



Summary

‘Mind Your Food’: An Initiative around Consciousness and Nutrition

Food and nutrition are at the heart of human and planetary wellbeing and existence. In this context, Mind & Life Europe (MLE) is uniquely positioned to contribute towards our understanding of the role of the mind and consciousness in shaping healthy diets, lifestyles and sustainable food systems, and vice-versa.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Health, well-being, hunger and responsible consumerism are centrally positioned within the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These goals are interlinked. Health is no longer defined as the mere absence of physical disease. ‘Positive health’ includes lifestyle factors in which nutrition and food play a central role. The problems of obesity, illnesses linked to food (diabetes), and poor food choices in both youth and adults illustrate the link between nutrition and health and well-being.

Solving complex food related challenges and improving our own wellbeing and health without ourselves becoming more conscious about what foods we consume and how we eat, and how this impacts our health, and the environment we live in is the focus of this initiative.

Science demonstrates the effects of mindful practices in food choices, but is often unable to develop larger scale commercial applications of its findings, while business responds to consumer interest and demand, often without the evidence of scientific research. Siloed approaches to core issues, whether in scientific disciplines or applied areas related to food production and consumption, creates inefficiencies and time lags.

THE INITIATIVE

The *Mind your Food* initiative is a response to the growing challenges and rapidly evolving landscape of health, wellbeing and food systems. It addresses the underexplored role of the mind and consciousness in the area of nutrition.

Preliminary findings focus on three initial areas and opportunities for MLE:

- 1) Regularly convening disparate actors in the nutrition and food sectors
- 2) Interdisciplinary research
- 3) Training programs

SCOPE AND APPROACH

Specifically, by focusing on the mind-food, nutrition issue, and, identifying, supporting and distributing research demonstrating the effects of, for example, mindfulness



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training on positive food choices and eating habits, *Mind your Food* is in a position to work with targeted groups and multiple partners in the health, consumer, and food businesses.

Personal change, that is, consciousness development as the first step towards behavioural change, is the core driver of broader societal change. In this sense, the theory of change for *Mind your Food* targets a clear gap in the personal development and food/nutrition debate. The *Mind your Food* initiative is poised to become an important stepping-stone to envision and deliver a paradigm shift for mindful eating and mindful food systems with far-reaching positive effects on human lives, economies and our planet.

NEXT STEPS

A small interdisciplinary meeting of professionals from business, science and academia, food and nutrition and health will be planned for late Spring 2019 to explore innovative issues around the consciousness-nutrition issue.