



**Future
First**

Annual Review **2016 – 2017**

Our vision is for a
world where a young
person's start in life does
not limit their future

Harnessing the talent and energy of alumni is a simple yet brilliant idea that really works.

Future First is the UK education charity helping state schools broaden their students' horizons by connecting them with alumni. With our support, there were over 214,000 alumni working with their former schools in 2016-17.

We want to see every state school and college supported by a thriving and engaged alumni community, which improves students' motivation, confidence and life chances.

Alumni inspire young people and help break the link between a young person's background and their future success in life. This is social mobility in action. In collaboration with schools and colleges, alumni, employers and our supporters, we constantly seek new ways to innovate so we make change happen faster.



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"I listened to what they had done and I thought this could be me".

"I think that all students should get the opportunity to do something like this. It's given me a different perspective and shown me that I can be successful in my future if I try".



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VOICES FROM EMPLOYERS

“Our work with Future First helps students to see what’s possible and opens up their eyes to the many and varied careers in our industry”.



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

“I am convinced that hearing from alumni changes students’ lives”.



Christine Gilbert
Executive Chair



Matt Lent
CEO Designate

Introduction

Headteachers across the country tell us that what we do is really making a difference to young people's lives. Students and alumni tell us that too. 84% of the young people we worked with told us that meeting alumni made them realise that 'people like me' can be successful; 82% committed to working harder in school as a result.

Among former students from every school sit a host of inspiring alumni who want to go back, and give back, to their old school. By having access to alumni networks, young people make connections and see the many opportunities they can have.

Independent schools and universities have long seen the value of alumni networks. We want every state school to realise the same benefits so no student is held back because of their start in life.

Students can relate to alumni because they went to the same school, sat at the same desks and in some cases, even had the same teachers. Alumni are great role models. Their insights, experience and stories can have a transformational effect, particularly with students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students see - some for the first time - that they too can have successful, fulfilling lives.

When Future First started, less than 1% of schools made the most of their former students. Today, we estimate that a quarter of UK schools regularly engage with their alumni. This is a real shift in national culture.

We worked with 110,850 students in 2016-17 (up from 83,700 the year before) and had over 214,000 alumni on our database. Every contact between a former student and a current one is an opportunity to raise expectations, make connections and inspire bigger dreams and ambitions.

Our work with employers is going from strength to strength, with existing employers expanding their work and new employers wanting to get involved. These programmes enable students to broaden their horizons and so they complement Future First's core programmes well.

Last year, we reported on the work set in train by our funding from the Careers and Enterprise Company. Our work in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset was tremendously successful and I am delighted that we now

have a contract with the CEC to work in each of the first six opportunity areas in England.

We understand the heavy pressures of school and college leadership. Our new on-line toolkit is designed to make it even easier for schools to establish and sustain a thriving network. And with a menu of ways in which Future First can assist, from a full-service model to DIY+, we can add practical value to life in schools.

Prospects for 2017/18 look great. We hope to extend our CEC funded work to the second-round opportunity areas too. We have agreed exciting plans to work with several government-funded outreach programmes to widen participation in higher education and improve social mobility in a number of regions. We are also piloting an important initiative in eight primary schools with a view to offering Future First programmes to all primary schools from September 2018.

Our new Chief Executive, Matt Lent, takes up his post in January 2018 at an exciting but still challenging time. Matt joins us from UK Youth where he was Director of Partnerships and Policy. He brings his rich experience, abundant energy and his passionate drive to our work.

We remain grateful for the work of our supporters, our staff and of course, for the contribution of alumni themselves. They tell us that in giving back, they gain great enjoyment and huge satisfaction too.

We are proud of our successes, but too many schools and colleges are still not keeping in touch with their alumni and are letting this valuable resource go to waste. We will work tirelessly until alumni communities are embedded in the life of every school in the country. I hope this Annual Review will inspire and enthuse you all to share that journey with us this coming year.

Christine Gilbert
Executive Chair

Why we are needed

Careers education in English schools is often patchy and inadequate. Whilst teachers can provide strong role models, too many students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, still lack real examples of what's possible.

Only one in eight children from a low-income background will become a high earner. At Future First, we believe that things don't have to be this way. We are working to ensure that every school reaps the benefit of a thriving alumni network just as independent schools have done for decades.

We want to ensure that every student has a rewarding future, using alumni communities to break down generational disadvantage.

Alumni communities have two distinctive strengths – they are relatable and sustainable. They are also an inexpensive way of delivering results, creating hope and possibilities for all students, regardless of their starting points.

Alumni can play a crucial role, not just in careers education, but also in the life of a school. They give children and young people the chance to understand how someone like them has succeeded. By showcasing their different career paths, providing personal insights and making connections, former students can not only break down barriers for young people but also gain immense satisfaction themselves from playing an important role in creating a fairer society.



