



SRNT

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Racial Equity Task Force Report Update July 1, 2024

The SRNT Racial Equity Task Force submitted its Final Report to the Board of Directors in 2022 following 18 months of focus groups, discussions with stakeholders, and thoughtful discussion and debate. The [Final Report](#) contained more than 60 recommendations that would move SRNT toward becoming an anti-racist organization.

The following are Task Force recommendations that have either been completed and checked off the list, or have begun and remain ongoing:

1. Create a standing Racial Equity Committee to continue monitoring SRNT's progress with recommendations from the Racial Equity Task Force; monitor and assist with ongoing and new initiatives; provide support and consultation to the Board and other SRNT groups; and continue to have conversations with stakeholders and members about issues of racial equity within SRNT.
2. Appoint a member of the Racial Equity Committee to serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors.
3. Conduct a comprehensive review of SRNT Bylaws related to membership eligibility, voting eligibility, and eligibility to run for elected office; identify, remove, and/or mitigate barriers that impact SRNT members from minoritized communities and priority populations. Member(s) of the Racial Equity Committee should be part of the comprehensive Bylaws review.
4. Create a Health Equity track for the Annual Meeting, this will include having a 5th co-Chair to support this track.
5. Adopt a policy of no Tobacco Industry employee involvement in SRNT-sponsored activities.
6. Prohibit commercial tobacco-industry employees from attending the SRNT Annual Meeting due to the inherent conflicts of interest with health as well as its racist history and continuous practices in targeting racial/ethnic minority populations (except for nicotine replacement therapy approved by the FDA, Therapeutic Goods Administration, or equivalent)
7. Prohibit commercial tobacco-industry funded research from being presented at SRNT due to the inherent conflicts of interest with health as well as its

- racist history and continuous practices in targeting racial/ethnic minority populations.
8. Ban tobacco industry employees from participation in Chapter events.
 9. Ban tobacco industry employees from participating in webinars or other Network activities.
 10. Develop Indigenous Research and Health Equity Research content/sections in SRNT-U.
 11. Include on the Program Committee representation of researchers from diverse racial, ethnic, and Indigenous populations who conduct research with these populations.
 12. Assess diversity through the abstract submission system with respect to race/ethnicity, gender, and country, with the ultimate goal of increasing the diversity of presenters.
 13. At the beginning of SRNT-sponsored meetings, acknowledge the original inhabitants of the land in accordance with local practice.
 14. Consider allowing non-members with relevant racial equity/health equity expertise and/or lived experience to serve as Program Committee members and/or reviewers as appropriate.
 15. Make racial/ethnic/Indigenous diversity in theme lecturers (Basic, clinical, public health/policy, health equity) and Presidential Symposia a priority.
 16. Include “has strong racial equity/social justice policies” as a consideration when identifying potential host cities and hotel chains for the Annual Meeting
 17. Have each Network adopt an equity statement of explicit commitment to promoting equity and diversity.
 18. Utilize the Nominations Committee to enhance racial diversity on the SRNT Board, especially Presidents.
 19. Update SRNT’s Society Values page to reflect SRNT’s commitment to being an anti-racist scientific society, including (but by no means limited to):
Recognition and denouncement of historical and ongoing patterns of discrimination and dehumanization;
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Commitment to respect of the humanity of all persons, acknowledging race, religion, sex and gender, sexual orientation, abilities, age, and/or national origin.
 20. Adopt and advocate for a clear distinction between ceremonial and commercial tobacco use. Indigenous knowledges, sciences, research and values and the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples are commonly sidelined through the ongoing mechanics of colonization. Prior to colonization, many Indigenous peoples used tobacco as a sacred medicinal plant in ceremonial and cultural practices. Tobacco has often been used to promote wellness for individuals and communities, and Indigenous peoples across the world have unique practices, protocols, and relationships with a variety of plants. While some Indigenous peoples use tobacco for ceremonial purposes, a significant change came through colonization and the commercialization of tobacco; selling back an appropriated and distorted culture to Indigenous peoples as consumers. Further, “Tobacco” is a term in Taíno, a language of the Arawakan people of the Caribbean, but was claimed

by the Spanish in 1550. This claiming of language was one of the first forms of colonization, and we continue to see this play out in Indigenous languages, knowledges, and academic discourse as we continue to see this play out in Indigenous languages, knowledges, and academic discourse as we continue to sideline Indigenous knowledges, sciences, research and values.

