

# International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee Guidelines for Fair Trade Towns

These are the guidelines for those who are interested in launching a Fair Trade Town campaign in their country recommended by the International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee based on the conclusions from the Fair Trade Town Coordinators meeting held in Brussels, 2009. These were first produced in April 2013 and revised in February 2015.

## Fair Trade definition (FINE 2004)

“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade Organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.”

## Fair Trade product (A Charter of Fair Trade Principles)

“**Fair Trade products** are goods and services that are produced, traded and sold in accordance with these Fair Trade principles and, wherever possible, verified by credible, independent assurance systems. All Fair Trade products originate from producers and workers committed to Fair Trade principles. However, in the subsequent supply chain, Fair Trade products are traded and marketed through two distinct but complementary channels:

**The integrated supply chain route** whereby products are imported and/or distributed by organizations that have Fair Trade at the core of their mission and activities, using it as a development tool to support disadvantaged producers and to reduce poverty, and combine their marketing with awareness-raising and campaigning. (WFTO certified members, World Shops)

**The product certification route** whereby products complying with *international standards* are certified indicating that they have been produced, traded, processed and packaged in accordance with the specific requirements of those *international standards*. (e.g. Fairtrade certified)”.

## International mission of the Fair Trade Towns campaign

To enable local actors to raise awareness, capacity for mobilization and sales in favour of Fair Trade products.

## Main objectives for the international campaign

1. Inspiring, learning and collecting best practices to use for both established and emerging Fair Trade Town campaigns in order to build a strong national campaign in the different countries, including empowering and assisting campaigns in the ‘Global South’ in order to promote awareness of Fair Trade locally.
2. To develop and protect the concept of Fair Trade Towns while maintaining common ground and an identity based on the five founding goals.
3. To encourage campaigns to adopt an inclusive model for Fair Trade Towns and promote better understanding of the ‘Big Tent’ approach (see below) among Fair Trade campaigners.
4. Building a global movement of international Fair Trade Town campaigns that will support policies for fair trade and trade justice in particular by the development of ethical public procurement as well as advocacy for Fair Trade.

## Towards a common concept

The recommendations of the International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee (see below) are:

- 1 Name of the campaign:** It is not necessary to use the same name for different national campaigns
- 2 Use of a logo:** It is not necessary to use the same logo for different national campaigns but where permitted national logos may be shared with others.
- 3 The 5 goals:** A campaign based on the 5 goals is necessary for new countries wishing to join the international Fair Trade Towns family, although specific targets may be adapted to suit different situations. The Steering Committee does not have the intention to enforce this system or use penalties. They do however; consider it vital for Fair Trade Towns to involve the whole community rather than just local government if the campaign is to be a part of the international movement. National campaigns are free to add to the five goals as they feel is appropriate in their own country, but none of the five founding goals should be

### **The core 5 goals for a Fair Trade Town**

- 1) Local council passes a resolution supporting Fair Trade and agreeing to use Fair Trade products.**
- 2) Fair Trade products are readily available in the area’s shops & served in local cafés/catering establishments.**
- 3) Fair Trade products are used by a number of local work places and community organisations (faith groups, schools, universities etc).**
- 4) Attract media coverage and popular support for the campaign.**
- 5) A local Fair Trade steering group is convened to ensure continued commitment to its Fair Trade Town status.**

removed. The Steering Committee does however, recognise a need to adapt the goals in regions where they are not appropriate in their present form e.g. Fair Trade Towns in the 'Global South'.

- 4 Order of the goals:** The 5 goals founded in the UK were never meant to be followed in any chronological order. Therefore, the order they are written is of no significance whatsoever. National campaigns can, therefore, use whatever order they prefer, but on the international level the UK order is used
- 5 International standards for every goal (i.e. specific targets given in order to pass each goal):** No international standards are used as the situation in each country is very different.
- 6 The use of Fairtrade and/or Fair Trade products in the campaign?** There are different approaches to the types of products incorporated within the goals of the Fair Trade Town campaign as defined below in the 'Models of Fair Trade Towns section'. Recognising the different networks, and markets for Fair Trade products, each national campaign is encouraged to engage with the relevant civil society partner organisations and Fair Trade initiatives in their country to determine the most appropriate for their situation. A guiding principle should be the need to ensure clear understanding of the Fair Trade Town campaign, and avoid excluding key groups from engaging with the national Fair Trade Town campaign.
- 7 Other minimum guidelines:**
  - There needs to be a non-partisan coordinating body that awards Fair Trade Town status, involving different stakeholders of the Fair Trade movement on the national level (e.g. Fairtrade Labelling Organisations, WFTO members if present, World Shops associations, Fair Trade USA).
  - There should be a national Fair Trade Towns Coordinator who participates in international coordination.
  - There needs to be a renewal process to ensure on-going Fair Trade commitment, at least every 2 -3 years.

