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NNEdPro 15-Year Odyssey

Pioneering Nutrition Excellence and Transforming Global Nutrition Education

Celebrating fifteen years of groundbreaking work, the NNEdPro Global Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health stands as a beacon for knowledge translation with a vision of impact. Founded in 2008, in Cambridge (UK), NNEdPro embarked on a journey to advance and implement food and nutrition knowledge for the betterment of health and society worldwide.¹ Recognising the disparities in nutrition education within health systems in particular, NNEdPro operates as a bridge between research and practice. In collaboration with professionals globally, it assesses and addresses nutrition practice gaps. Despite the extensive focus on applying evidence from human nutrition research, NNEdPro recognises the significant gap in investment toward developing and evaluating the efficacy of these approaches. This acknowledgment serves as the catalyst for NNEdPro's lean-innovation approach, transcending regional networks established to include over 65 countries. Leveraging the Knowledge-to-Action Cycle, NNEdPro seamlessly bridges high-quality research to practical implementation, promoting best practices in the field.²

The evolution – from need to global excellence

NNEdPro's roots trace back to the 2007 Nutrition Action Plan of the UK Health Department. It initially took shape as the Need for Nutrition Education Project (2008-10), supported by the National Institute of Health Research. Evolving into the Need for Nutrition Education/Innovation Programme (2011-15), backed by the Medical Research Council, NNEdPro emphasised innovation in addressing nutrition challenges. With additional support from Innovate UK, NNEdPro underwent a transformation, becoming the NNEdPro Global Centre for Nutrition and Health (2016-22).¹ In July 2022, NNEdPro experienced significant restructuring, emerging as the NNEdPro Global Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health. This transformation incorporated the functions of an independent research organisation, an education and training centre and advisory services. Anchored at St John's Innovation Centre, NNEdPro operates virtually across borders, proudly featuring a Virtual Core Team of over 60 highly qualified professionals and a wider member of over 700 across six continents.²

Foundation of knowledge & education

NNEdPro is dedicated to enriching nutritional education and capacity through diverse initiatives. Central to this mission is the NNEdPro Summer School in Applied Human Nutrition, now a continuous learning programme,

offering a comprehensive Foundation Certificate Course tailored for an interdisciplinary range of professionals. The Summer School provides 360 degrees of exposure to core and current topics in applied human nutrition, featuring speakers from various disciplines.

The International Summit on Food, Nutrition and Health serves as a crucial platform for policy dialogue and collaboration. Originating in 2015, the Summit has become a dynamic space for international cooperation. In 2018, NNEdPro further extended the pathway to impact by co-founding BMJ Nutrition, Prevention and Health, now a leading peer reviewed journal in the field.² The International Academy of Nutrition Educators (IANE) complements the NNEdPro mission, offering a global platform for individuals passionate about enhancing nutrition education and evaluating its impact on practice. Together, these initiatives form a comprehensive framework that aligns with the NNEdPro commitment to advancing nutrition capacity building on a global scale.

Bridging research & practice

NNEdPro also houses a dynamic Independent Research Organisation, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration across clinical, biomedical, public health and related fields. Integral to this are a Data Science and Evidence Synthesis Hub, which has seen significant growth since 2020.³



NNEdPro International Summit
www.nnedpro.org.uk/summit



NNEdPro Summer School
www.nnedpro.org.uk/summer-school



International Academy of Nutrition Educators <https://iane.online/>

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Focused on methodological advancements, the hub employs cutting-edge analytical approaches to address crucial questions related to nutrition, disease prevention and health interventions, aiming to bridge the gap between scientific research and evidence-informed professional education and practice.

Collaborations & partnerships

The NNEdPro collaborative journey has been marked by strong support from esteemed institutions, such as the MRC Elsie Widdowson Laboratory and Human Nutrition Research unit where NNEdPro was hosted from 2010-2018, and the British Dietetic Association which provided invaluable strategic and operational support over 15 years. Key collaborations with the University of Cambridge, Ulster University, Imperial College London and a wide range of academic institutions and specialist organisations have played a pivotal role in our mission. As a proud member of multiple UKRI-supported research consortia, the institute has actively collaborated with over a hundred international partners.² These collaborations include initiatives such as the 'GCRF Cambridge TIGR2ESS' Group and BBSRC Food Biosystems DTP Group. NNEdPro has also established subsidiary initiatives including the CREATE Global Leadership Academy, which promotes the development of interdisciplinary transformational leadership across education, research and health sectors, as well as The International Food and Nutrition (TIFN) Trust, which recognises excellence across the world through its award scheme.² NNEdPro strategically manages these partner initiatives, aligning them with the overarching mission of advancing education for social impact.

MTK: a culmination of success in nutrition education

One of NNEdPro's notable achievements is the Mobile Teaching Kitchen (MTK) International Initiative, originating in Kolkata, India, in 2017. Originally conceived as a nutrition education tool, it has now evolved into a transformative force addressing food insecurity and malnutrition. This grassroots initiative not only promotes health but also empowers marginalised communities by training women as micro-entrepreneurs and culinary health educators. The MTK enhances nutrition-related Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP), fostering community resilience through knowledge dissemination and public-facing microenterprise around affordable healthy diets. The programme employs the 'See One-Do One-Teach One' (SO-DO-TO) training method that facilitates the transfer of nutritional knowledge and culinary skills in the process of providing a nutritional and health sensitive food service to the public led by champions drawn from underserved populations.⁴

The MTK offers a viable solution by delivering nutrition education through practical demonstrations and verbal communication, making it accessible even in areas with literacy challenges. This initiative transforms marginalised community members into culinary nutrition and health educators capable of operating micro-enterprises, distributing healthy food, knowledge and practical skills to all echelons of the general public while generating revenue for their own families and communities.

From Kolkata to the world: the MTKs trailblazing path to the UK

Following receipt of the *Society for Nutrition Education and Behaviour (SNEB) 2022 Program Impact Award*, as well as the successful adaptation and implementation of the MTK in Mexico and the USA, in April 2023, the MTK made its official debut in the UK, bringing its transformative potential to a nation grappling with complex diet and health related challenges. Crucial dialogues with stakeholders, including UK Government representatives, underscored the innovative approach that MTK brings to tackle nutrition-related issues in the UK. The initial steps in launching the MTK in the UK included a public-facing workshop in Cambourne in April 2023, through a collaboration with CamCare UK and the University of Brighton. This launch initiated NNEdPro-UK roadshow events in September 2023 across key regions: London, Cambridge, Belfast, Aberdeen and Dundee.⁵ Further to this, with competitively won seed funding in November 2023, a culinary nutrition education workshop took place in Dundee, Scotland, in collaboration with the Dundee and Angus College.⁵ Participants learned about food groups, interpreting labels, and mastering skills for healthier recipe substitutions, all with a focus on nutrient profiles. This led to the training of 17 culinary professionals and the creation of a hub that will now serve to recruit, train and support UK MTK champions as the model is implemented further in the UK.

The adaptability and future scalability of the MTK is evident in its expansion to Mexico, the USA and, most recently, the UK, aligning with the initiative's commitment to diverse global impact.

A movement for change: the MTK vision for a better future

The MTK is a movement striving for universal nutrition education access and improvement. With the UK launch signalling a new chapter, NNEdPro envisions extending its 15-year legacy, continually shaping global nutrition education, research, and advocacy, to bring together professionals and policymakers in the spirit population service innovation. Through strategic partnerships, and groundbreaking initiatives such as the MTK, NNEdPro stands poised for a future that seeks to democratise food and nutrition knowhow from science to society.

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