VOICES FROM GOVERNMENT

“Too many young people are leaving education without the tools to help them consider their future options or how their skills and experiences fit with opportunities in the job market”.

Business, Innovation and Skills Sub-Committee on
Education, Skills and the Economy



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

“We heard that Future First were the best people to partner with to get things going. All the support we have received has been amazing.

“There has been so much guidance... We've learnt how best to do things, when is best to do things, how to communicate with our alumni and how to involve them in school”.



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

“Alumni are living proof that someone like me can succeed.”



What we do

We help schools to establish and develop alumni networks. These help students make a stronger connection between what they are learning in school and the world of work.

What we offer

CORE PROGRAMME

Our core programme makes it easy for schools to reconnect with their former students and encourage them to come back to school to share their insights into the world of work, apprenticeships or university. We create bespoke programmes that meet schools' individual needs.

ALUMNI PROGRAMME OFFICER

Each school or college gets its own alumni programme officer who provides expert, hands-on support to help grow the school's alumni network.

THE PORTAL

Our unique on-line portal enables communication with the school's former students at the click of a button. We also offer a toolkit of ideas, lesson plans, tips and templates.

WORKSHOPS

There are a wide range of workshops for schools to choose from depending on students' specific needs. Future First designs and delivers to each school's requirements.

EMPLOYER OPPORTUNITIES

Future First members have access to unique opportunities hosted by our employer partners and designed by us, giving students the chance to get really immersed in the world of work.

What a successful alumni network does

Engages former students

Provides relatable role models

Creates personal interactions with employers

Motivates and inspires students

Provides insights into career paths and work

Provides one-to-one mentoring and advice

Creates a community of successful volunteers

Supports the school, including with governors and fundraising

Enriches delivery of the core curriculum

Helps the school in raising aspirations and achievements.

“ ”

VOICES FROM HEADS

“I would estimate that it takes no more than an hour a week to sustain our highly effective alumni network. Our overall investment in Future First is small compared to the impact we are having in terms of raising aspirations and achievement in our school”.

There are five simple steps



STEP ONE

Sign up leavers

Future First's secure, on-line platform helps schools keep in touch with all leavers from their last day. It means schools can easily keep alumni up-to-date, communicate effectively with them and search to find alumni to meet specific needs.



STEP TWO

Reach out to former students

We help schools to find and sign up past students using a wide range of sources including social media, university and employer partnerships, and the local press. Our successful social media campaigns encourage alumni to sign up.



STEP THREE

Engage the network

We have a wealth of practical resources to help schools keep their network engaged and playing an active role in school or college life.



STEP FOUR

Track journeys

Using our annual tracking survey and on-line platform, we help schools to track former students' journeys.



STEP FIVE

Invite alumni back to school

From inspiring talks and mentoring, to fundraising or becoming an alumni governor, there are many ways an engaged network can add real value.

Making it happen

Delivering success relies on an effective collaboration between our expert team, school staff, students, alumni, employers and partners. Our services have been shaped by their feedback, to maximise impact. We know how busy people are, so we have developed our unique approach, supported by an on-line platform and toolkit, to make the best use of resources.

Our alumni

Future First would not exist without alumni volunteers. They are the heart of our work. At the end of the academic year 2016-17, we had 214,000 alumni signed up to go back, and give back, to their school.



Role models

Students relate to alumni because they have grown up in the same place and attended the same school. Alumni help expand students' horizons by sharing their personal stories and presenting a world of choice and opportunities.



Mentors

Mentoring offers students a powerful new relationship to help overcome barriers and challenge perceptions. Whether on-line or in-person, alumni can help with information, advice and guidance.



Supporting the curriculum

Bringing alumni into the classroom can motivate students and provide a real-world insight into careers education. There are lots of ways in which alumni can co-teach the core curriculum related to their careers.



Work experience

By providing shadowing opportunities and placements, alumni provide an invaluable insight into their workplace and the skills students need to achieve success.



Volunteering

Former students have so much to offer, from running after school clubs, to coaching the netball team, supporting the school play, or re-designing outdoor space.



Fundraisers

Alumni have donated and raised thousands of pounds for their schools.



Governors

With their combination of local knowledge, experience and skills, former students can make a powerful contribution as governors.

A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a dark grey school suit with blue piping, a white shirt, and a blue and yellow striped tie, is smiling broadly. He is sitting at a desk in a classroom, with other students and a teacher visible in the background. The lighting is bright and natural.

Building a national alumni movement

Voices from alumni

Dr Sarah Caddy

Post-doctoral researcher, Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge University; Alumna, Oathall Community College

"I was lucky that I found schoolwork relatively easy, but this meant I wasn't one of the cool kids. I studied every hour possible for my A levels and ended up getting straight As but, to my great disappointment, I didn't get into the universities I applied for first time around.

