



# FAIR TRADE TOWNS **USA** **TOOLKIT**



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**BEFORE** you get underway, we want to make sure to connect you with the resources you'll need for your campaign.

So, **FIRST**, register your Fair Trade Town campaign at [FairTradeCampaigns.org](https://FairTradeCampaigns.org). Once you've registered, we will reach out to answer questions and help you get started.

And, **SECOND**, don't set out on this journey alone! Don't be shy about getting friends, family, colleagues, and others to work with you. Share the journey, learn from others' experience, and celebrate your success together!



## QUESTIONS?

We're here to help! Drop us a line at [admin@fairtradecampaigns.org](mailto:admin@fairtradecampaigns.org)

# FAIR TRADE TOWNS CRITERIA



## Goal 1: Build Your Team

The Fair Trade Committee provides leadership and direction for your campaign. Establish a diverse team that meets regularly and make sure it represents a cross section of your community, including representatives of local organizations, retailers, faith groups, educators and city government. A minimum of five members is required to meet this goal.



## Goal 2: Reach out to Retailers

Identifying opportunities for consumers to make a difference with their purchases is a crucial part of Fair Trade Towns. Based on the population of your town, a certain number of retail locations must sell at least two Fair Trade products. *See below for the calculation based on your town's population.*



## Goal 3: Enroll Community Organizations

Getting a commitment from community organizations, like schools, places of worship, and offices, to serve or use Fair Trade products makes an impact in the community. Similar to the retail criteria, your town will need a certain number of community organizations serving Fair Trade products based on population size. *See below for the calculation based on your town's population.*



## Goal 4: Commit to Fair Trade Education and Events

Raise awareness of Fair Trade in your community through educational events and other activities. Participate in existing events, organize Fair Trade events and presentations, and get coverage in local media. A minimum of four activities is required to meet this goal.



## Goal 5: Pass a Fair Trade Resolution

Work with your city or town council to pass a resolution in support of Fair Trade. By getting a commitment from your community's governing body, you are demonstrating to the entire community the importance of making a difference with your purchases. In addition, local government is often the largest institutional purchaser in town and can make a major difference with its purchasing power.

# BUILDING A FOUNDATION

## Introduction

Earning designation as a Fair Trade Town demonstrates your community's commitment to Fair Trade, workers' rights, and sustainability. The five criteria of the Fair Trade Towns program will increase visibility and purchasing of Fair Trade products, and raise awareness about the impact of Fair Trade. By starting a campaign, your town will join an international movement led by passionate organizers like you. As you proceed through the steps, not only will you be making new connections and becoming a leader in your community, but you will also be organizing to improve the lives of farmers and workers around the world.

**Please note:** The five criteria can be completed in whatever order makes the most sense for you and your team. While we recommend starting with "Build Your Team," feel free to proceed as you see fit and contact Fair Trade Campaigns if you feel you need more support. Let's get started!

## Build Your Team

**Recruit at least five committee members.**

Start by reaching out to people in your personal and professional networks who may have an interest in Fair Trade. Also consider groups whose values align with Fair Trade, including environmental, social justice, or anti-trafficking organizations. Organize an initial meeting to announce the campaign and recruit potential volunteers. Cast a wide net with a public event! Schedule a meeting at a café that serves Fair Trade coffee, host a film screening at your local library, or set up a table at the Farmers Market.

**As you begin, think about:**

- **Who** to include? Aim for a diverse representation of community interests who can bring new groups to the table! Think about people's time – don't get hung up on folks that you know are too busy.
- How to **organize** the team? Some groups assign each member a unique role (Team Chairperson, Community Outreach Coordinator, Retail Outreach Coordinator, Event Coordinator, Social Media Coordinator, Government Relations Coordinator, etc.) Other campaigns choose to tackle each of the criteria together. Make sure to consider the strengths, skill-sets and interests of the people involved.
- Educate yourselves as much as possible! Do the members of your committee have a **basic understanding of Fair Trade**? Get started with our [Fair Trade 101 guides](#).



