



Forum for the Future

# The Forum 500 Investment Fund

Sustainable development.  
It is big and it is clever.

# Forum500

Forum for the Future is a unique organisation. Right from the outset, we have addressed the **root causes** of issues such as climate change, social inequality and environmental degradation by taking a positive, solutions-based approach. We work in partnership with business, finance, government, Higher Education and the professions to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable way of life.

Underpinning all our activity is the belief that sustainable development is the **only** big idea for the 21st century. Learning to live sustainably on this planet is not an option: it's an imperative that we must all face up to.

**The mission of Forum for the Future is to accelerate the building of a sustainable way of life, taking a positive, solutions-based approach.**

## Our track record

Set up in 1996, Forum for the Future has grown from 6 to over 60 employees, with a turnover of around £4 million. As the UK's leading sustainable development charity, we're essentially in the business of changing hearts and minds. We work alongside partners and professions, collaboratively but independently, offering advice, research, capacity-building, support and constant challenge. It's through this partnership model that we are able to reach the parts that other charities cannot reach!

- We work with over 60 companies to put sustainability at the heart of the corporate agenda
- We work with 27 local authorities and 4 regional bodies to embed sustainability in management and planning processes
- Our innovative one-year Masters in Leadership for Sustainable Development trains up the leaders of the future: 80 graduates have gone on to work for organisations from national government to blue chip companies
- Green Futures, our flagship magazine, is a leading source of debate on how society can make the shift towards sustainability
- We use the insights gained from our partnership work to advocate policy reforms with government and other decision-makers
- Sustainability has become part of professional development for engineers, following our work with the engineering profession

## Building on success

Not a bad track record so far. But the challenges are as pressing as ever, and the pace of change remains frustratingly slow.

Most of our partnership schemes and research projects are self-funding, but there's a lot of work going on in the Forum that we have to fund from other sources – and that's what **this** initiative is all about.

To help us achieve the necessary breakthroughs, what we now want to do is to create a **partnership of 500 individuals**. We hope that people who share our commitment to sustainable development will be prepared to support the work of Forum **personally** by contributing to our **Forum 500 Investment Fund**.

In effect, we're asking you to invest in our networks, our knowledge, our 'intellectual capital', our creativity and our dedicated staff. Innovation needs to be properly resourced. As a small charity, we need to build up an ongoing source of working capital for new areas of our work.

**There are three main areas which our Forum 500 Investment Fund will be helping to resource.**

### 1 Sustainable finance

It's impossible to exaggerate the importance of the financial system: it governs our lives from first savings accounts to our pensions. But an enormous amount of work is needed to help financial institutions to understand sustainability. Forum for the Future set up its **Centre for Sustainable Investment** for that specific purpose, and has found there is a real appetite for learning and change within the investment community. Our small team is now developing training materials for investment professionals in many different organisations. At the same time, we have coordinated the development and promotion of the London Principles for Sustainable Finance, and are working to demonstrate the **business case** for sustainable development to the investment community. We now need extra resources to take these projects forward, and to work with financial regulators to ensure that this sector becomes part of the solution.

### 2 Communicating the message

Dramatic headlines like 'global warming kills 160,000 a year' appear almost on a weekly basis. Less well broadcast are the **solutions** which sustainable development can supply. Forum's flagship magazine, *Green Futures*, explores

how we can solve problems ranging from international security to local traffic congestion. It's a bi-monthly celebration of other peoples' success. Special in-depth supplements focus on issues such as health and wellbeing, fuel poverty and renewable energy. But *Green Futures* needs extra resources to market itself more widely and increase its circulation beyond the current 10,000.

There is a long way to go to convince journalists that sustainability is a topic worth covering, and the Forum constantly needs to find more arresting ways of getting the message across and inspiring change. Increased resources will enable us to train our frontline staff to work more effectively with the media.

### **3 A vibrant rural economy**

It's a difficult time for farmers and landowners, with huge uncertainty about reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy, about the Government's new Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy, about survival itself.

Our Rural Economy Programme is addressing that uncertainty head on. With ten very diverse farm businesses in our Farm Network, we're doing detailed appraisals to demonstrate what sustainable farming means in practice. With our Land Use Project in the South West, we're identifying and actively promoting best practice in terms of broader land use. With our Farm Waste Project, we're trying to turn new and very challenging waste regulations into an opportunity for farmers.

Much of the £3 billion that goes into the rural economy every year is still undermining rather than promoting sustainable farming and land use. We need to look at how we can reverse that situation by using the findings of the programme to ensure taxpayers' money is deployed to achieve a vibrant rural economy, a thriving countryside, good healthy food, improved access, local markets, biodiversity and sustainable tourism.

## Are you one in 500?

The timing is right to make a real difference over the next few years. We want to create a partnership of 500 individuals to provide us with working capital of around £250,000 to really push the three key areas outlined inside.

**Investment guideline** As you'll see from the enclosed reply form, we are looking for contributions from around £125 to £1,000 a year. By making a regular contribution, you will give us the security to plan our work with confidence and make the most effective use of your donation.

**Making a group contribution** Do your colleagues share your commitment to sustainable development? If so, we are pioneering a completely novel approach to 'Give as You Earn,' and would love to discuss this with you.

**Return on investment** The return on your investment will be measured in terms of our increased effectiveness, better communications, and a leap forward in terms of our ability to innovate, inspire and drive change.

A special bi-annual Report to Investors and a copy of our Annual Report will enable you to track progress – you elect what level of contact you wish to have with us and how. In addition, you will receive a free annual subscription to *Green Futures* magazine. PLUS you can choose to receive a free copy of all publications that interest you.

**Join in the debate** Should you want to talk to us any time about any part of Forum's work, we would love to hear from you.

**Tax effective giving** Charities can reclaim tax on all gifts from UK taxpayers. If you are a taxpayer, please sign the enclosed Gift Aid declaration form to ensure that we can make the most of your donation. If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you may be able to claim further tax relief on donations you make to us. You can do this through your self-assessment form.

# Forum500

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