

EIE2025 Partner Portrait: Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI)

CEI Factsheet

Name of your organisation:	Centre for Evidence and Implementation
Location:	Offices in London, Oslo, Melbourne, Sydney, Singapore
Reach:	international
Website:	https://www.ceiglobal.org/
Social media:	LinkedIn & Bluesky
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What are your organisation's mission and core values, including your organization's primary focus within the field of implementation science/practice and knowledge mobilization?

At CEI, our mission is to make a difference for people facing adversity through the effective implementation of evidence into policy and practice.

We know that well-evidenced and well-implemented innovations can improve lives.

A global, non-profit, social purpose organisation, CEI works with policymakers, practitioners, organisational leaders, and funders, across the spectrum of evidence synthesis, implementation support and evaluation.

We conduct active implementation support projects and build capacity for implementation science across fields including early childhood, education, employment, child and family services, youth justice, housing and homelessness, disability, health and mental health, and international development.

How did your organization become involved in this field, and what inspired its establishment?

We were founded in Melbourne, Australia, in 2016. Like many others in the field, we became involved in implementation science and practice through frustration and failure! Our founding CEO, Dr Robyn Mildon, had been working for some time to support take-up and evaluation of programmes for children and families, and became increasingly frustrated at not seeing them effectively implemented and sustained. She and early colleagues found their way into implementation science, and set up CEI to apply this knowledge, and contribute to building the field. We're now a team of 60 people globally. We've been working in Singapore since 2017, and our teams in London and in Oslo were set up in 2019 and 2022 respectively.

Can you share a project or initiative your organisation is particularly proud of?

One such project is a systematic review led by CEI that underpinned development of the UK's first national Practice Guide on Kinship Care, which sets out how local authorities (municipalities) need to support kinship care families.

Kinship care is an important part of the care system in the UK, but the evidence review highlighted the challenges and unmet needs that kinship families face, and that can be addressed through programmes designed to support kinship carers and the children in their care.



The review was commissioned by Foundations (the national 'what works centre' for children and families) and undertaken by CEI in partnership with Dr Marc Winokur of Colorado State University (USA), and Professor Aron Shlonsky of Monash University (Australia).

One of the key recommendations we made was to introduce financial support for kinship carers. In the 2024-2025 UK Government Budget, a £44 million pilot of financial allowances for kinship carers was announced – the UK's highest-ever national government investment in kinship care.

You can access the evidence review and national Practice Guide [here](#).

A second example is a major study of the take-up of early education in England, which CEI led with partners Ivana La Valle, the UCL Centre for Education Policy and Equalising Opportunities, and Coram Family and Childcare, and was funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

The study looked at the barriers and implementation challenges leading to disadvantaged families not utilising a government-funded entitlement of 15 hours a week of early education. We also investigated the implementation practices of local authorities that have higher take-up; entitlement take-up rates vary from fewer than 5 in 10 children to more than 9 in 10 children, in different local authority areas.

We identified multiple barriers at the family level, local service and policy system levels and national system level, ranging from confusion about what families are entitled to and difficulties navigating application processes, to how early education providers offer and structure funded places and additional charges levied, to poorly aligned national policies and communication.

We found that local authorities with higher take-up prioritised early education as key to children’s development and later outcomes. They also had what we described as “a relentless focus on removing barriers for disadvantaged families.”

We set out a series of recommendations for actions local authorities can take, and for improving national support for local authorities, the early education sector, and families.

The research team was able to advocate directly to government. The UK Department for Education recently announced a review of early education guidance and funding to support the take-up of early education entitlements, addressing several of the implementation barriers we highlighted. Read more [here](#).

You can find more about the early education entitlements study [here](#).

How do you envision your organisation’s work influencing the broader field in the future?

One of the key areas of work we’re developing is the application of common elements – also described as effective practice elements – building on the work of colleagues including Bruce Chorpita and John Weiss. We’ve been working with the State Government of Victoria (Australia) for some years on a major project to identify and apply common practice elements in family support as an alternative to children entering state care. CEI and our partners have developed a suite of implementation resources, and provided intensive implementation support to sites – enabling use of evidence-based elements alongside evidence-based programmes. We’re now developing this approach in projects in the UK. We see this as an area with huge potential for accelerating the take-up of evidence alongside evidence-based programmes.

We also have a number of strands of work that are about building cultures for evidence use, so that effective implementation of evidence into policy and practice becomes a norm in a system. Key here is our co-hosting of the biennial Evidence and Implementation Summit (EIS), and a free-access EIS Virtual webinar series. **The next EIS will be held 27-29 October this year in Melbourne, Australia** and you can see more about it, and the Virtual webinar series, at <https://www.eisummit.org>

Is there a story, quote, or piece of advice you’d like to share with us?

CEI is engaged in lots of work on scaling at the moment, particularly in the UK. Over and over again, we come back to the message that a scalable version of an innovation should be tested from as early as possible, and the ‘endgame’ or the pathway to scaling should be front and centre of mind. Much time, resources and effort is wasted in testing unscalable versions of innovations, and we are all failing the populations we’re here to serve if we are not getting that right.

What are you most looking forward to when attending EIE2025?

Fishbowls, implementation science slams, riding the waves, guided walks, dinners – all the brilliant ways EIE brings our tribe together.