

2026 Nutrition Congress

WORKSHOP ● Friday, 9 October 2026 | 13h00 – 16h15



● **Scaling Youth Engagement for Healthy and Sustainable Diets: Lessons and Opportunities from the Food Boost Challenge Approach**

- **Organizer/s:** The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands - In collaboration with Durban University of Technology
- **Target Audience:** Nutritionists, dieticians, other public health professionals, educators, trainers, scientists, government and policy makers, representatives from NGOs, community organizations, and development agencies focused on nutrition and health outcomes, professionals in industry throughout the food system
- **Participant Limit:** Minimum – 20 | Maximum - 40

PROGRAMME CHAIRS & PRESENTERS:

- Dr Machteld van Lieshout, Ms Wendy Scholtes-Bos, Prof Sanne de Vries, The Hague University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands), Ms Sanrika Sahadeo & Prof Ashika Naicker, Durban University of Technology (South Africa)

WORKSHOP SUMMARY:

This interactive workshop explores how the Food Boost Challenge (FBC) can empower young people to drive healthier and more sustainable diets through youth-led innovation in participatory action research (PAR). Beyond health, the approach also has the potential for entrepreneurship/business opportunities for youth. Building on experiences from South Africa and the Netherlands, the session highlights what has been learned from implementing the FBC in different educational and community contexts, and how these insights can support a future, larger-scale South African initiative.

The workshop opens with two brief presentations: one by a South African researcher who will share lessons from implementing the FBC in a university setting, and another reflecting on experiences from FBC programmes conducted in the Netherlands. These presentations will provide complementary perspectives on how to engage and empower youth, facilitate co-creation, create ownership and foster behaviour change within local food environments.

Each presentation is followed by an interactive component. Participants will first generate ideas using an impact–effort matrix, and then co-design pathways for scaling the FBC in South Africa, exploring essential partners, missing stakeholders, formulate ambition levels, essential programme components, and potential funding opportunities.

The workshop aims to stimulate cross-sector collaboration and offer practical guidance for advancing youth-led approaches that promote healthy and sustainable diets.

