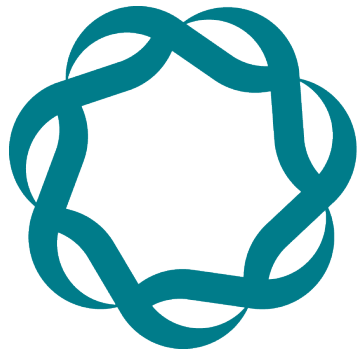




SRNT

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 **WHITE PAPER:** **The Edge Effect**

There's a phenomenon in nature called the Edge Effect that describes the distinctly active, generative effects that occur at the boundary of two habitats.

"When two ecosystems meet, at the edge where they meet you have the most diversity in new life forms." (The Edge Effect: Where Innovation Happens, Aspen Institute interview with Yo Yo Ma).

WHITE PAPER: The Edge Effect

The initial round of SRNT 2025 Work Advisory Group meetings brought incredible clarity to an overarching challenge for SRNT – members have the tendency to bring to the table their own unique perspective of what SRNT is or is not as a Society, based on their own career beliefs and research discipline, as well as strong personal opinions on a multitude of issues. Some members assume that SRNT is a tobacco control organization, while others assume it is a treatment organization. Some think SRNT should engage in advocacy (relative to their own advocacy agenda) while others do not (relative to their own lack of an advocacy agenda). There is disagreement between those who see SRNT as an organization that is focused solely on the generation and dissemination of the science and those who believe SRNT should be actively engaged in how that science is used by adjacent communities. And, some members think SRNT's role in LMICs is akin to that of a traditional NGO.

These divergent perspectives bring challenge and opportunity to the SRNT 2025 process, as it is not possible for SRNT to fill such a wide spectrum of roles and expectations. SRNT's specific, unique role is that of a scientific membership association in the broader community of nicotine/tobacco public health organizations, with its own specific, unique agenda. How that role and agenda affect how

SRNT interacts with adjacent communities that have some level of mutual interest but also have their own unique roles, missions, and agendas is a fundamental question that the SRNT 2025 review process was intended to answer.

The phenomenon of the Edge Effect – that innovation is stimulated when two separate systems come together in the Edge Zone – provides a useful paradigm for thinking about how SRNT interacts with adjacent communities working in the broader nicotine/tobacco community. The Edge Effect has been used to better focus the discussions and recommendations of the Work Groups, and will continue to provide focus to the Board when considering future partnership opportunities.

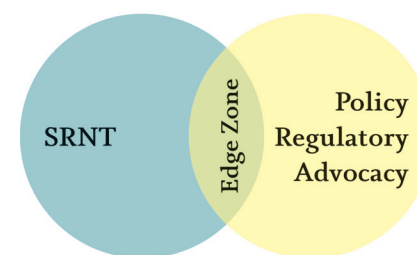
To visualize the Edge Zone and Edge Effect concepts, imagine SRNT as a blue circle and the adjacent community of Policy/Regulator/Advocacy as a separate, yellow circle:



If these two circles do not intersect, then the research base developed by SRNT never informs Policy/Regulatory/Advocacy efforts and the questions these experts have are never shared with researchers in SRNT.

Similarly, if the two circles completely overlap, then the two communities are virtually one and the same; sharing the same purpose, mission, agenda, and priorities.

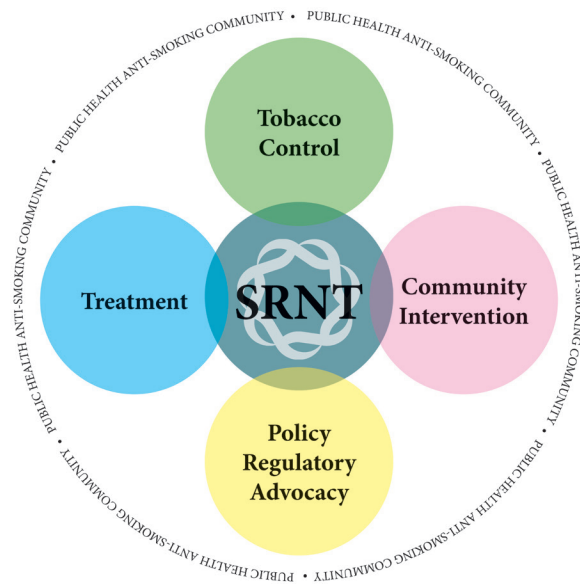
However, when there is some measure of overlap (the green area) both groups are able to take advantage of the fertility within the Edge Zone (i.e., where the scientific community and the Policy/Regulatory/Advocacy communities come together for mutual benefit). That fertility represents the Edge Effect. To determine the extent to which SRNT intersects with organizations in adjacent communities, there needs to be a clear definition of SRNT's BLUE circle and a definition of the GREEN area (i.e., Edge Zone):



WHITE PAPER: The Edge Effect

The Edge Zone – the borders – must be negotiated with each individual community based on its needs, how those needs fit with SRNT’s scope/purpose, and SRNT’s capacity to provide support. This discussion must be held each time an adjacent community or organization asks for or assumes SRNT support. SRNT must set the borders of the Edge Zone, or those borders will be set for us and not necessarily in a way that maintains SRNT’s agenda, priorities, or unique position.

The following graphic reflects four examples of the adjacent communities with which SRNT interacts:



It is critical for SRNT to maintain its own identity – its own circle – particularly as it partners with various groups who may, unintentionally, perceive SRNT as automatically sharing all of their respective goals, priorities, and agendas simply because of frequent interaction, or the fact that individual members of SRNT also belong to these adjacent communities.

If SRNT cannot maintain its unique identity within the broader community of adjacent groups, then it will be pulled in too many directions; it will lose focus and its ability stay true to its scientific mission to stimulate the generation and dissemination of new knowledge concerning nicotine in all its manifestations. Furthermore, if SRNT loses its identity as a scientific society, then we lose our unique contributions to the Edge Effect and thereby lose all of the generative effect of this intersection.

Recognizing and focusing on a limited, well-defined role or field of crossover will serve to clearly identify how SRNT best contributes to the Edge Effect.

The SRNT Board has the leadership role and responsibility to make decisions about these borders and specifying what SRNT is and is not, from now into the future. These distinctions have and will continue to provide guidance throughout the SRNT 2025 review process. They will also be key to future conversations about SRNT’s interactions with other organizations in the nicotine/tobacco community. Edge Zone borders will guide decisions while consciously maintaining SRNT’s unique identity and role, and it’s ultimate focus on science.



SRNT

• 2025 Strategic Review
WHITE PAPER:
The Edge Effect