"I decided to take a gap year and re-apply. When I came back, I was thrilled to be offered a place at Cambridge. I finished my PhD at Imperial College London, in 2015.

"I'm very passionate about levelling the playing field between state schools and private schools. Cambridge is often seen as an institution just for people from wealthy backgrounds, but that is absolutely not the case. I want to support my old school and try to inspire current students to aim high.

"The first time I went back to Oathall, it felt really strange. I initially went back to take part in a workshop for students in Year 8, which was hosted by Future First. I was then asked to go back to meet with GCSE science

students as part of Work Related Learning Week. I brought model viruses with me, which the students were very interested to see. At the end of each session they all wanted to ask questions about my career as a vet and being in Sierra Leone where I worked in a lab at an Ebola hospital.

"During my time at Oathall, I don't remember anything like this happening at all. I would have been fascinated by visits from alumni and I feel it could have really helped to open my eyes to science as a career."



Building a national alumni movement

Voices from alumni

David Honess

Astro Pi Programme Manager and former student, St Ives School, a Technology College

"I was the uncool, nerdy kid at school. I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do. When I was 20, I decided to do some A levels at Cornwall College in Chemistry, Physics and Biology. It was then that I realised I had an aptitude for computer programming. I did a BTEC and went straight into employment.

"It wasn't until later on in life that I went to university. That's one of the main reasons I want students at my old school to know they can change careers

and switch about, as long they find something they're passionate about.

"I signed up to support my old school after seeing an article in a local newspaper about their work with Future First. I've volunteered a couple of times. We did some remote sessions (then) the school asked me to present Astro Pi to two ICT classes.

"I did a 30 minute presentation using slides and images that show how

we got code into space. I'm on first name terms with astronauts. I'd never have believed you if you'd told me that when I was at school.

"The students asked lots of questions – they seemed really interested. I think they realised that I am someone who has been in exactly the same situation. Hearing someone saying, 'don't worry it will be OK' is reassuring. It makes a job like mine seem attainable".

Building a national alumni movement

Voices from alumni

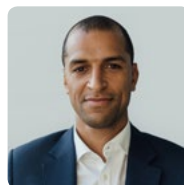
Jenny Baskerville

External Affairs Senior Manager and Social Mobility Lead, KPMG, and Alumna of Orleans Park School

"As Social Mobility Lead for one of the most progressive social mobility employers in the UK, my work is focused on breaking down the barriers that exist in elite professions.

"I am nearly two years into my tenure as a School Governor at Orleans Park and last summer, we signed up to Future First. We are at the beginning of our partnership but I am confident Future First will help us create a thriving alumni community.

"Alumni networks are a hugely valuable resource for schools. Former students can relate and connect with current students in a way that staff may not be able to. Alumni can get involved in a range of volunteering activities to support students including mentoring, offering careers advice and work placements, CV advice, supporting curriculum delivery and acting as vital role models".



Deji Davies
Future First Trustee



VOICES FROM ALUMNI

"I found going back to my old school really rewarding... particularly being able to open students' eyes to possibilities they may not otherwise have thought about".



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"It has helped me to be more curious in what I want to do."



VOICES FROM ALUMNI

"Alumni networks are a hugely valuable resource for schools. We all respond well to people who share a common experience or have followed a similar path."



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"It has helped me to be more confident".



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"It has showed me that even if you struggle at school, you can still get somewhere if you try".

Extending our reach

Voices from schools and colleges



Stuart Gander

**Head of Careers Education
Eastbury Community School
'The kindest school in the UK'**

"Eastbury Community School is an all through school for three to 19-year-olds in one of the five most deprived areas of the country. A large proportion of our 1,850 students come from minority ethnic groups. We are a specialist maths and computing school and were recently voted 'the kindest school in the UK'.

"We have been working with Future First for four years now. We aim to inspire young people by inviting alumni back for all careers related events at the school.

"Events include mock interviews, pathway evenings, careers fairs and careers 'speed networking'. The 'speed networking' event included 25 representatives from different careers, talking to small groups of year 9 and 10 students about their jobs and how they got into them. The aim of the day was to inspire our future workforce about real jobs, develop their communication skills, challenge stereotypes and find out what is required to stand out in an increasingly competitive employment market. The event was a huge success and we look forward to running it again next year.

"Excitingly, we are now starting to use alumni in the curriculum, bringing them into the classroom, and hope to have more coming back to support teachers in their subject areas".



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"We like our students to have access to alumni regularly so they can get advice and guidance on how to be successful and learn more about career and education pathways. We find that students like speaking to alumni and open up a lot more to them as they've been exactly where they are".



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"The exciting thing about working with alumni is that there are just so many creative ways you can use them in school".



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"It's been great having an Alumni Officer; it means the programme doesn't get pushed to the back burner".

