

Our vision

A world where each person's education enables them to build a sustainable life—now and in the future.



Our mission

We fund work that supports people to gain the skills and knowledge to thrive throughout their life. We focus on supporting people of all ages who would not otherwise have these educational opportunities.



Background to First Sentier Foundation

First Sentier Foundation ('the Foundation') was established as First Sentier Investors' philanthropic initiative in 2012. From its inception until mid-2022, the Foundation operated as a global initiative aimed at making a difference to the local communities in which staff live and work, promoting charitable time and giving in the areas of Education, Environment and Social Welfare. It also supported charitable giving promoted by staff or as required by natural disasters.

In mid-2022, a strategic review was taken to narrow the focus of the Foundation's purpose, to better align with First Sentier Investors' wider corporate objectives and drive greater positive impact via partnerships with charity partners and their beneficiaries.

Developing a new vision and mission for the Foundation

Together with a social sector consultancy, a new vision and mission for the Foundation was developed through open workshops, online surveys, interviews and focus groups with over 120 staff globally. This process used the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) as a starting point, to develop decision-making criteria and prioritise themes for the Foundation. Through a process of review and refining, a consensus emerged around having a broad focus which allowed for local relevance whilst unified around a global theme, ensuring there was

evidence of impact (both short and long term), and developing a compelling narrative linked to First Sentier Investors' work, values and identity. The thematic area which received the top priority was Education. Following this development process, First Sentier Investors' CEO and Executive Leadership Team approved the new vision and mission (see diagram above) in October 2022.

Sustainable Livelihoods and Education

Sustainable Livelihoods as a concept emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as a response to the shortcoming of traditional development approaches, which focused solely on economic growth without consideration of other factors such as social and environmental dimensions. This gained prominence in the [Brundtland Report: Our Common Future \(1987\)](#) – where sustainable development meant meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Over time, Sustainable Livelihoods has tended to focus on vulnerable groups and marginalised communities, seeking to address the underlying causes of poverty and inequality, promote resilience, and empower individuals and communities to improve their own livelihoods. These sustainability aims were formalised as part of UN's 17 SDGs in 2015. The UN's [2023 Sustainable Development Goals Report](#) provides an update on the latest progress of these goals.

Education plays an important part in sustainable development. **SDG 4 – Quality Education** aims to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning. According to the [UN](#), education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. Education has been found to reduce societal inequalities – for example, the [UN](#) has reported that in 114 countries from 1985–2005, one extra year of education is associated with a reduction of the Gini coefficient¹ by 1.4 percentage points. The [UN](#) also has found that education is the key that allows other SDGs to be achieved. It empowers people to improve their livelihoods, contribute to the sustainable development and health of their communities, and is crucial to fostering tolerance and peaceful societies².

The Foundation's support of Education

The Foundation is dedicated to partnering with charities to build sustainable lives³ through Education. It does this through providing grants to charities, organising volunteering support, and general capacity building advice and guidance. The Foundation is currently fully funded by FSI and does not solicit external grants or donations for its work. The Foundation is also not used to market or sell any First Sentier Investors' products.

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- 1 The Gini coefficient is a widely used summary measure of inequality in the distribution of household income. The lower its value, the more equally household income is distributed. See also the Office for National Statistics for more information on the Gini-coefficient and how it is calculated.
 - 2 See also [UN Sustainable Development Goals – Education](#); and other research such as [‘The role of education in the sustainable development agenda: Empowering a learning society for sustainability through quality education’](#) (Didham & Ofei-Manu, 2015)
 - 3 The terms “sustainable livelihoods” and “sustainable lives” are used interchangeably, given the similarity of meaning. For example, Serrat (2017:21) in [The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach](#) defines “a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living”. Given a person needs a livelihood to live, in the context of the Foundation's vision of education enabling each person to build a sustainable life, this refers to education being one of the capabilities, assets and activities which can help a person build a livelihood which is sustainable for their living.

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