### Ownership of the campaign

Fair Trade Towns is essentially a people's movement with true 'ownership' at the grassroots. To ensure credibility however, national campaigns have been facilitated by a number of different national organisations or a coalition. Each national campaign is represented at the international level by a national Fair Trade Towns Coordinator. The main task of the coordinator at the international level is not one of management, but one of facilitating mutual learning.

### International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee (Int. FTT SC)

When the number of national campaigns increased to 24 the International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee was set up in February 2013, primarily to ensure coordination between the 24 or more national Fair Trade Town campaigns.

The current members are:

Adam Gardner, UK Fairtrade Towns Coordinator - [adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk)

Billy Linstead Goldsmith, USA Fair Trade Towns Coordinator - [wlinsteadgoldsmith@fairtradeusa.org](mailto:wlinsteadgoldsmith@fairtradeusa.org)

Bruce Crowther, Int. FTT Ambassador - The FIG Tree International Fair Trade Visitor Centre - [brucecrowther300@gmail.com](mailto:brucecrowther300@gmail.com)

Katharina Beelen, Belgium Sustainable Food Coordinator - [katharina.beelen@vredeseilanden.be](mailto:katharina.beelen@vredeseilanden.be)

Tatsuya Watanabe, Japan Fair Trade Towns Coordinator - [tnabe@tku.ac.jp](mailto:tnabe@tku.ac.jp)

Tadeusz Makulski, Poland Fair Trade Towns Coordinator - [tadeusz.makulski@sprawiedliwyhandel.pl](mailto:tadeusz.makulski@sprawiedliwyhandel.pl)

Ulisses Ferreira de Oliveira, Poços de Caldas, Brazil - [adm.ulisses@gmail.com](mailto:adm.ulisses@gmail.com)

The objectives and outcomes for the Steering Committee are to:

1. Facilitate the International Fair Trade Towns network both for organisers and campaigner groups by:
  - Ensuring an annual Int. FTTs conference is held each year and assist in its organisation.
  - Arranging regular Steering Committee and coordinator meetings.
  - Maintaining the international Fair Trade Towns website and corresponding NING Discussion Forum.
2. Establish direct communication lines between the Steering Committee and local groups, e.g. Fair Trade Town Steering Groups, WFTO members etc., as a tool to create an integral international movement.
3. Further develop the existing international network of Fair Trade Towns and support all new national initiatives including but not solely Fair Trade Towns in the 'Global South'.
4. Develop and protect the concept of Fair Trade Towns while maintaining common ground and an identity based on the five founding goals.
5. Create and participate in dialogue with different stakeholders of the Fair Trade movement (Fairtrade International, Fair Trade USA, WFTO, FTAO etc)
6. Raise funds for its work.

### International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador

Since Garstang declared itself the first Fair Trade Town in April 2000 the founder of the movement, Bruce Crowther became active in the role of a Fair Trade Towns Ambassador by hosting visits to Garstang and visiting other countries to tell the 'Garstang story' to help inspire, encourage and support Fair Trade Town groups, national campaigns and new budding campaigns. Due to increasing demand and to some extent, the need to fulfil this role in an independent capacity Bruce set up in Garstang The FIG Tree International Fair Trade Centre. As well as providing a base for this

international ambassador's role, The FIG Tree hosts visits, runs educational workshops and manages a Fair Trade café shop, exhibitions and displays on Fair Trade Towns-

The Fair Trade Towns Ambassador has the following roles:

1. Facilitate the Fair Trade Town network both for existing national campaigns and new national initiatives by:
  - a. Supporting and assisting the annual International Fair Trade Towns Conference.
  - b. Arranging and attending regular International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee meetings.
  - c. Arranging and attending regular National Fair Trade Town Coordinators meetings.
  - d. Maintaining the International Fair Trade Towns Website and any associated discussion forum.
2. Advocate policies for fair trade and trade justice.
3. Support existing campaigns and new national initiatives by:
  - a. Traveling to strengthen and in some cases, resurrect existing initiatives.
  - b. Traveling to encourage and advise new initiatives.
  - c. Providing support via hosting visits to Garstang, emails and telephone calls.