Extending our reach

Voices from schools and colleges

Beverley Evans

Careers Advisor,
Ormiston Forge Academy,
Cradley Heath

"At Ormiston Forge Academy, we make sure all of our students have a careers interview in Year 11 and that they get lots of support with thinking about their futures.

"The first event we arranged for Future First to run at the school was a Feeding Britain's Future workshop, in which a range of employers from the grocery industry came in to work with Year 12s. The volunteers were great and the session really helped open students' eyes to all sorts of careers they'd never even heard of.

"After that, I thought it would be great to start inviting our ex-students back to the school and we've built up from there. It's been really useful to link up with former students to share information on career and education pathways.

"Our Alumni Programme Officer helped us to use the alumni portal to find a range of volunteers to come in and speak to our high ability Year 7 and Year 8 students. A group of former students, including a social worker, a student nurse, an actor and an artist came along with a prop related to their job. Students had to guess what jobs they did. The students were really switched on, motivated and eager to get involved. It really helped with communication and teamwork skills for the pupils. Those sorts of soft skills are really important for any interview".



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VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"Seeing that someone from their school has gone on to do something makes them think, 'I can do that as well'".

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VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"I think, for the Year 12s, meeting former students will have an impact on them applying to university or thinking more in detail about their future. I hope the process improves the number of students considering university, a foundation degree or a higher-level apprenticeship".

Extending our reach

Voices from schools and colleges

Freyja Danielsen

Sixth Form and Careers Manager,
Highworth Grammar School, Kent

"A few years ago, we began to realise just how much universities use their alumni and could see how powerful former student stories could be. When we started to re-connect with people it became clear very quickly just how much our alumni truly wanted to do for us.

"Our alumni have returned to Highworth on multiple occasions and it's wonderful to see how their enthusiasm grows each time. For example, we've had former students come back and give a lunchtime talk, which has led to them mentoring one or two current pupils or offering work experience placements for a student they've met. It's really nice to see it happening and working so well.

"We feel incredibly blessed to have so many people that are willing

to come back and inspire current students and talk about their time here and their journey since leaving school. It has definitely become a whole-school initiative, as all alumni talks are available for, and advertised to, the whole school.

"It's also having a real impact with our Year 13 leaving students, who for the first time this year actually asked if they could sign up to the network before we promoted it! It's now become something that students know they will be a part of when they leave school and it's something they want to do.

"Over the past year we have paired a small number of Year 12 students with alumni for work experience placements. We have been extremely lucky that our alumni have been so willing to offer

placements and if they can't offer in-person work experience, they have sent extensive tips for our Year 12s about their careers and sectors.

"The impact that alumni have on our current students in general is that it completely opens their eyes to what is possible and available to them in later life. Alumni show our students that anything is possible and are the best people to demonstrate what you can achieve after leaving school.

"We hope our alumni community continues to grow and are so glad that we have worked with Future First as we love working with them! In only a few years we have seen an overwhelmingly positive impact across the school and a real difference in the students who have interacted with them and been part of the programme".



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VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"We are so pro-alumni, we just want to keep trying new things and keep growing our network".

Extending our reach

Voices from schools and colleges



Bernie Corrighan
Careers Adviser,
Grey Court School, Ham

"Grey Court School is an outstanding, mixed comprehensive school, for 11 to 18-year-olds in Ham. It opened its sixth form in 2014.

"We've been working with Future First for three years now. We wanted to get access to more role models. We also wanted work experience offers for our sixth formers and to support any events that we're running in school. We just thought the advice would be so much better if it was coming from a real role model to the students.

"We hold a careers networking event for our Year 9s in which we run various workshops. We have about 20 alumni

per session. The students split into pairs and work with the alumni who come from a range of careers. It's important because it opens them up to careers they don't know about – careers that are beyond their immediate reach.

"We get such brilliant feedback from students. Parents even say students talk about the alumni they meet at home.

"We run mock interviews with Year 10 students where they are interviewed by alumni, which is great because it exposes them to people from the working world. Now that we have the alumni network we can be specific about

who we want and who is suitable for events, rather than it just being whoever you can get to volunteer.

"Our alumni programme is mainly about careers and inspiring our students but we also do a bit of fundraising. We have a Grey Court tree and alumni can buy leaves. We also held a reunion where alumni paid to come and visit. One of my favourite things we do is a friends and founders evening for our Year 12s. They bring in their CVs and talk to people from different careers, and they try and find work experience placements".

Extending our reach

Voices from schools and colleges

Angela Inglese

Assistant Principal, St Dominic's Sixth Form College
'Sunday Times' Sixth Form College of the Year.'

"St. Dominic's Sixth Form College is a Catholic Sixth Form College in Harrow. We have approximately 1200 students aged 16-18. We are very proud to have been named 'The Sunday Times' Sixth Form College of the Year, 2017'.

