

Concept Note: Youth Photography Contest

"Unmasking the Tobacco Industry in a Single Frame"

Background and Rationale

The tobacco industry (TI) continues to use deceptive tactics to promote its products and shape public policy, often concealing its true intentions behind misleading marketing, so-called corporate social responsibility activities, and the promotion of new nicotine and tobacco products. These strategies are designed to attract and addict youth, who are particularly vulnerable to industry manipulation. Unmasking the tobacco industry means exposing these harmful tactics, raising awareness about its real motives, and protecting public health from industry interference.

Photography can be a powerful way to expose what lies beneath the surface. By encouraging young people to document how the tobacco industry appears in their communities, this contest aims to raise awareness, inspire advocacy, and challenge the industry's influence using the creative power of a single image. In addition, it seeks to understand the perspectives of youth and how they experience the presence of tobacco products and industry activities in their daily lives. Centering the youth voices provides critical insights that can inform tobacco control strategies that are more relevant, resonant, and effective for their generation.

Objectives

- To raise awareness among youth about the tobacco industry tactics.
- To inspire youth to observe and document industry interference in their daily environments
- To promote visual storytelling as a powerful tool for advocacy and education in tobacco control
- To capture the tobacco industry as seen from the perspective of youth
- To provide a platform for youth voices in tobacco control efforts.

Eligibility

- Age group: 13 to 35 years old
- Open to all youth regardless of location or photography experience
- Participants can use mobile phones or any type of camera
- Any camera or smartphone may be used (**only one photo per participant**)

Suggested Themes and Examples

Participants are invited to submit a photo that captures their perceptions of the tobacco industry's influence on youth, including its promotion of tobacco products and other industry activities. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Advertising or promotional materials (in shops, online, or public spaces)
- Sale of tobacco or nicotine products near schools or playgrounds
- Product displays in stores that appeal to youth
- CSR or donations from tobacco-related companies
- Vaping and other new product promotions targeting young people
- Environmental pollution from cigarette waste
- Social media or influencer marketing related to tobacco or nicotine.

Participants are also welcome to explore other aspects of tobacco industry tactics and their influence on youth beyond these themes.

Submission Requirements

Each entry must include the following:

1. One original photo related to the contest theme
 - Image files should be 2 to 10 megabytes, must be in JPEG, JPG, or PNG format, must have a capture resolution of 1600x1200 pixels, and can be in portrait or landscape orientation.
 - Basic post-processing such as color correction, exposure adjustment, and cropping is allowed; however, heavy manipulation (e.g., adding or removing elements) is not permitted.
 - Photos that have been published or won awards in other photographic contests or AI-generated images will not be considered.
2. A title or caption for the image
3. A short narrative (maximum 250 words) explaining:
 - What the photo shows and its significance
 - Date and location where the photo was taken
 - What device or equipment was used
 - The meaning or message behind the image in one sentence

4. Minors must complete a form and provide written consent from their legal representative(s) to participate
5. Include consent if people appear in the image; if they are 18 or under, they must be fully anonymized and not personally identifiable.

Photos must be taken by the participant and must not violate any privacy or copyright rules. If the photo includes identifiable people, participants must obtain written consent from the subjects and upload the consent forms along with their entry submission via the Google Form.

Submission Rules: Prohibited Content

1. No Pornographic or Sexually Explicit Content

Photos that include nudity or show sexual acts—either directly or suggestively—will be automatically disqualified.

2. No Sexual Innuendo or Suggestive Poses

Entries must not include gestures, poses, expressions, or outfits that imply sexual meaning or provoke sexual interpretation.

3. No Implicit Sexual Themes

Photos that may appear innocent but carry subtle or symbolic sexual connotations will be carefully reviewed and may be rejected if deemed inappropriate.

4. Respect and Cultural Sensitivity

All submissions must respect cultural norms and sensitivities. Content that may be interpreted as degrading, exploitative, or objectifying any individual or group based on sexual content will not be accepted.

Judging Panel

Submissions will be evaluated by a diverse panel of judges from different regions, including:

- Experts from the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub for Public Awareness
- Journalists at the Center for Studies on Tobacco and Health (CETAB/Fiocruz)
- Professional photographers with a focus on social or health issues

Evaluation Criteria

Judges will assess entries based on:

- Relevance to the theme

- Originality and creativity
- Visual impact and clarity
- Strength of the story or message
- Technical quality of the photo

Prizes

- For 10-18-year-olds
 - First Prize: USD 500
 - Second Prize: USD 300
 - Third Prize: USD 100
- For 19-35 years old
 - First Prize: USD 500
 - Second Prize: USD 300
 - Third Prize: USD 100
- Honorary mention

Winners will also receive certificates and have their work featured in campaigns, exhibitions, or educational materials developed by the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub for Article 5.3 and the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub for Public Awareness.

Timeline

- Launch date: 12 August 2025 (International Youth Day)
- Submission deadline: 12 September 2025 at 11:59 p.m. Thailand time
- Winners announced: 30 September 2025

Additional Notes

- Participants must confirm that the photo is the original work and sign a conflict of interest form.

- By entering, participants (or their parent/guardian, if under 18) grant the organizers a worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to use, reproduce, publish, adapt, and display the submitted photos in any media, for educational, promotional, or advocacy purposes related to tobacco control. Participants retain ownership of their photos, and proper credit will be given to the photographer whenever possible.
- Ethical standards must be followed. Entries that risk harm, misrepresentation, or disrespect will be disqualified.
- Employees of the WHO FCTC Knowledge Hubs and their family members are not eligible to participate in the contest.

How to Submit

The submission form will be accessible at: [[Google Form](#)]

For questions or more information, contact Dr. Ye Htut Oo (yehtut.oo@kh.tu.ac.th).