

# Review of "The Foundation for a Smoke-Free World after two years: can it be trusted?"

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This is an nicely written descriptive review of the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World. After two years of operation I think the jury is still out on what the Foundation has actually accomplished or can realistically accomplish. There has been some transparency in operations of the Foundation, but much of it is secretative, which given the funding source is problematic. The Foundation's activities have been hampered by public health groups that have opposed its operations from the beginning (WHO and CTFKs among others). The suspicion of public health groups should come as no surprise given the clear history of the cigarette companies' deceit in funding of past research in the name of public health. Also, the Foundation's original creation was done in a way that largely guaranteed opposition from the beginning. Based on the first two years of operations it is hard to see how the Foundation will achieve much to accelerate a reduction in the use of combustible tobacco. However, in fairness to the Foundation it is too early to tell; research centers have only recently been supported. However, I've not seen a clear vision for research that would give me confidence that the Foundation's activities will do anything meaningful to harm cigarette production. My sense is the Foundation was not a good idea to begin with; it has created division within public health which in the end only helps the cigarette industry.

Cigarette companies have it within their capability to transform themselves, but this will not happen unless they are pushed to make changes more rapidly. So far, I've not seen the Foundation operating in a way that would bring about the kind of pressure for the industry to change. In fact, I would say now three years into the Foundation's lifecycle the Foundation has helped provide evidence within the cigarette industry to oppose rather than accelerate change. That is truly disappointing. The article attempts to provide an objective assessment of the Foundation and I think fairly offers a pessimistic view of its accomplishments and prospects for the future.