"Through Future First, we are able to keep in touch with our alumni and create a sense of community by sharing college news with them and requesting support throughout the academic year.

"A large number of our career talks by alumni over the years have been to show our students that there are so many ways of being successful. Often in society, the focus is on academic success and we've been really fortunate to have a bank of wonderful alumni who can show our students and

their parents that it's not always about being a doctor, it's more about giving them a chance to be who they are.

"Since we joined Future First, every year, in the spring term, we invite our alumni back for an alumni panel and careers event. A few months before the event is due to take place, our Careers Team get together and decide which careers and courses we want to focus on, generally picking something from each department in the college.

"This event is run like a panel, with the Future First facilitators asking our alumni open-ended questions about the importance of working hard to get into university, work or apprenticeship schemes, what the expectations are when they get there, and what university and work

life is all about. We finish off with a break-out session, enabling students to speak to each former student in more detail about their journey after leaving college. Our alumni also share any advice they have to give.

"The most noticeable impact our alumni have is helping students understand the importance of their UCAS application. The whole point of this event is for students to understand what is on offer, what kinds of things they are interested in and whether they could then do that as a career and if so, how to get there.

"Our students find it so helpful especially because they are hearing from those who were once in their seats".



VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

"We signed up to Future First because their ethos really resonated with us, particularly around the power of role models and the impact former students can have broadening young people's horizons".



Extending our reach

Working with Multi-Academy Trusts

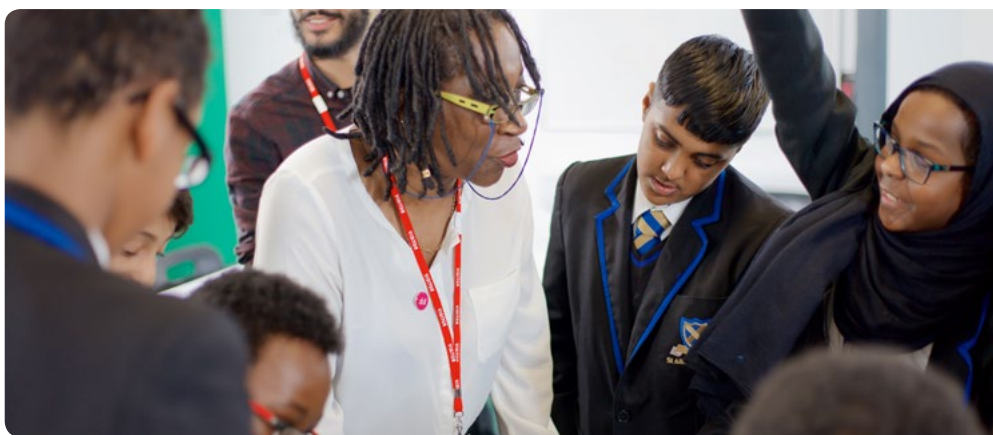
In 2015-16, Future First started to establish a programme for Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), working with six Trusts and 53 schools. In 2016-17, our programme for multi-academy trusts took a big step forward with the introduction of a hub view on our technology platform. One click gives MATs the umbrella view of activity happening across all of the schools in their trust.

ARK

Since beginning their work with Future First, 13 schools have joined the Ark alumni programme and, collectively, signed up 3,300 alumni across the participating schools. 75 different alumni activities have taken place, including:

- One-to-one tutoring between an alumnus who has lived in France for many years and a student preparing for her French a-level
- Alumni currently at university supporting a workshop focused on preparing students for moving away from home
- Alumni supporting an after school Code Club, helping students to develop their digital skills
- An alumnus being interviewed on his experiences of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and his tips about resilience and overcoming difficult challenges.
- King Solomon School has gone a step further by bringing alumni into the staff team in a range of roles from receptionist and exam invigilators, to nursery assistants and music tutors.

Ark St Alban's in Birmingham has participated in our first corporately supported repeat intervention workshops. Funded by the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD), Future First returned to Ark St Alban's on three separate occasions with volunteers from the world of work to talk to students about the different pathways available to them in the food and grocery sector after leaving school.



HARRIS

Future First facilitators worked with the Harris Federation to deliver two days of workshops for their high achieving students. Alumni of the 'Harris Experience' programme returned to share their experiences of the most selective universities with 250 Year 12 students from across the Harris London schools.

Students heard from Ashleigh, a second year student at Warwick, about his experience of changing from Maths to Philosophy while Reanna, a final year undergraduate at Queen Mary, explained why she chose to study Civil Engineering rather than Physics. One former student of Harris Academy South Norwood told us 'I received some really valuable help from former students when I was applying to university and it's great to be here today to help the sixth formers make those decisions'.