For a list of best practices from other campaigns who have built successful committees, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Reach Out to Retailers

**Based on the population of your town, a certain number of retail locations must sell at least two Fair Trade products.**

Start by building an inventory of which retail locations already carry two or more Fair Trade products. You might be surprised by how many you find! In addition to identifying the locations where Fair Trade products are sold, use this as an opportunity to find new supporters for your campaign. Talk to store and café managers about posting signage to highlight their Fair Trade offerings. Get permission from a supermarket to table at their store. Reach out to retailers and cafes about using their space for community events. The stores benefit from the visibility, and you strengthen partnerships and make progress towards Goal 4 – it's a win-win!

The number of stores needed to complete this goal is based on the population of your municipality. The following is the breakdown of the retail criteria for towns or cities of various sizes:

- Population less than 10,000: 1 location for every 2,500 residents
- Population 10,000 – 100,000: 1 location for every 5,000 residents
- Population 100,000 – 200,000: 1 location for every 7,500 residents
- Population 200,000 – 500,000: 1 location for every 10,000 residents
- Population 500,000 – 2,000,000: 1 location for every 25,000 residents
- Population 2 mil + : 1 location for every 40,000 residents

**NOTE:** Fair Trade Campaigns recognizes products certified by Fair Trade USA, Fairtrade America, and Fair for Life, and products from members of the Fair Trade Federation. [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of commonly found Fair Trade products.

[CLICK HERE](#) for tips on how to reach out to local retailers, from other Fair Trade Town organizers.



### Some ideas

- **Have fun with a scavenger hunt** after your first meeting. Have your team track all the places they can find Fair Trade in their weekly shopping. **TIP:** This is a great place to get student volunteers involved!
- **Meet with store managers** to find out if Fair Trade is on their radar. Let them know that you will be promoting their business in the community if they sell two or more Fair Trade products. Some may even want to join the team!

## Enroll Community Organizations

**Based on the population of your town, a certain number of community organizations must use or serve Fair Trade products.**

By reaching out to community organizations, you can influence institutional purchasing throughout your town. Community organizations are any non-retail location using or serving any Fair Trade product. Examples include places of worship, local schools, non-profits, community centers, or offices that use Fair Trade products internally. By changing the purchasing habits of these institutions, you are driving even more impact for farmers and workers. And by exposing people to Fair Trade in other areas of their lives, from their office to their gym, it helps build the idea of living a Fair Trade lifestyle.

Just like the retail criteria, the number of community organizations that you need to complete this goal is based on the population of your municipality. The following is the breakdown of the community organization criteria for towns or cities of various sizes:

- Population less than 10,000: 1 location for every 2,500 residents
- Population 10,000 – 100,000: 1 location for every 5,000 residents
- Population 100,000 – 200,000: 1 location for every 7,500 residents
- Population 200,000 – 500,000: 1 location for every 10,000 residents
- Population 500,000 – 2,000,000: 1 location for every 25,000 residents
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### Some ideas

- What organizations are already represented on your team? Inevitably, members of your team are also members of local congregations, work at offices, have children in local schools or are on the Parent Teacher Associations, etc. Go around the team and brainstorm a list of community organizations where you already have connections.
- Meet with organization leaders to talk about Fair Trade and how they can support the campaign. Start the relationship off right by offering your support for one of their events or other actions before you ask them to commit to your campaign. Embrace the role of partnerships!
- If an organization already uses Fair Trade products, talk about ways to make their staff aware of those products and their impact. Can they post signs in the kitchen or breakroom? Include a presentation in a staff meeting? Help them celebrate the difference they're already making with their purchases!
- Give a Fair Trade presentation to decision makers, like those responsible for purchasing an office's coffee, the social justice group of a local place of worship, local non-profits, etc. Get them excited about serving Fair Trade and being part of the local campaign! [CLICK HERE](#) for a Fair Trade Campaigns presentation template.

## Commit to Fair Trade Education and Events

**Organize at least four educational events or other activities to raise awareness in your community.**

Engage the broader community in celebrating your campaign's achievements! Educational events and local media coverage are great ways to raise awareness about Fair Trade and gain more support for Fair Trade in your town. Leverage the partnerships you've built in your outreach to retailers and community organizers to expand your reach. Enlist support in promoting your own events or participate in existing events that align with the message of Fair Trade, like an Earth Day celebration or an anti-trafficking campaign.

