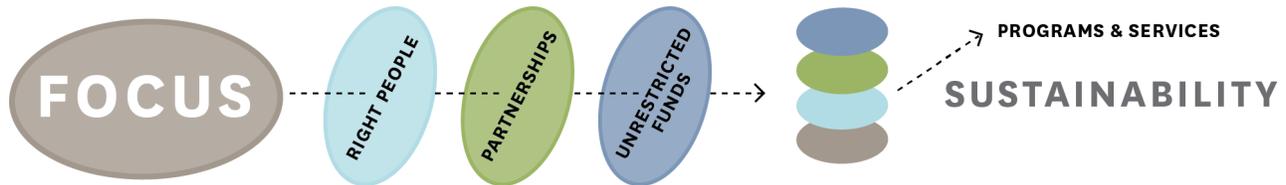


## The Foraker Nonprofit Sustainability Model



Our model proposes that sustainability is an organization's journey, not its destination. This diagram shows how the factors are inter-related and how they move from the focal point that we call **focus**. The factors, like lenses, help us reflect on sustainability.

Founding purpose and values are part of **focus**. In a sustainable nonprofit, they don't change – they are absolute, almost sacred. **Focus** reflects the passion of the founders, defining both the core purpose and the core values that drive and motivate the whole organization. It's the anchor for everything the organization does and answers the fundamental question, "Who are we?"

The other part of **focus** is flexible – it helps us stay relevant and answers the question, "Where are we going?" That direction is under consistent review. As the external environment changes, it must be adjusted so the organization continues to move in the right direction and has the greatest impact. Together, the founding purpose and values, along with a clear direction, provide a **focus** that is both true to the founders' intent and relevant to today's community.

Moving from **focus**, the next lenses also are constant in their underlying principles while remaining flexible as each adapts to current conditions. Organizations that use the lenses as a way to view their actions become more resilient and are able to:

- **Focus** on founding principles, making strategic decisions and looking ahead
- Recruit and retain the **right board and staff** and work together effectively as partners
- Seek and nurture strategic **partnerships** to maximize impact
- Assure sufficient **unrestricted funds** to take advantage of opportunities and handle emergencies

Using the lenses, you can begin to understand the dynamics of sustainability. Then, and only then, is it time to develop programs and services. That's why they are presented at the other end of the diagram.

Programs and services are flexible – they are not sacred activities. One simple way to understand this is, "what you do is not who you are." The strategic organization modifies programs and services, drops them, or adds new ones as it adjusts to the needs in its community – always influenced first by the factors of sustainability.