Extending our reach

Employer programmes

Our employer programmes link staff from leading UK firms to state schools. Our growing list of employer partners provides invaluable opportunities for students to talk to professionals, explore different career opportunities, and experience different workplaces. Our employer events provide inspirational opportunities for young people to develop their employability skills and create networks in the world of work, while also offering meaningful volunteering opportunities for staff. In addition, the programme can provide employers with a diverse talent pipeline for apprenticeships, internships, school leaver positions and entry-level jobs.

INSTITUTE OF GROCERY DISTRIBUTION

Our partnership with the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) has flourished since its outset in 2014. IGD is a research and training charity at the heart of the food and grocery industry. It brings together a powerful network of retailers, manufacturers, producers and service providers to address skills gaps in the sector. Many came back to speak to students in schools up and down the country about the huge variety of jobs available in the grocery sector.

In 2016-17, IGD renewed their partnership with us and extended the scale of their work. Future First worked with IGD to design a set of interactive workshops which

demonstrate the dynamism and creativity of the grocery industry.

Feeding Britain's Future Schools Programme engaged 8,934 students in 378 workshops between January and December 2017. This high impact and popular initiative, develops employability skills, showcases roles in the food and grocery industry, and highlights skills required and career paths to success. We know from feedback how valuable these progressive sessions are for students, teachers and alumni.

89% of students agreed that the workshop had helped them to prepare for the world of work; 90% said it had helped them to understand how their skills and subjects can prepare them.

100%

of teachers said that the sessions helped their students to prepare for the world of work and life after school. Volunteers love taking part; their enthusiasm and experience make the events engaging and real for students.



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"I found this workshop extremely informative".



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"Really good".



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"It was really helpful having the opportunity to speak to professionals".



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"A lot of people could benefit".





Extending our reach

Employer programmes

TAYLOR WESSING

Taylor Wessing, the international law firm, started working with Future First seven years ago because of our focus on social mobility. Over the years, a very strong partnership has developed.

Three times a year, Future First runs Taylor Wessing's Career Insight Days for students in years 10 to 12. Around 40 students from five or six different schools take part each time.

Neil Smyth, Partner said: "These days open young people's eyes to the vast array of job options. We focus on developing

students' transferable skills in presentation, networking and communications. They walk away with more knowledge, greater self-awareness and tangible advice, which they can put to use immediately.

"One of the keys to the success of our partnership with Future First is the number of Taylor Wessing volunteers involved. The impact of the day is certainly two-way. Both our employee volunteers and the students taking part are challenged and developed. Our staff also have their horizons stretched by working with today's young people. They get to feel the pulse of changing perspectives and modern attitudes".

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VOICES FROM EMPLOYERS

"It was wonderful to see so many students showing such enthusiasm at being involved in the day".

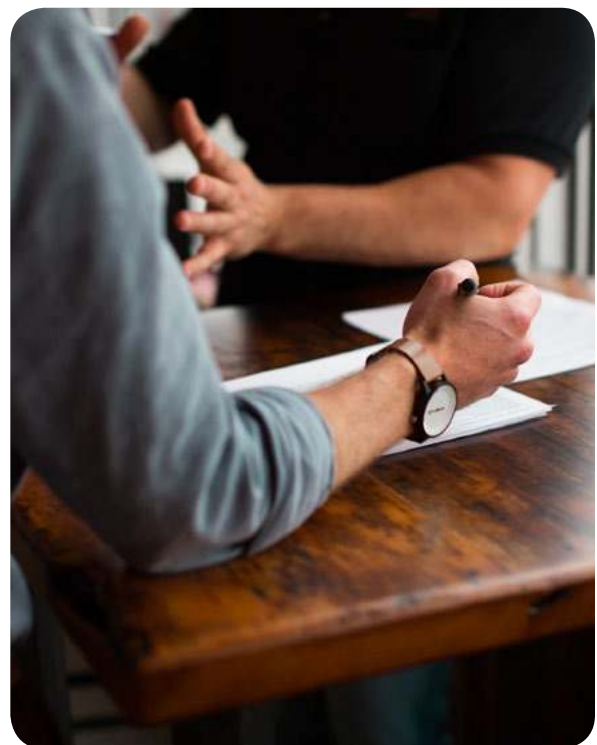


Extending our reach through collaboration

During 2016-17, Future First entered into a range of contracts with others whose goals strongly aligned to our own. By working in partnership, we are able to have greater reach. One example of this is our work with The Key. The Key is a successful provider of information and guidance materials and resources to support the effective running and management of a school.

Future First is proud to be The Key's only partner supporting their work experience programme. With seven workshops on offer, The Key's work experience event for students in year 10 provided a real insight into what it's like to work in an office. The day-long event included two CV workshops, a session on office etiquette and creating an 'elevator pitch': how you could sell yourself to a prospective employer in the time it takes to go up in a lift. Students also had the chance to participate in a demanding, 10-minute, mock interview. Everyone agreed that this day of workshops had improved their chances of getting a job.