- When planning an event, schedule it to align with relevant holidays or other national events. World Fair Trade Day is the second Saturday of May, and October is Fair Trade Month. The lead up to Halloween is a great time to talk about Fair Trade chocolate, Earth Day is a perfect opportunity to talk about environmental sustainability, and January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. You can also look at national day calendars for things like national chocolate day, national ice cream day, and more!
- Give a presentation at an all school assembly. Try approaching the principal or other administrative staff over the summer, when they're planning for the coming school year.
- Share news and accomplishments with your community by getting attention from local media! Reach out to your local paper or radio station to pitch a Fair Trade story or schedule an interview.
- Large community events are a great way to get media coverage for your campaign. Share event details with your local paper or radio station and offer press passes for them to attend. Having trouble engaging reporters? Write an Op-ed about the importance of Fair Trade and submit it to your local paper.

## Pass a Fair Trade Resolution

**Pass a resolution in support of Fair Trade through your city or town council.**

In addition to demonstrating local support for Fair Trade, this criteria is also about making connections with your local government. Establishing a strong relationship lays the foundation for future support and collaboration, including conversation about Fair Trade procurement in your town!

While **the goal of the criteria is to pass a resolution**, local politics are different everywhere, and there may be instances where passing something is not immediately possible. If you cannot pass a resolution through your city or town council, the following steps can lead to Fair Trade Town designation without a resolution:

- Documenting at least 2 meetings with city officials.
- Obtaining two written endorsements from city department officials, such as sustainability offices or directors, as well as civic organizations.
- Meeting with the City or Town Manager.
- Requesting a proclamation or similar document from the Mayor if the Mayor is supportive.

**As you begin, think about:**

- **Who** to seek out? Look into what types of resolutions or initiatives council members have championed in the past. Target those who seem to support sustainability initiatives.
- **Who knows who?** Very often, someone on your team will either know, or have a connection with someone in city hall or on the council. Those relationships can help open the door to a conversation.
- **Don't forget** the city or town manager. Since this person is responsible for the actual purchasing, they need to be in the loop. Their support can be crucial!



# MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

This next section provides ideas and guidance on staying active after your town earns Fair Trade designation. By completing the initial five criteria, you and your team will have constructed a strong foundation from which to continue your advocacy.

## Mission Statements

The exercise of writing a mission statement can be useful whether you are just getting started or moving into the post-declaration phase of your campaign. Developing, and even revising, a mission statement is a great way to keep your team focused and motivated. [CLICK HERE](#) for help developing a mission statement.

## Getting Public Attention

How can you make sure your efforts and accomplishments get noticed? One great way to get started is by finding places where you can reach the community easily. Look for ways to engage a large number of people, like tabling in a high traffic area, or at a pre-organized event like a farmers' market or holiday fair. Continue seeking media coverage and organizing events in your community, even after you've completed Goal 4!

## Audio-Visual Resources

Movies and documentaries are an effective way to generate interest in Fair Trade. Organize a movie night to educate and help build community around Fair Trade. Pair the film screening with a short presentation, and some delicious Fair Trade coffee, tea and snacks. [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of Fair Trade books and films.

## Speakers and Producer Visits

Invite speakers give a talk about Fair Trade. Look local and invite the manager or owner of a Fair Trade store, a representative from a Fair Trade brand, or a professor working on labor rights or social justice. Or expand your search and consider inviting a Fair Trade farmer or worker to visit your town!

## Expanding Your Reach

Once you have completed the initial phase of meeting the five criteria and making your community a Fair Trade Town, there is a growing list of deeper outreach efforts that you and your team can engage in. We encourage you to try out any of the following activities, or create new ones for your campaign!

- Reach out to a local college or university. Our [Fair Trade Colleges & Universities](#) program is growing rapidly and is an exciting way to engage students in making a huge difference on their campus.
- Expand your work with community organizations. Fair Trade Campaigns offers designation programs for [K-12 Schools](#) and [Congregations](#). Mentor local groups to earn their own designation!
- Build a Regional Coalition. Many campaigns connect with others in their region as they move through the criteria. Forming a coalition can really amplify your ability to hold incredibly dynamic events.
- Continue holding community-facing events and partnering with other local groups on existing events.