21. Encourage SRNT's management company, The Rees Group, Inc., to engage in hiring practices that promote a diverse workforce.
22. Develop clear statements about the journal's commitment to promote racial equity.
23. Ban tobacco industry employees from submitting research to *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* for peer review and inviting tobacco industry employees to serve as reviewers.
24. Incorporate use of a specialty deputy editor (or an editorial team) for racial equity, similar to the specialty deputy statistical editor, to review papers that specifically address race, ethnicity, and Indigeneity.
25. Develop ways to track and promote race/ethnicity/Indigenous diversity among all editorial staff (editor, deputies, associates), reviewers, and authors.

Additional information on *Nicotine & Tobacco Research's* Racial Equity efforts can be found [here](#).

The following are Task Force Recommendations that are on the Board's or Racial Equity Committee's current "to do" list. The Committee, in particular, is thoughtfully working through each of these recommendations—implementation details and steps are often complex and raise more questions than they answer—some of which will require additional input and guidance. It is my hope the Board and Racial Equity Committee will have made it through this second group of recommendations by the time we meet at the SRNT 2026 Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

26. When using terms to describe socially constructed identities of various populations and peoples, we recommend that the Board consider the relevant context and relationships of power, positions of power, and structures of power in understanding patterns of race, ethnic, and Indigenous-based based and ancestral outcomes. We recommend that the Board engage with the population group(s) of interest when discussing these issues, adopting an approach led by the population group of interest, or co-led approach(es) with the population of interest to help balance power relationships by prioritizing self-determination and sovereignty. This is consistent with the principle of "nothing about us without us" and will help to ensure the respective SRNT processes aid in dismantling white supremacy, recognize and support cultural preservation, and appropriate language and practices are used without doing harm.
27. Adopt a statement denouncing the racist history of commercial tobacco use (e.g., targeted marketing, regulation loopholes, cultural appropriation).
28. Encourage Chapters to incorporate any new SRNT policies/procedures that address racial equity and inclusion in their own governing documents (e.g., promoting racial equity in leadership, membership, and conference activities).
29. Update SRNT's "Guiding Principles" to reflect the value of racial equity and anti-racism across SRNT.
30. Develop a clear statement of commitment from the Board to cultivate a safe space for diverse perspectives, respectful discourse, and thoughtful decision making. This would apply

to the Board of Directors as well as any and every appointed group (Network leadership, committees, etc).

31. Update SRNT's Policies and Procedures to promote a culture of inclusivity across all SRNT programs and activities, ensuring that research on minoritized populations is valued and promoted (e.g., the equivalent to basic science, policy, or treatment research), transparent and inclusive decision-making processes.
32. Develop an anti-racist procedure for identifying diverse Program Committee members and abstract reviewers.
33. Make clear statements about how race, ethnicity, and Indigeneity should be addressed in submissions (e.g., language to address specific population groups, providing context for analyses and/or findings related to race) in the Instructions for Authors and Instructions for Reviewers. This should also include a comment that race has been used to harm specific populations in the past and this needs to be explicitly acknowledged.
34. Among Chapters, promote membership diversity, including exploring race/ethnicity/indigeneity of members, and conference and other program attendees to ensure safe and appropriate programming and allow for evaluation of racial equity efforts.
35. The Board should consult the Chapters to better understand racial equity issues/challenges unique to their regions and encourage Chapters to find ways to begin tackling those issues as related to the nicotine and commercial tobacco research community.
36. Allow Networks to recognize scientific accomplishments as well as Network service. Seat a joint task force of Awards Committee members and Network representatives to recommend guidelines for ways Networks can expand and enhance SRNT's efforts to recognize excellence in science.
37. Using SRNT Oceania's Acknowledgement Statement and Ethical Principles, develop a guide for Ethical Research for researchers across the globe.
38. The REC will recommend additional Values for the Board to approve.