Students found the experience demanding and valuable in terms of improving their knowledge of the world of work and increasing their confidence in applying for suitable opportunities. Students learnt about the subtleties of working in an office, including the skills they would need, such as time management and being able to work independently.



VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"I used to think it was 'me against the world'. Now I can see that people have had similar experiences at school...and that I'll be able to get somewhere too if I put my head down".



Designing and trialling new initiatives

Our Sustainable Alumni Communities project, supported by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC)

In June 2016, we launched our Sustainable Alumni Communities project, supported by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC). The CEC project set out to connect young people from 40 schools with former students across Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, working intensively over a 15-month period. The project kick started alumni networks, bringing former students into schools as role models, governors, mentors and fundraisers, as well as providing work placements and support in the classroom including co-teaching the curriculum in their areas of expertise.


The core programme was supplemented by World of Work days bringing alumni from a wide range of jobs into schools, highlighting options, leaving students better informed, more skilled and motivated to work harder.

The project, which has now finished, exceeded all but one of its targets. In total, more than 28,000 encounters between students and employers took place, against a target of 12,000. The critical mass involved in the project has meant that it now has its own momentum. Nearly three-quarters of the participating schools have retained Future First services, with others citing financial pressures for running their networks independently.

SSAT were a partner on the project. They are the largest membership network of schools in the UK. SSAT offered a Lead Practitioner accreditation to teachers so that their learning and experience through the project could be formally recognised. Five schools chose to take part in the accreditation in 2016-17.

"I decided to do the Lead Practitioner accreditation because it was a free opportunity to pursue some extra professional development and to review and reflect on my practice", said Jackie Druiff, Director of Sixth Form at Coombeshead Academy, Devon. "In the current climate where everyone is really stretched, it's good to take a moment and reflect on your work".

In 2017, we were delighted to receive confirmation of our successful bid to the CEC for a second round of funding but this time the initiative was to be focused in the government's newly designated opportunity areas. A total of 60 schools from six different areas – West Somerset, Derby, Norfolk, Scarborough, Oldham and Blackpool – now have the opportunity to select our services from a 'rate card' appearing alongside other schemes. By the end of the 2016/17 academic year, 43% of schools in the opportunity areas had chosen to work with Future First.



Designing and trialling new initiatives

An Employability Skills project, supported by
The Rothschild & Co. Charitable Giving Programme

Future First is pioneering a three-year Employability Skills project for students in need, from Years 9 to 11, supported by the Rothschild & Co. Charitable Giving Programme. The project seeks to improve the skills of at least 80 young people at risk of missing out on education or training.

The first year saw four schools across the country (in Cornwall, Bristol, South Tyneside and Cambridgeshire) take part.

Pupils benefit from the support of former students with similar experiences to them, throughout a crucial stage in their education. Fully trained alumni work with each group in a series of bespoke workshops to raise aspirations and help them overcome barriers to achieving their potential.

Alumni coach students through activities that build self-awareness, confidence and drive, and

increase their understanding of the options open to them in the future. Alumni have a powerful influence on the aspirations and confidence of young people. 85% of students say that Rothschild's alumni events help them to understand that "people like me" can be successful.

Students from the school in Cambridgeshire attended a mock interview session at Rothschild's offices in London. Beforehand, more than a third of students said they didn't talk to their parents about future careers (37%); nearly a half (49%) said they didn't know

anyone in the career they wanted to do; and some 45% said they had 'never', or 'not very often', talked to people in jobs they found interesting.

Lillian Hosea, Director and founder of The People Academy, left school in 1980. Students were amazed to hear about her journey and the barriers she overcame to build a successful career. She told students: "I left school with nothing. I didn't work hard and I had to study until I was 40 to get the qualifications I could have got at 21. When I was at school all I knew was that I wanted to leave".

“ ”

VOICES FROM HEADS

"The volunteers were brilliant and... all got fully involved with the students"...

“ ”

VOICES FROM STUDENTS

"I changed my mind about not caring about my future".

Developing organisational effectiveness

The new academic year saw the implementation of a new four-year strategy get underway. This is designed to accelerate impact and deliver our goal of a thriving alumni network in every school and college in the land.

We were delighted to launch a new website, e-Bulletin and toolkit in 2016-7.

Aimed at former students, school staff, employers and the general public, the website is packed with information about who we are and what we do, plus advice and guidance on how to get involved.

Our e-Bulletin shares news and stories from our members and alumni events across the country. This highlights the impact of relatable role models, shares ideas and innovation, and encourages the spread of highly effective alumni networks.

Building, engaging and mobilising your alumni community is now more straight-forward, thanks to our on-line Digital Toolkit, which distils best practice and advice. Content has grown and evolved over the year, benefitting throughout from valuable feedback from schools as they use it.

