomes the responsibility of the SRNT leadership to set clear parameters for their membership and participation in SRNT, based on information gathered about the differing levels of consultancy and the nature of each consultant-member's relationship with the Tobacco and E-cigarette Industries.

Finding: In open-ended questions, members responding voiced strong and divergent opinions about Tobacco and/or E-cigarette Industry funding.

Responses clearly demonstrated that a majority of members responding believe funding sources should be considered when accepting research for presentation and dissemination at the Annual Meeting and in the Society journal, *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* (as previously noted, there was not agreement that Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry submissions should automatically be disqualified). Specifically, 73% of respondents believe funding sources should be considered when selecting keynote speakers; 68% believe funding sources should

be considered when accepting symposia; 67% believe funding sources should be considered when selecting papers for oral presentation; 64% believe funding sources should be considered when reviewing submissions for the Journal; and 61% believe funding sources should be considered when reviewing poster presentations.

Comments indicated that those who support Industry participation in the Annual Meeting believe Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry employees should be evaluated by the quality of their research, just as all other presenters are evaluated. These respondents claimed prohibiting Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry participation would harm a free and open discussion of science, and run the very real risk of censorship.

Conversely, those who were against Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry participation argued the presence of these Industry-funded individuals was stifling free and open discussion. These respondents asserted Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry-funded individuals have motivations to obscure results and limit the propagation of disparaging findings.



MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: Executive Summary

Industry Participation Key Findings, continued



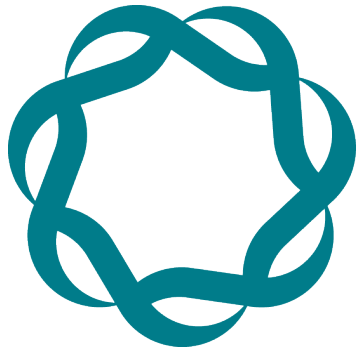
Industry Participation Summary Learning

Not surprisingly, SRNT members are divided on this important issue that has been part of the Society since its inception. If employees from the Tobacco and E-cigarette Industries are allowed to continue participating in the Annual Meeting, then full disclosure is critical. The same can be said for individuals who consult with these industries. It will be important to establish a balance between concerns that Tobacco and E-cigarette Industry participation may have a negative influence on the Annual Meeting and concerns that excluding researchers could stifle the science.

Therefore, it is the role of SRNT leadership to set standards (e.g., requiring disclosures, establishing participation limitations) that establish a middle ground respectful of members on both sides of this divisive issue; one that provides a neutral as well as advantageous ground for presentation, discussion and debate of the science.

The Guiding Principles and Boundary Standards for Section 3, Industry Participation, can be found [here](#).





SRNT

• 2025 Strategic Review
**MEMBERSHIP SURVEY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**