# FAIR TRADE TOWNS FAQS

## **What do I need to get a campaign started in my community?**

Getting started simply requires commitment and energy. Reach out to those who share your passion for social justice, organize a group and embark on the adventure! Register your campaign to access the support of our staff and our resources.

## **Have other communities earned Fair Trade Town status?**

Since 2006 over 100 communities have started the process of becoming a Fair Trade Town, with over a third having met all five criteria. Meanwhile many more, representing all regions of the US, are well on their way.

[Visit our website](#) for a list of declared Fair Trade Town campaigns.

## **Who created and oversees the Fair Trade Towns program?**

Fair Trade Towns began in 2006 in the US when the borough of Media, PA followed the example of Garstang in the UK. Today, a Steering Committee of organizers and Fair Trade advocates manages and guides the program. Fair Trade USA has raised funds to sponsor the program, and dedicated staff are housed at Fair Trade USA's headquarters in Oakland, CA.

## **How is Fair Trade Towns funded?**

Fair Trade Towns is entirely grant funded. Grants have been raised by the resource development staff at Fair Trade USA and managed by the Director of Fair Trade Campaigns.

## **How will my community benefit from Fair Trade designation?**

Earning Fair Trade status demonstrates your community's commitment to social and economic justice. Many towns are looking for ways to differentiate themselves as sustainable. From LEED certified buildings to Transition Town campaigns, municipalities recognize the allure of sustainability. Tourists and potential residents are looking to spend their resources in a conscientious way. Fair Trade Town status is an excellent way for your town to market itself to this growing consumer demographic.

## **What are the costs associated with a Fair Trade program?**

There are no program fees. Any increased cost from switching to Fair Trade products is generally very modest.

## **What resources are available?**

Fair Trade Campaigns partners with organizations across the US to provide guidance and support. [Our website](#) provides event ideas, media packets, examples from previous campaigns and more. Plus, the program's Steering Committee and dedicated staff are available to offer support and work in partnership with campaigns. Fellows and Leadership Team members offer additional support in our established Regional Networks.

## **How do you keep the momentum going after achieving Fair Trade Status?**

Towns earning Fair Trade status have the responsibility to fulfill and uphold the commitments outlined in their Fair Trade Resolution. Advocates periodically check with town officials to ensure agreements are fulfilled, host educational events and help spread the Fair Trade movement to other communities.

# FAIR TRADE CAMPAIGNS BACKGROUND

Fair Trade is a market-based approach to alleviating poverty in ways that improve lives, strengthen communities, and protect the environment. Fair Trade offers fair prices and wages to farmers, workers, and artisans, improved terms of trade, and community development funds to invest in education, health care, and other projects to improve quality of life.

## About Us

Fair Trade Towns began in 2006 as a group of passionate Fair Trade advocates in Media, PA sought to build on the Fair Trade Towns movement that was rapidly growing across Europe. The movement has since grown to offer designation programs for Colleges & University, K-12 Schools, and Congregations. Fair Trade Towns recognizes and awards Fair Trade status to municipalities of all sizes that reach across the sectors of their community to drive awareness and purchases of Fair Trade. Fair Trade Towns achieve five basic criteria (see above) and work to deepen their commitment to Fair Trade year after year.

## Our Mission

The mission of Fair Trade Campaigns is to inspire our fellow consumers to support the Fair Trade movement in its efforts to seek equity in trade and promote sustainable development. Fair Trade Towns harness the power of consumers and institutions in the United States to both raise awareness of the benefits of Fair Trade, and leverage their significant buying power to purchase Fair Trade products, thus extending real opportunities of empowerment the enable communities around the world to lift themselves out of poverty.



## QUESTIONS?

Contact Fair Trade Campaigns at  
**[admin@fairtradecampaigns.org](mailto:admin@fairtradecampaigns.org)**

Find more information at **[fairtradecampaigns.org](http://fairtradecampaigns.org)**