



Who We Are

How Fair Trade Campaigns Empowers Individuals and Communities to Make a Difference

Fair Trade Campaigns is a powerful grassroots movement mobilizing thousands of conscious consumers and Fair Trade advocates at schools, on campuses and in communities across the United States. We are part of a global effort to normalize Fair Trade as an institutional practice and consumer preference across 24 countries on six continents.

How it Works

- The core of our model is empowering Fair Trade advocates to educate their communities and build consumer citizenship.
- Fair Trade Campaigns recognizes towns, colleges, universities, schools and congregations in the US for embedding Fair Trade practices and principles into policy, as well as the social and intellectual foundations of their communities.
- We provide tools, resources and support events to launch and grow local Fair Trade Campaigns in your town, university, school or congregation.
- Awareness and education are key ingredients in making Fair Trade an institutional practice and consumer preference.

Mission

Our mission is to grow a nationwide community of passionate, lifelong Fair Trade advocates. As advocates, their commitment will inspire others to support the Fair Trade movement in its efforts to seek equity in trade and create opportunities for economically and socially marginalized producers. Fair Trade Towns, Colleges, Universities and other communities embed Fair Trade values and purchases into mainstream business and institutional practices.

History

Over 2,000 communities and thousands of schools and congregations on six continents have joined together to alleviate poverty through Fair Trade. Efforts started in 2000 in a town called Garstang (UK). For nearly 14 years the global **Fair Trade Towns** movement has inspired thousands of communities to pave the way for driving impact through institutional and consumer purchasing decisions.

Fair Trade Colleges & Universities also grew out of Fair Trade work in the UK. The movement ensures that Fair Trade products are sold and served at campus-owned and operated outlets.

Fair Trade Campaigns formalized in May 2013. Leaders from Fair Trade Town and Fair Trade College & University campaigns teamed up with organizations like Fair Trade USA, Fair Trade Federation, Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade and Green America to build a mission and strategic plan. The mission and plan unified all of the types of campaigns under one umbrella and expanded our scope to include additional types of institutions such as congregations and schools.

Organizational Structure

Fair Trade Campaigns currently includes **Fair Trade Towns, Fair Trade Colleges & Universities, Fair Trade Schools** and **Fair Trade Congregations**.

Fair Trade Campaigns utilizes an innovative shared governance model referred to as a 'Big Tent' approach, in which Regional Leadership Teams of volunteers work with paid staff to determine direction and strategy, as well as execution of campaign objectives. The national staff members are housed at Fair Trade USA, which provides direct staff and programmatic supervision, as well as support for fundraising, office space, equipment, and other resources.

The Regional Leadership Teams consist of a wide range of stakeholders in the Fair Trade movement. This includes organizers from large and small towns and congregations, faculty and students from colleges, universities and schools of varying size and affiliation, as well as NGOs in the Fair Trade movement.

Our Big Tent Approach

A National Steering Committee (NSC) has been actively engaged with Fair Trade Campaigns from the onset of the organization in 2013 and was part of the decision making process in regard to determining which systems and certifications are officially recognized as Fair Trade for the purposes of achieving the goals of the campaigns. As Fair Trade USA is a certifier, it is recognized by all parties that there would be an inherent conflict of interests for Fair Trade USA to participate in those particular decisions. The NSC considered each system and certification against a set of previously agreed upon principles developed by the NSC. If a system or certification met those principles, it was included in campaign materials and recognized as Fair Trade. Fair Trade Campaigns currently recognizes the following systems and certifications: Fair Trade USA, Fairtrade America, IMO Fair for Life, Fair Trade Federation, and the World Fair Trade Organization.

This 'Big Tent' approach to governance and inclusion of multiple labels is unique globally. It is a model that is growing in interest among other national Fair Trade campaign initiatives and has already inspired other countries.

Joining the Movement

We currently have over 300 active campaigns across the country, raising awareness and driving institutional purchasing of Fair Trade products. To earn Fair Trade status, organizers must meet criteria such as:

- Building a core team or steering committee
- Documenting product availability
- Gaining attention from the media
- Sourcing Fair Trade products at events and meetings
- Passing Fair Trade resolutions within local governments

Interested in starting a Fair Trade campaign in your community?

Learn more at fairtradecampaigns.org/organize

Quick Facts

- In 2006 **Media, PA**, became the first Fair Trade Town in the U.S.
- The largest Fair Trade Town in the U.S. is **Chicago, IL**
- In 2008, **University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh** became the first Fair Trade University in the U.S.
- In 2018, **ASU** became the largest Fair Trade University in the U.S.
- In 2010, **Emma Willard School** in Troy, NY, became the first Fair Trade School in the U.S.
- In 2014, **Our Lady of Assumption** in Claremont, CA, became the first Fair Trade Congregation in the U.S.
- There are over 300 active campaigns in the U.S.
- Fair Trade Campaigns hosts several promotional programs each year, including World Fair Trade Day, Back to School, Valentine's Day and Fair Trade Your Finals.