During the year we improved the sign up process for alumni and revamped the portal for school staff to save time and make life easier. We also launched our new Manchester office, which enables us to provide more face to face support and makes us more accessible.

We made extensive use of social media during 2016-17, with over 6,270 followers signed up to hear our news and views via Twitter feeds.

“ ”

VOICES FROM SCHOOLS

“The Future First portal has saved so much time that I just didn’t have”.



Delivering good value

Future First's income in 2016-17 stood at £1.52million. 65% of our income is generated through delivering services to schools and employers. The remaining income comes from our funders who support the development of innovative projects and contribute to the central costs of running the organisation.

To maintain the sustainability of our work, we are phasing out price subsidies to ensure that the price of Future First's programmes reflects both their value and the cost of delivery. Income from programme delivery has increased by more than 30% compared to the previous year.

We have built on our financial reserves and are meeting our policy of maintaining four months of expenditure in reserve.

“

We are efficient and deliver good value for money. For every pound spent, 93p goes on programme delivery; the rest goes on fundraising, administration and good governance.

Income from alumni programmes	£682,446
Income from employer programmes	£300,530
Income from grants and donations	£534,203
Income from other sources	£5,416
Total income	£1,522,595

Provision of educational and careers support	£1,278,501
Cost of fundraising and governance	£95,082
Total costs	£1,373,583

Surplus in the year	£149,012
Reserves	£602,233

Delivering on our promises

In 2016-17, we set ourselves four strategic goals. Here we look at our achievements and our progress towards them.

We said:

“We will extend our reach”

We delivered:

110,850 young people took part in a Future First initiative, compared to 83,700 in 2015-16

83 new schools signed up, in spite of difficult financial circumstances for schools across the country

68% of schools renewed their membership

450 schools engaged during 2016-17

89,843 young people took part in school-led alumni events (up 40%)

75%

of young people said that sessions with alumni will help them to make better, more informed decisions

100%

of schools staff said hearing from people in jobs raised students' motivation levels about their school work

We said:

“We will design and trial new innovations”

We delivered:

A new CEC programme which exceeded all but one of its targets

Work with Rothschild to support **80** young people at risk of missing out on education

We said:

“We will develop our organisational effectiveness”

We delivered:

Over **97,500** unique views of the website each quarter

7,800 followers on social media

Improved value for money. The total cost per young person worked with has fallen by **17%**

85%

of teachers said that even without Future First they would build an alumni community because it is so valuable

We said:

“We will build a national alumni movement”

We delivered:

Over **214,000** alumni signed up to support their old school or college

98% of alumni really enjoyed working with their old schools

99% would be happy to take part in more alumni events

Our Supporters

We are proud to be supported by a diverse range of organisations who share our commitment to ensuring every young person has access to relatable role models.

Each supporter is unique. Some organisations provide vital funding or pro bono support. Others provide hours of staff volunteering time or work with us to design powerful programmes. But every single one helps to have a meaningful impact on young people, schools and their alumni across the country.

Ashurst LLP

Careers and Enterprise Company

Citi Foundation

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Garfield Weston Foundation

IGD – The Institute of Grocery Distribution

Jack Petchey Foundation

KPMG Foundation

Nominet Trust

Pears Foundation

Rothschild and Co

Shawbrook Bank

Taylor Wessing

The Blagrove Trust

The Dulverton Trust

The Key

The Monument Trust

The Worshipful Company of World Traders

UBS

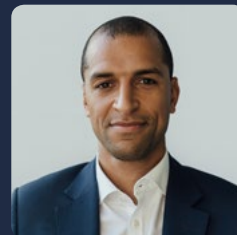
Wellcome Trust

ZING

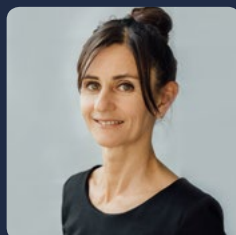
Our Trustees



Christine Gilbert, CBE
(Executive Chair)



Deji Davies



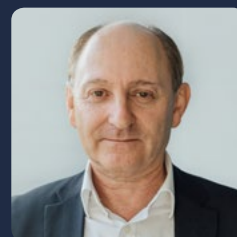
Lindsey McMurray



Sally Nelson



Robin Tombs



Michael Ter-Berg

Our Advisory Council

Dr Sarabajaya Kumar,
Teaching Fellow at LSE

David Laws,
Executive Chairman, Education Policy Institute
and former Minister for Schools

Fiona Millar,
Education Campaigner and Journalist

Estelle Morris,
Baroness Morris of Yardley and former Secretary of State for
Education

Chloe Smith,
Conservative MP for Norwich North and Parliamentary
Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office





Helping state schools broaden their students' horizons

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