



Seeing Our Work Differently Through SDG Lenses: The experience of Siegen Community Foundation.



Founded in 2005 and serving the 100,000 inhabitants of the city of Siegen, the Siegen Community Foundation has, for the past couple of years, seen more relevance, and has developed the connection, between their work and the 2030 Agenda. ECFI caught up with Sandra Fuchs and Brigitte Ross-Henrich to find out why and how they embraced the SDGs. Below, they describe their SDG journey so far and how by putting on SDG glasses revealed a new perspective and opened up new conversations and partnerships, bringing refreshed inspiration, aspiration, and action.

*German Alliance of Community Foundations Regional Meeting participants sporting SDG lenses.
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In 2021, the [Siegen Community Foundation](https://www.communityfoundations.eu) was operating entirely remotely, and, like everyone else, it shifted its activities and rethought any engagement opportunities. Being online opened up a new realm of possibilities for the organisation and its members, including participation in a series of ‘SDG Wake-Up Call’ online workshops organised by the German Alliance of Community Foundations and ECFI. Two years later, the opportunity was presented at the Alliance’s Regional Meeting for Community Foundations in North Rhine Westfalia, to share their experience in putting learning from the ‘SDG Wake-Up Call’ into practice.

Realising the connection between the SDGs and the work that the community foundation was doing on the ground was immediate and seamless. Indeed, even though the 2030 Agenda is not explicitly mentioned in the organisation mission and statute, its aim has always been to promote the sustainable development of their community. Therefore, following the workshop Siegen Community Foundation decided to set out a strategy that would embrace [the SDGs with “a whole of organisation” approach](#).

One of the first actionable things that they did was, quite literally, put on new SDGs glasses to analyse the projects they support and to address the new ones to have a deeper understanding of what they and their partners are focusing on and how they are contributing to this global agenda. Furthermore, there is a general awareness and recognition of the SDGs discourse among members of the community and organisations operating on the ground that could lead to further alignment with the foundation itself.

From a communications point of view, Siegen Community Foundation started openly talking more about the SDGs through their channels. They are now planning to revamp their website homepage accordingly.

From the operations side, the plan is to become paperless, cutting down the hard copies and materials produced for meetings and events. However, the organisation must consider the generational factor: older community members feel uncomfortable with this solution. Therefore, they are finding new and accommodating ways to nudge changes from within.

Finally, talking about the endowment, the community foundation has updated its investment policy to comply with the ESG regulation.

The Siegen Community Foundation found the SDGs both inspirational and aspirational: a concrete set of goals that could enhance their development and make them feel part of a bigger global picture. Integrating them is a lengthy process, facilitated by the fact that the community foundation had, from the beginning, the buy-in from the whole board to move forward. But it is a worthy task, opening new possibilities for the organisation and strengthening local partnerships, with new targets and a clear role identified for Siegen Community Foundation.

More information on Siegen Community Foundation can be found here [here](#)

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