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IISc announces partnership with Tufts University to establish Centre for Nutrition Science and Medicine

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Addressing the entire disease spectrum arising out of malnutrition as well as obesity



Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tufts University in the US, to foster academic and research collaborations, specifically in the area of nutrition science and medicine.

The agreement establishes a framework for the development of a range of possible initiatives jointly pursued by the two institutions.

Foremost among the collaborations envisioned is the creation of a centre of excellence focused on nutrition science and medicine. To be housed at IISc, the proposed centre, known as the Interdisciplinary Centre for Nutrition Science and Medicine (ICNSM).

Among that centre's earliest priorities will be to initiate research across categories (basic, applied, clinical, and translational) occurring at both the Gerald J and Dorothy R Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University and IISc. This will, in turn, create opportunities for collaboration, visiting scholars at both institutions, and innovative research opportunities.

Possible areas of research focus include ageing; nutritional immunity; cancer; cardiovascular, metabolic and kidney disease; nutrition and infectious diseases; precision nutrition; gut microbiome and immunity; obesity; food-as-medicine; plant-based nutrition; health impacts of ultra-processed food; nutrition and technology (including the use of sensors and AI); and preventative nutrition.

In addition, Tufts and IISc see opportunities to collaborate through the centre on large-scale nutritional intervention studies focused on, for example, chronic disease, anaemia, hypertension, malnutrition, and metabolic disease. The centre also anticipates the co-development of nutrition-specific competencies for physicians and scholars who are trained at IISc, an important first step in creating curriculum and education standards that will transform healthcare.

Nutrition-specific competencies could be woven into multiple areas of provider education and could be obtained through nutrition courses and degrees that currently exist within the Friedman School's educational offerings and developed specifically in collaboration with IISc.

There are also plans to establish a joint PhD supervision programme as well as a tele-nutrition system for knowledge transfer at the level of primary care delivery.