## Funding

The coordination of Fair Trade Town Campaigns on the international level as well as activities of the Fair Trade Town Ambassador requires resources which enables them to be sustainable in the long term. The Int. FTT SC together with the national Fair Trade Town coordinators are presently taking responsibility for ensuring resources at an adequate level. The work plan and budget for those activities are prepared by the Steering Committee and approved by the coordinator's assembly. Possible sources of future long term funding include:

- Donations from the national FTT campaign budgets,
- Support from the main Fair Trade movement stakeholders (Fairtrade International, WFTO, Fair Trade USA and others),
- Participation in international projects
- Other

## Models of Fair Trade Towns

The campaign in the UK was founded (2000) in order to promote Fairtrade certified products, hence initially the name 'Fairtrade Towns' was used. Internationally, however, the movement has evolved to include multiple certifiers, NGOs and stakeholders and is therefore named the 'Fair Trade Towns' movement. What became known as the "Big Tent" model developed in the US is now extensively used in Australia and New Zealand, Spain, France, Japan, Czech Republic, Poland and Switzerland.

### The single Mark model

As there was one label in the UK, Ireland and Scandinavia when Fair Trade Towns began, the goals for Fair Trade Towns in these campaigns are linked to the FAIRTRADE Mark of the Fairtrade International system, therefore called Fairtrade Towns. Status is awarded by, and support is provided to the grassroots by the National Fairtrade Organisation (NFO) thus developing a strong link between the grassroots Fairtrade Towns network in these countries and the labelling of certified Fairtrade products.

This approach has resulted in bringing clarity to stakeholders at local and national level, and a clear and focused call to action for businesses, consumers, local authorities and other stakeholders alike. In some countries, such as the UK, a national campaigner committee represents the grassroots Fairtrade Towns movement as strategic advisors and play a governance role in the NFO, to ensure the views of the grassroots are reflected in their wider work.

Non-certified and other Fair Trade initiatives, including Fair Trade shops are nonetheless important actors in the Fairtrade Towns networks in these countries and are frequently involved at local level in the activities of campaign groups and recognised as an important part of the campaigning narrative for Fairtrade Towns, although non-Fairtrade certified products are not a requirement within the goals for Fairtrade Towns.

### The "Big Tent" Model

The "Big Tent" approach is an inclusive model that works to promote and drive sales of a wide-range of Fair Trade products. The "Big Tent" uses a national Fair Trade Towns platform that represents a variety of National Fair Trade Organisations. The US example is given below for illustration.

Since its inception, Fair Trade Towns in the US has been governed by a National Steering Committee (NSC). This committee is made up of campaigners and stakeholders from across the movement. While Fair Trade Towns is housed at, and staffed by, Fair Trade USA (the leading 3rd party Fair Trade certifier), its governance remains shared with the NSC.

One specific area where the NSC holds governance is with regards to what certifications or organizations count as officially Fair Trade for the purposes of the criteria. The NSC considers each system and certification against a set of principles that was developed by the NSC. If a system or certification meets those principles, it is included in campaign

materials as recognized Fair Trade. This has led to the inclusion of not only Fair Trade USA certified products, but those certified by Fairtrade America (FLO US) as well as IMO Fair for Life certification. In addition, any product sold by a member of the Fair Trade Federation counts as well, which allows for the inclusion of artisan products and crafts.

In addition to systems, the NSC contributes to the development of the strategic plan and the direction of the campaign, nominates and selects new NSC members, assists in the delivery of strategic goals and directives, provides regional and network support to Town campaigns across the country and works closely with staff to grow and strengthen the campaign nationally.

The US example above has been adopted and further adapted by other national campaigns.

### Conclusions

The Fair Trade Town campaign is a tool both in 'consumer' countries to promote the sale of Fair Trade products and raise awareness of Fair Trade and in 'producer' countries (although the Steering Committee accepts that in reality all countries are both 'consumer' and 'producer' countries) to also promote producers and their communities.

The Steering Committee encourages Fair Trade Towns to be utilised in this way in order to create the broadest possible base of stakeholders, all of which should feel responsible for the campaign at national level.

International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee  
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