

# Become a Fairtrade Ambassador in your College

The international student movement has been central to the growing success of Fairtrade worldwide, because so many students are willing to stand up and demand that the significant buying power of academic institutions is used to put an end to trade injustice and exploitation of farmers and workers in developing countries. The Fairtrade Colleges and Universities program offers students like you valuable leadership experience designing and implementing a multifaceted campaign.

On this page you can find out how you and your institution can become part of the dynamic core of this movement by providing helpful hints as well addressing obstacles that may challenge you.

*You* are the leading force of campaigning on campus, and we have plenty of resources to help you set up your events. They are all available from our [Online Resource Catalogue](#)

## How to become a Fairtrade College?

### Top Tips for organizing your campaign

- ✓ Get support for your campaign – have a meeting, serve Fairtrade coffee, tea, wine, bananas and snacks and invite people to get involved. Don't forget to involve representatives from all parts of your university or college – students, academic staff and support staff.
- ✓ Develop an action plan to work towards meeting the five criteria of becoming a Fairtrade University/College
- ✓ Start collecting evidence for each of the five goals. Make a note of any events you organise and keep copies of all press coverage you generate
- ✓ Publicise your events or campaign progress in your student paper or local press.
- ✓ Get your SU President, or senior academic staff to endorse your campaign.
- ✓ Set up a Facebook or Twitter page for your campaign and let everyone know what you are doing.
- ✓ [Order resources](#) or [purchase merchandise](#) to help promote your campaign.



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- ✓ Encourage your institution and Student Union to stock Fairtrade wherever possible.
- ✓ If your application is successful, organise an event to celebrate so that everyone knows about your Fairtrade status.
- ✓ Declaring Fairtrade status is an important milestone but it is just the beginning. Plan ways to develop and extend your Fairtrade campaign.

## How to get started

To leave a lasting legacy of your ambassadorship in your campus you'll need to work with a range of players and interests. Think of what questions and challenges can you anticipate? How can you build interest in your cause? Who will be your allies? Some of the questions below may help guide your approach as you interact with different interest groups on campus.

As you begin, think about:

- ✓ How to find a small number of committed Fairtrade Ambassadors?
- ✓ Who to include? Aim for a diverse representation of campus interests!
- ✓ What resources or groups are already on campus?
- ✓ What partnerships could help your Fairtrade campaign?

Reach out to students, faculty and staff who have an interest in Fairtrade, as well as groups that share common values (e.g. social justice, gender equality, climate justice). Partnerships with other groups may support your cause. Consider where there is potential and reach out to academic departments, student ministries and volunteer resource centres on campus. Organize an initial meeting with Fairtrade coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Work to build a coalition of interests that share the values promoted by Fairtrade.

## WHAT'S ALREADY AVAILABLE ON YOUR CAMPUS?

An inventory catalogues the availability and variety of Fairtrade products on campus. Establishing a baseline lets you see where you're starting from and helps chart your progress. This can serve as a powerful tool for interacting with students, faculty and service providers as you move forward.



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Some ideas:

- ✓ Have fun with a scavenger hunt after your first meeting—fan out in pairs to gather info.
- ✓ Meet with food service providers to find out if Fairtrade is on their radar.

What stated principles and values guide your college or university?

These are generally called “mission statements” and may fit well with your Fairtrade campaign. Be sure to use the language of your college’s principles and stated values to underscore alignment with Fairtrade values. The underlining message of most Universities and colleges mission statements is their aim to draw out the best in each student by encouraging initiative and leadership in order to translate knowledge into societal and economic benefit in Ireland and world over. Raising awareness of the lack of fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world, and how Fairtrade aims to overcome this, is a fantastic way to get students and staff discussing and debating issues surrounding global trading system and our role as consumers and global citizens. We anticipate that your college authorities will be only glad to participate in your initiative given their recognition that knowledge and action are critically interrelated as well mutually sustaining.

How are decisions made on your campus?

Research your institution’s organizational structure and decision making procedures. Create a map to show the positions people hold, their relationships, their responsibilities and decision-making power within these roles.

Who decides which products are purchased?

Most institutions have purchasing policies that guide negotiations and priorities with food service providers and other groups. Ask to take a look at your institution’s policy and find out whether your foodservice provider is contracted or self-operated?



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What factors may motivate people or affect their perspectives?

Different factors may motivate people or affect their perspectives. A person's job title, personal interests and prior experience with student groups are all important to consider. Seek to understand and work through any concerns.

Who should you reach out to?

When forming a Fairtrade Steering Group of Ambassadors, organizing events or writing up a Fairtrade Resolution, carefully consider who to involve, taking into account their influence and interest. Remember, you are working with a diverse community, so try to capture as many ideas as possible and make sure your language reflects that diversity.

How can you make sure your efforts and accomplishments get noticed?

- ✓ Reach out to campus publications and organize on social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter to help spread the word about upcoming events, your achievements and your involvement with Fairtrade.
- ✓ Audio-Visual Resources
- ✓ Movies and documentaries are an effective way to generate interest in Fairtrade. Set up movie night to educate and help build community on your campus.
- ✓ Speakers. Fairtrade farmers or workers can inspire an audience and get more supporters on board. Keep in mind that you may need a budget for this type of activity.

How do you keep the momentum going after achieving Fairtrade Status?

Campuses earning Fairtrade Status have the responsibility to fulfil and uphold the commitments outlined in their Fairtrade Resolution. Fairtrade Ambassadors ought to continuously host educational events and periodically check with dining groups to ensure agreements are fulfilled.



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Here are some examples of events you could be organising:

- ✓ Fairtrade Fortnight
- ✓ Fairtrade information packs for new students during Fresher's Week
- ✓ A Fairtrade fashion show to help promote Fairtrade cotton
- ✓ Fairtrade wine evenings
- ✓ Selling Fairtrade Roses for Valentine's Day
- ✓ Tye dye Fairtrade cotton t-shirts
- ✓ Fairtrade coffee morning
- ✓ Put signs around campus, i.e. by registers
- ✓ Put information on tables in dining halls
- ✓ Give out pamphlets of information
- ✓ Organising Fairtrade petitions or postcard signing campaigns
- ✓ Film screenings (i.e. The Dark Side of Chocolate; The Price of Sugar; Buyer Be Fair: The Promise of Product Certification; Black Gold (2006); Birdsong and Coffee: A Wake Up Call; The Great African Scandal; On the Coffee Trail; On the Tea Trail; The Banana Industry of the Windward Islands; Bonita: Ugly Bananas; Growing our Cocoa, Raising our Voices.)
- ✓ Take pictures or video your events and share on your social media or share them with Fairtrade Ireland

