

## Postdoctoral fellow on Inuit diet, nutritional status and health in Nunavik, Quebec, Canada

Inuit country foods are traditional foods that are hunted, fished, and gathered from the land (including, locally or regionally harvested marine and terrestrial wildlife, fish, and plants). Traditional food systems play a key role in the culture of Nunavimmiut. Hunting and food preparation are opportunities to pass on Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit* (traditional knowledge), which is a central pillar of Inuit culture. Additionally, country food sharing is an important cultural and historical practice that supports those who might otherwise have insufficient access to food. Country food is also crucial for Inuit nutrition, health and wellness and contributes to the self-sufficiency of Inuit communities.

Data from previous health surveys conducted in Nunavik pointed to a decline in the consumption of these important country foods between 1992 and 2004, likely due to lifestyle and environmental changes. In 2004, the only recommendation from the Canada Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis (Health Canada, 2007) Nunavimmiut met was that for meat and its alternatives. Store-bought foods represented 84% of daily energy intake, and included a low consumption of vegetables/fruits and whole grains and a high consumption of sugary foods and drinks.

The [Qanuillirpittaa? Nunavik Inuit Health Survey](#) is a major population health survey (N=1,326) that was conducted in Nunavik between August and October 2017 in close collaboration with several Nunavik organisations, the Institut national de santé publique du Québec ([INSPQ](#)), and researchers from Université Laval, McGill University and Trent University, that involved the collection, analysis of data, and dissemination of information on the health status of Nunavimmiut.

Core descriptive findings from the 2017 survey highlight that country foods remain central to Nunavimmiut diet, highlighted by the lack of a further decline in their consumption from 2004 to 2017. This is largely thanks to the multiple regional efforts to promote traditional activities and the transmission of Inuit knowledge to younger generations. As for store-bought market foods, even though the consumption of vegetables and fruit and whole grains increased compared to 2004, they remain low. A significant proportion of Nunavimmiut had low iron and vitamin D, and several women of child-bearing age had below optimal folic acid levels to ensure a healthy pregnancy. These findings highlight the importance of global and local initiatives aimed at promoting the consumption of country foods and healthier market foods to improve nutritional status and to mitigate nutrition-related diseases in Nunavik.

**The present postdoctoral fellow aims to conduct more in-depth analyses using *Qanuillirpittaa?* 2017 data to further identify the multiple determinants of 1) country and market food consumption, 2) food consumption profiles and 3) optimal nutritional status, as well as the associations between diet, nutritional biomarkers and health outcomes in Nunavik. The fellowship will be realised in an interdisciplinary environment and in close collaboration with the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS). Knowledge mobilisation activities to share and discuss key findings with Nunavimmiut are also envisioned if the sanitary conditions permit travel to Nunavik communities.**

### Description of research environments

The successful candidate will carry out the project under the direction of Mélanie Lemire based at the Institut de biologie intégrative et des systèmes at Université Laval and the [Research Centre of CHU de Québec-Université Laval](#), where Mélanie heads the [Littoral Research Chair](#) and at the [INSPQ](#) under the direction of Pierre Ayotte. Amira Aker (CHU de Qc), Tiff-Annie Kenny (CHU de Qc), Matthew Little (UVic) and Marie-Josée Gauthier (NRBHSS) will also be part of the team.

### Required profile:

- PhD in Epidemiology or Nutrition with a specialisation in nutritional epidemiology
- Advanced statistical analysis and manuscript writing
- Experience working with survey data
- Collaborative energy and good adaptation skills, as well as experience and strong interest in participatory, interdisciplinary and knowledge mobilisation approaches (an asset)

- Excellent understanding, writing and speaking of English
- Work experience in Indigenous contexts or internationally (an asset)

**Start date:** Winter 2022 or when available, remote work possible

**Financial support:** Training scholarship of a minimum of \$50 000/year for 1 year and may be renewable. The successful candidate will also be required to submit scholarship applications to the FRQS and/or CIHR. Tax benefits and insurance according to the collective agreement of the CHU of Quebec.

**To submit an application, send the following documents, combined into one PDF document. Please note that all documents are required for the application to be considered complete:**

- A **cover letter** detailing the candidate's motivations and experience and background in relation to the profile sought
- A **complete CV** including academic background, list of publications and communications, list of projects in which the candidate has participated, and experience in science and knowledge mobilization
- The **names and contact information of two referees**
- Any other relevant document illustrating the candidate's experience, leadership and qualifications for the profile sought.

**Application deadline: March 11, 2022 or until position is filled**  
**Interviews will be held starting February 1st**  
**Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered.**

**Please send your application by email to Mélanie Lemire**  
(Subject: Application for a Postdoctoral fellow on Inuit diet, nutritional status and health in Nunavik)  
[melanie.lemire@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca](mailto:melanie.lemire@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca)