

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2023

TAMIL PROFESSIONALS NETWORK



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WELCOME NOTE

Welcome to our first Annual Newsletter, reflecting on the remarkable achievements and milestones of Tamil Professionals Network (TPN) in 2023. In just one year, TPN has impacted hundreds of students' career paths, providing a bridge between aspiration and opportunities. We have established a mentorship network of 83 early career professionals, creating a community where students can build meaningful connections with professionals in their desired industries. Beyond student support, TPN extends its impact to early career professionals through targeted workshops and events, fostering continued growth.

Our achievements stand as a testament to the unwavering support of our mentors who serve as the foundation of TPN. Their commitment to TPN's aims has been the driving force behind our success.

I am amazed by the rapid pace at which TPN has grown over the last year, and I hope we can build upon this foundation of collaboration as we approach 2024. With your continued support, we can strengthen our impact to support more students on their career journeys. Together, we will continue to uplift and empower the Tamil community, creating a lasting legacy of success and positive change.

Kind Regards,
Dharnya

DHARNYA NIMALAN

DIRECTOR



INTRODUCTION

AIMS & VISION

Tamil Professionals Network (TPN) is a non-profit organisation founded in December 2022 by Dharnya Nimalan and Chathurrsan Thaneswaran. With a commitment to fostering growth and empowerment across the Tamil community, TPN champions three core aims that guide our endeavours: Uplift, Community and Aid.

Uplift: TPN recognises the importance of access to opportunities, and endeavours to provide support in helping students realise their career ambitions and goals. Through workshops, career advice, and networking opportunities, TPN empowers students to navigate their professional journey with confidence and purpose.

Community: Beyond individual success, TPN aims to unite students, graduates and professionals to build a community of individuals who are passionate about elevating one another. By fostering connections and collaboration, we strive to build a community that thrives on collective growth.

Aid: At the heart of TPN's mission is a dedication to supporting the Tamil community in Sri Lanka. We plan to channel our efforts to raise funds for various charities, driving positive change to the Tamil community in Sri Lanka.

TPN oversees a dynamic community of 83 early career professionals spanning across 10+ industries, including banking, consulting, STEM, marketing and fashion. The diversity of expertise across our Mentorship Network ensures that students have access to professionals across a broad range of industries, enhancing their opportunities for learning, guidance and mentorship.

MEET OUR STREAM LEADS

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM



Kirija
Kandiah



Vaishnavie
Sureshkumar



Shubanu
Ranjalingam

EVENTS TEAM



Dilan
Premkumar

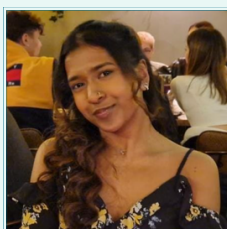


Aranan
Sivakumar



Anushan
Kirupakaran

EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS NETWORK TEAM



Kavitha
Kirubendran



Chathurrsan
Thaneswaran

FUNDRAISING LEAD



Shayen
Sathianathan

In 2024, we will be introducing a YouTube & Student Ambassadors Team to expand our reach

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

83

Early career professionals offering mentorship to students

62

University students receiving 1:1 mentorship

15

Events & Workshops (in-person/virtual)

1,000+

Instagram followers @tamilprofessionalsnetwork

2

HSBC Tamil Students Insight Days

2

Experienced Professionals Network events

STUDENT EVENTS



MIDLANDS UNIVERSITIES:

University of Birmingham
Finance Workshop

University of Nottingham
Science Workshop

SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITIES:

University of Bristol
Technology Workshop

LONDON UNIVERSITIES:

Queen Mary University of London
CV Workshop

London School of Economics
Consulting Case-Study Workshop

University College London
Pathways to Graduate Success
(We Are Wiser)

City University of London
Networking Event

SOUTH-EAST UNIVERSITIES:

University of Kent
Creative Careers Workshop

University of Southampton
Consulting Workshop

Other events include:

Association of British Tamil Lawyers:
Law Workshop

Tamil Endowment Fund:
Asset Management Workshop

HSBC Tamil Students Insight Day

TPN Apprenticeships Workshop

TPN Careers Workshop

STUDENT SUPPORT & MENTORSHIP

Throughout 2023, we have delivered a range of workshops and networking events, empowering students to explore various job opportunities through direct interactions with industry professionals.

In collaboration with organisations such as *The Tamil Endowment Fund* and the *Association of British Tamil Lawyers*, we have delivered targeted workshops, allowing students to develop an understanding of a range of industries and roles.

Our commitment to supporting students extends beyond London's geographical boundaries. We have collaborated with various university Tamil Societies across the UK, ensuring that our events are accessible to all students irrespective of their geographical location.

These events are open to students from all universities, free of charge, to ensure that financial barriers do not hinder students from accessing valuable career support.

In August 2023, TPN launched its **Student Mentorship Programme**, designed to provide direct mentorship to students throughout the academic year of 2023/24. 62 students are currently enrolled in this programme, benefiting from invaluable insights provided by mentors in their desired industry.

Our mentors offer tailored support and skill development opportunities, allowing students to build professional connections in their desired industry. By leveraging the wealth of experiences shared by their mentor, students gain invaluable insights and cultivate meaningful relationships.



HSBC TAMIL STUDENTS INSIGHT DAYS

On 23rd June 2023, 30 Tamil students aged 15-18 were welcomed to HSBC's Global Headquarters in Canary Wharf. The day featured engaging career-related workshops and was concluded with a tour of the 45-storey skyscraper, providing students with a unique insight into the corporate world.

Throughout the day, students developed an understanding of the banking industry and honed practical skills, including interview techniques and CV writing.

Following the resounding success of HSBC's first Tamil Students Insight Day, we had the privilege of facilitating a second event, this time welcoming 40 University students aged 18-22 into the bank.

These insight days serve as a catalyst to empower and motivate Tamil students in reaching their aspirations, providing a truly eye-opening experience. This invaluable opportunity has enabled students to cultivate and enhance their skillset, knowledge, and understanding of the wide range of roles across the banking sector.

A huge thank you to HSBC's Tamil Students Insight Day Working Group for introducing and facilitating these events at the bank – Praveena Ravishanker, Jothiga Rahulotchanan, Branavan Hariharan, Jenorth Santheeswaran, Vaishnavie Sureshkumar, Harshita Ganesh, Deechhyan Koirala, Minal Gadher, Rishika George and Dharnya Nimalan.



EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS NETWORK: SPEED-NETWORKING EVENT

To mark the official launch of TPN's Experienced Professionals Network, we held our first speed-networking event on 10th June 2023. Dr. Naveendran, our keynote speaker, shared invaluable insights on navigating career challenges, marked by his unique formula for maximising performance in the workplace.

The event was a resounding success, providing the opportunity for engaging conversations and the exchange of invaluable knowledge spanning generations. We were joined by a diverse range of experienced professionals, ranging from consultants and tech advisors to entrepreneurs and CEOs.

During our panel discussion, we delved into a range of insightful topics, establishing a platform for addressing various challenges that have long warranted discussion. These conversations not only broadened our perspective but also shed light on key challenges faced by professionals across the Tamil community.

This event provided a unifying platform, facilitating collective support and shared learnings from individuals with similar backgrounds. Thank you to our experienced professionals for their willingness to support those in the early stages of their career. Your time and support is hugely appreciated!



WISER: PATHWAYS TO GRADUATE SUCCESS

On 30th November 2023, TPN had the privilege of collaborating with 'Wiser', a market-leading employer branding and early talent agency. This rare opportunity allowed students to speak directly with recruiters and gain insights into the recruitment process.

We were fortunate to have Wiser's very own Ciara Campbell join us on the panel. Ciara offered invaluable advice to the students, driven by her perspective as an early talent recruiter. She shed light on the nuances of the graduate application process and her expertise, coupled with practical advice, equipped students with the tools to develop a competitive edge when applying for roles.

Students had the opportunity to build connections with recruiters for various industries, providing exclusive insight into the application process and the opportunities available within these sectors.

The panel discussion, Q&A, and networking opportunity equipped students with knowledge and invaluable connections. Feedback has been incredibly positive, with many students citing the event as a pivotal experience that has increased their confidence on their career journey.

A big thank you to Chathurrsan Thaneswaran for facilitating this event, and to our panellists Hari Asokan, Kirija Kandiah, Shubanu Ranjalingam and Ciara Campbell for sharing their insights.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Given the rapid pace at which TPN has grown within its first year, we hope to build on this continued success to increase our reach and facilitate more events to support, unite, and uplift the Tamil Community.

We are kicking off the new year with a Careers Fair in collaboration with UCL's Tamil Society, providing students with the opportunity to build connections with mentors across a wide range of industries. Throughout the year we will be hosting various career workshops and skills sessions in collaboration with Tamil Societies across the UK, supporting students with CV-writing, interview techniques and providing opportunities for students to expand their knowledge of various career paths.

To expand our influence across universities and ensure that all students are benefiting from the opportunities provided by TPN, we will be introducing TPN Student Ambassadors. These ambassadors will serve as a pivotal link between TPN and their respective

university, aiding in the organisation of workshops and circulating upcoming events with their university Tamil Society.

We will also host several Experienced Professionals Network events to foster the exchange of ideas and knowledge across generations, ensuring that early-career professionals are equipped with the knowledge and skills to advance on their career journey.

Ultimately, TPN serves to ensure that all students and professionals, irrespective of their background, have access to opportunities. We recognise the unique challenges that many individuals face having escaped Sri Lanka's Civil War, and are committed to preventing a lack of opportunities from hindering the progress of the Tamil community. TPN acts as a bridge to industry professionals, enabling students to forge connections and thrive in their career pursuits. In 2024, TPN will be facilitating further events and workshops to ensure that individuals have the necessary opportunities for growth and success.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT US?

Fundraising and sponsorship will be a critical element for TPN's growth in 2024. From hosting CV workshops for our students to organising networking sessions for our mentors, it is critical to raise funds to facilitate these events. Not only does donating provide an opportunity to support the Tamil community, but it also provides the perfect medium to advertise your services to a community of students and professionals across a diverse range of industries.

As a sponsor, you could benefit from:


- Increased visibility through promoting your services to our network of 1,500+ students and professionals across various platforms including LinkedIn, Instagram & TikTok
- Build strong connections with the next generation of Tamil professionals who could support you in growing your business


Why Us?

TPN holds a unique position with access to university students, recent graduates and experienced professionals. Through sponsorship, not only will you be able to advertise to thousands of young Tamils, but you will also have the opportunity to develop your business through featuring in unique advertisements on our various social media platforms. All this, whilst helping the future generation of young Tamils thrive in their chosen industry.

If you would like to know more about how we can support each other, or if you would simply like to make a one-off donation, please get in touch with us:

 tamilprofessionalsnetwork@gmail.com

 Tamil Professionals Network

 @tamilprofessionalsnetwork

TESTIMONIALS

Students

“Attending TPN’s events have been a career game changer for me. Their first event at my university opened my eyes to a supportive community dedicated to guiding young Tamils on their professional journeys. The mentors were not only knowledgeable but also approachable, fostering an environment that encouraged me to attend subsequent events. As a regular attendee at TPN’s events, I joined their Student Mentorship Programme and have received invaluable support when preparing for interviews. TPN goes beyond professional development but it fosters a sense of community. Through this organisation, I’ve not only gained mentorship but have also made lasting friendships with like-minded peers. TPN has truly been a guiding light in my career journey, and I highly recommend attending their events to any young Tamil navigating their career journey.”

- Preyankan Kamalakumar, City University of London

“TPN has been a significant milestone in my career development. As a Malayalee from an ethnic minority, I’ve found TPN’s commitment to diversity and inclusion particularly inspiring. Their Student Mentorship Programme has offered unique access to industry professionals, which was instrumental in broadening my career horizons beyond traditional paths. The personalised guidance, from CV workshops to understanding the intricacies of the corporate world, has been invaluable. Moreover, the warm and friendly community within TPN made the experience not just educational but genuinely enjoyable. I am immensely grateful to TPN for not only enhancing my professional skills but for also fostering a sense of belonging.”

- Nibin Babu, University of Warwick

TESTIMONIALS

Students

“Attending TPN’s events have supported me in getting closer to reaching my career goals through the opportunity to gain insights into the working world and develop my knowledge. For example, the Tamil Students Insight Day at HSBC provided an amazing insight into what it is actually like working in a bank, which has helped me to make informed decisions on how to both access and prepare for the world of work. There is a strong sense of community and I have been able to build close connections with mentors who can support me on my career journey. Most importantly, TPN has the friendliest faces who are always willing to offer help and guidance. TPN’s brilliant Insight Day has truly set me ahead of the other students my age and I look forward to attending more of their events in the future.”

- Khyan Kamalan, Year 11 Student at John Lyon School

“TPN has been a huge support throughout my professional journey, providing invaluable insights into the working world, for example through HSBC’s Tamil Students Insight Day. The insights and skills gained have helped me to make informed career decisions for the future. Beyond this, TPN cultivates a sense of community among its mentors and mentees, and I have been able to build connections that extend beyond individual career development. The mentors not only provide career support, but they are also friendly faces across the wider Tamil community. Without TPN, students across the UK wouldn’t have the exposure to a diverse range of industries. Thanks to TPN, more students, including myself, have broadened our horizons and are aiming higher than the people who came before us.”

- Seyon Srishangar, University of Nottingham

TESTIMONIALS

University Tamil Societies

"I would like to pass on my appreciation and commendation to TPN. The work they do is truly commendable and it is something that us Tamil students are extremely lucky to have. Having experienced the struggles of succeeding in the corporate world as BAME individuals, witnessing TPN actively address these issues to create a positive impact for our community is truly heartwarming to see. As the president of a smaller Tamil society, I appreciate their inclusivity by doing the utmost to collaborate with TSocs across the UK and not only London universities. It was great to collaborate with TPN for a Creative Careers workshop, providing insights into an industry that is generally less represented by Tamils. It has just been over a year since TPN's launch and they have grown from strength to strength, challenging societal and cultural norms as they strive to make a better future for students from our background. I cannot wait to see what they have planned for the future and wish them all the best."

- Anbakan Varatharasan, Vice-President of Kent Tamil Society 2022/23

"As former Presidents, we want to express our gratitude for the invaluable support that TPN has provided to LSE Tamil Society. TPN's commitment to empowering students is evident through the diverse range of career sessions our members have attended. From in-depth CV workshops to introductions spanning fields like law and consulting, TPN has elevated the career readiness of many of our members. They help to demystify the application process, making it more accessible to our members who have found it previously unfamiliar. The networking sessions facilitated by TPN have played a key role in helping students, both from our society and beyond, establish meaningful connections with professionals and gain valuable insights into their respective fields. TPN stands as a beacon, demonstrating to Tamil students that there are professionals in their desired industries who share their background, proving that it is possible for them as well. Thanks to TPN, our members are better equipped to navigate their career paths, armed with knowledge, skills, and valuable connections."

- Vennila Sivaganesh & Ryan Sureshkumar, Co-Presidents of London School of Economics Tamil Society 2022/23

TESTIMONIALS

University Tamil Societies

“TPN has honestly been so insightful in its ability to show the inner workings of the professional world. Organising the CV and cover letter workshop for Queen Mary’s students in collaboration with TPN helped our members to understand exactly what firms expect, and a one-to-one CV review session allowed them to get direct feedback and practical advice. The Wiser event which TPN organised was such a rare yet enriching experience to gain insights into the graduate recruitment process and how to increase your chances of securing an internship or graduate scheme. TPN truly demonstrates the value of building networks and support systems to meet career aspirations. To have access to this network which directly caters to the needs of a student body, who are primarily first-generation university students with limited professional connections, is a testament to TPN actively increasing social mobility and levelling out the playing field.”

- Thusika Tharmarajah, Vice-President of Queen Mary University of London Tamil Society 2023/24

“City TSoc had the wonderful opportunity to collaborate with TPN for a networking event. The event allowed many students to interact with professionals in industries and roles which they envisioned themselves to one day be in. It was a good opportunity for our students to ask questions and truly understand the different career paths available, even some which they had not previously considered. Students gained an understanding of how to pursue these career paths and whether these roles met their expectations. It was a truly insightful event and a great opportunity to learn about a range of industries, all of which I truly believe will significantly help these students on their career journey. Thank you, TPN!”

- Vini Selva, Vice-President of City University of London Tamil Society 2022/23

TESTIMONIALS

Experienced Professionals

"I've had the incredible opportunity to participate in the events organised by the Tamil Professionals Network, and I must say, their dedication to nurturing the next generation of Tamil professionals is truly commendable. The speed networking events they host bridge the gap between undergraduates and seasoned professionals, providing invaluable insights into the working world. Their commitment to empowering young minds through Employability workshops is remarkable; teaching essential skills like crafting impressive CVs, mastering networking, and managing personal finances. TPN's efforts in fostering career growth and professional development within the Tamil community are simply outstanding."

- Pira Muthu, Mergers & Acquisitions Senior Manager at Tata Consulting Services

"I joined TPN as a mentor as I believe it is a positive initiative to give back to the community and support students and recent graduates on their career journey. Choosing a career can be daunting for many as there are so many different jobs out there, however, TPN provides opportunities for students and graduates to gain insights into different careers via workshops, networking events, socials, and the mentorship programme. I attended TPN's Speed-Networking Event last Summer as a mentor alongside other experienced professionals. Personally, I benefited from hearing the experiences of professionals who had faced various career challenges, such as navigating cultural norms when pursuing careers outside of traditional expectations, and managing imposter syndrome. TPN has come along leaps and bounds, with many professionals, students, and graduates getting involved over the last year. I'm excited to see TPN's growth over the next year and into the future!"

- Umesh Ramanan, Consultant at Accenture

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to give a special thank you to the following individuals/societies for their continued support over the last year:

Pira Muthu - Thank you for securing a venue to kick-start TPN's Speaker Series event. Your workshop on personal branding was a resounding success in guiding early career professionals. We appreciate your constant support over the last year.

Vaheesan from The Harley Lounge - Thank you for generously allowing TPN to host our first Experienced Professionals Networking event at your venue. We are truly grateful for your contribution to its success, facilitating insightful conversations across generations.

Harriet Walsh & Ari Ratnakumar - A big thank you for inviting us to the We Are Wiser Headquarters, providing students with the unique opportunity to speak directly with recruiters and gain exclusive insights into the application process.

University Tamil Societies - We would like to express our gratitude to the Tamil Societies which we have collaborated with over the last year, enabling us to support students at your University. Thanks to your collaborative efforts, TPN's aim to uplift and support the Tamil community on their career journeys has been possible. We look forward to further collaboration over the coming year!

University Tamil Societies include:

University of Birmingham, University of Bristol, City University of London, University of Kent, London School of Economics, University of Nottingham, Queen Mary University of London, University of Southampton, University College London



TAMIL PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

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