CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY
ABOUT US

Social mobility in Britain is low. The educational opportunities and life chances of a child born today are strongly linked to their parents’ socio-economic background. This is the challenge we face.

Since 1997 and under the leadership of our founder, Sir Peter Lampl, the Sutton Trust has worked to address this. We fight for social mobility from birth to the workplace so that every young person – no matter who their parents are, what school they go to, or where they live – has the chance to succeed in life.

How we work

Our Agenda-Setting Research identifies the root causes of low social mobility and promotes effective solutions through education and employment.

Our Strategic Advisory and Development Board attracts prominent leaders from both sides of the Atlantic who make significant financial contributions to the Trust and lend their expert advice and support.

Our Alumni Community brings together everyone who has been through our programme since 1997, so they can create connections, access support and inspire change.

Our Programmes support 5,000 high-attaining young people each year from less advantaged backgrounds to access leading universities and careers, helping them to raise and then realise their aspirations.

Our Policy Work keeps social mobility at the top of the national agenda and many of our practical and evidence-based recommendations have influenced national change in all of the areas we work in.

In order to leverage what we do, we work in partnership with leading UK and US universities, foundations, corporate partners and other not-for-profits.

“\nI applied for this programme because I didn’t have any knowledge of university life for a law student and no one in my life who could help me. I wanted to know if law was the right subject choice for me. And thanks to the programme, I can confidently say that it is! “

Saira, UK Summer School Programme

POLICY AND RESEARCH

The Sutton Trust put social mobility on the map. Since 1997, we’ve worked with every government to make sure that social mobility stays at the top of the agenda. We’ve published over 200 reports which have gone on to influence national policy.

200+ research reports published

20+ government policies significantly influenced

Our priorities

We aim to develop concrete and achievable policy asks in our five priority areas that we work in, at every stage of a young person’s life:

- EARLY YEARS
- SCHOOLS
- ACCESS TO THE WORKPLACE
- HIGHER EDUCATION
- APPRENTICESHIPS

Research highlights

Our 2006 seminal study from The London School of Economics found that social mobility in Britain was lower than in other advanced countries and declining. Its long lasting influence means that social mobility is now at the heart of policy making and reform.

Since then, the Trust has continued to regularly shine a light on social mobility issues through our research. Our flagship piece of research for 2019, Elitist Britain, analysed the educational backgrounds of over 5,000 leading figures across all areas of British life. We found that they are five times as likely to have attended a fee-paying school than the general population.
Through the development and field trial of targeted interventions, we work to address inequality in children’s early attainment. We managed the parental Engagement Fund (PEF) in 2014-2017, looking at what works to engage parents and improve home learning.

Delivered in partnership with the US-UK Fulbright Commission, this programme allows students to explore US study through a week-long visit to the US and a calendar of events and activities in the UK.

Launched in 1997, our flagship programme works to address the access gap for highly able students from less advantaged backgrounds at the UK’s leading universities. Since 1997, over 20,000 young people have taken part.

The Trust is embedding essential life skills across our programmes, as evidence shows these are associated with better academic outcomes and better prospects in the workplace.

High-quality apprenticeships have the potential to be powerful vehicles for social mobility. Apprentices earn while they learn and develop skills employers want. Our research has revealed the challenges poorer students face in accessing them. We are now focussed on embedding degree-level apprenticeships into our programmes and influencing policy. The new Sutton Trust Apprenticeship Summer School will help post-16 students explore degree level apprenticeships.

High-quality apprenticeships have the potential to be powerful vehicles for social mobility. Apprentices earn while they learn and develop skills employers want. Our research has revealed the challenges poorer students face in accessing them. We are now focussed on embedding degree-level apprenticeships into our programmes and influencing policy. The new Sutton Trust Apprenticeship Summer School will help post-16 students explore degree level apprenticeships.

How much the best apprentices can earn over their lifetime compared to many graduates.

989 students have participated to date, unlocking $110m of financial aid.

40% of students have gone on to study in the US.

96% of Medicine at Imperial respondents felt the programme had been useful in preparing them for a career in medicine.

85% of banking & finance respondents agreed their work experience made them more likely to enter the financial sector.

Personally speaking, it was the most rewarding 6 days of my working life”

Industry Volunteer

Work placements taken place and secured since 2017.

£50,000

more

HOW WE ARE FUNDED

The Sutton Trust has a diverse funding base and is entirely supported by voluntary donations from more than 100 generous individuals, trusts and foundations and companies. The Sutton Trust has a strong fundraising team, supported by the Chairman, Chief Executive, trustees and members of the Board, and raises £6m annually to meet programme and research costs and the core operation of the Trust.

Why support us

“Capital One is proud to partner with the Sutton Trust, with our shared focus on providing opportunity to help young people become confident and successful adults.”

Amy Lenander, Head of International and UK CEO of Capital One UK

£6m+

The amount we raise annually to champion social mobility.

£14

The return on investment for every £1 invested in our programmes, in terms of lifetime earnings.

“Our Impact

Over the past two decades, the Sutton Trust has driven the widening access agenda and made a real difference to the numbers of disadvantaged young people at leading universities and in competitive careers. To explore this data in more detail, we have developed a new ‘Impact Hub’ online.

5,000

young people are supported each year

more than

38,000

supported since 1997

3,700+

On our online alumni community

STUDENT DESTINATIONS

414

the number of our students admitted to universities in the US.

Over

15,000

Now attending a Russell Group university after completing a UK Summer School

Our programmes are well-targeted and support the young people who will benefit the most

On average

92%

met at least three of our five eligibility criteria (2018-19)

Our students are twice as likely

to be eligible for Free School Meals

93%

moved from the lowest groups to the highest socio-economic groups after leaving university

“As a national grant-maker we particularly value the Sutton Trust’s rigorous targeting of its work in order to support the young people who would benefit the most. This is underpinned by independent evaluation and ongoing review of programmes, which makes for a strong partnership.”

Philippa Charles
Director, The Garfield Weston Foundation

“The Sutton Trust is the UK’s go-to authority on social mobility and educational inequality.

We run a unique model, delivering programmes to widen access to selective universities and leading professions whilst producing agenda-setting research to keep social mobility high on the political agenda.

We maintain an impressive national reach, with programme beneficiaries in every single UK constituency.

Our programmes are independently evaluated to make sure that they have the biggest possible impact on participants.

The Sutton Trust has a strong fundraising team, supported by the Chairman, Chief Executive, trustees and members of the Board, and raises £6m annually to meet programme and research costs and the core operation of the Trust.

The return on investment for every £1 invested in our programmes, in terms of lifetime earnings.

£6m+

The amount we raise annually to champion social mobility.
I grew up living with my Mum and my older brother. It felt incredibly risky to head off to university placing all my bets on a subject I’d never formally studied before. So, when I heard that the Sutton Trust were offering low-income students the opportunity to study Sociology and Social Anthropology at Cambridge University, I jumped at the chance.

My week at Cambridge University was game-changing. Learning from and discussing human behaviour with world leaders in the field was awe-inspiring. They had so many ideas, so much to share and to ponder. The same went for my fellow summer-school students, who all brought vastly different experiences to the table.

I applied to UCL to study Anthropology with a study abroad year in California. After applying to graduate schemes across several sectors, I’m now a Partner Development Manager at Microsoft, where I work with a portfolio of independent software vendors it’s my job to help them grow their businesses and I love it.

Emily Gotch
UK Summer School 2013
Partner Development Manager at Microsoft UK