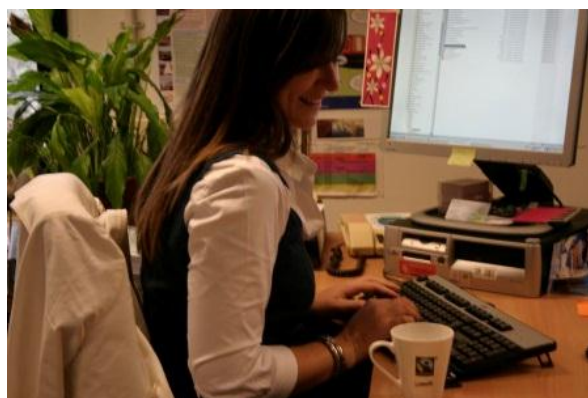


How To Guide : Regional Fairtrade Procurement Conferences

Aim: To increase the level of Fairtrade Purchasing in the public and private sectors

Target Audience

Local Authority Procurement staff
University and College Procurement staff
NHS Procurement staff
Large catering companies
Private sector Procurement staff
Fairtrade suppliers
Environment Agency
Ambulance Trust
TUC
Supermarket and store buyers



Why will they come?

To convince purchasers to make a switch to Fairtrade, they need to know **what the benefits are** – to them (CSR, financial, social) and to the producers, as well as **how to switch**, so it's important to involve Fairtrade suppliers and providers at the Conference.

It helps to provide a **legal framework** eg what the EU Guidance is on Fairtrade purchasing and how it can be included in contracts. This is the language procurement professionals will be looking for. A local legal firm may well be able to help with this as pro bono work or as part of their own CSR programme.

Most companies and local authorities have a **Sustainable Procurement policy**, so it makes sense to explain how Fairtrade can be part of an organisations' commitment to sustainable procurement and help meet targets on this.

Invitations may get better responses if they come from local Chambers of Commerce, or a University Vice-Chancellor, or Chief Executive of a local authority. Secure partners early on and ask them to put their name and weight behind the Conference.

Using **case studies** from private and public sector is an excellent way to demonstrate how Fairtrade purchasing can work well and benefit an organisation. The Fairtrade Foundation has some good examples on it's website if you don't have any local businesses that are willing to take part :

http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/for_business/default.aspx

It's ideal if you can produce a **Guide or Directory** to local Fairtrade stockists and catering suppliers, which can be handed out to all delegates, such as this one:

http://www.fairtradesouthwest.org.uk/uploads/resources/3_pdf.pdf

Logistics

You may be able to partner with a University, local authority or large company that already supports Fairtrade to host the event for free, or at a greatly reduced price – this will immediately identify them as a fair and ethical company, and gives you a professional location. This is not an event for a church hall!

The Fairtrade Foundation has a limited amount of funding to support Procurement Conferences and can provide a speaker from the Commercial team to give a background as why Fairtrade is important and beneficial to business.

The Fairtrade providers (such as Peros, Co-op and others) may be willing to provide refreshments for free so that the purchasers can sample their Fairtrade products.

Programme

This is provided as an example only



BEST VALUE FAIR VALUE

South West Fairtrade Procurement Conference

13th February 2013, UWE Conference Centre

- 9.45 Registration and coffee
- 9.45 Intro and welcome from Chair, James Bennett, Fairtrade Foundation – *Why Fairtrade?*
- 10.0 Keynote 1 : *New EU Procurement Policy* - Catherine Wolfenden, Osborne Clarke
- 10.30 Questions and issues arising
- 10.45 Case Study 1 : Education – Vicki Harris, UWE
- 10.55 COFFEE BREAK
- 11.20 Welcome from John Rushforth, Deputy Vice Chancellor at UWE
- 11.25 Keynote 2 : *How Fairtrade procurement helps meet Sustainability targets and supplements local purchasing* – Christine Storry, Bristol City Council
- 11.55 Case study 2 : Catering suppliers – Louise Whittaker, Peros
- 12.10 Panel, responding to pre-posted questions and queries from the floor.
- 12.50 Closing remarks and next steps – Chair

Feedback and Follow-Up

People often leave a Conference with the best intentions but take no action once they return to a busy office. Some ideas to ensure companies make the switch to Fairtrade:

1. Ask them to sign a pledge at the Conference – this can be simply to switch Fairtrade coffee, or to include Fairtrade in contracts with suppliers. Take a name and an email address and follow up after a few months.
2. Email all delegates 2 months after the Conference reminding them of the benefits to their company of using Fairtrade and asking for any examples of actions taken to be included in a press release about ethical and fair local businesses as a follow-up to the Conference.
3. Ask for any barriers to switching and see if you can help remove the barrier eg more information, cheaper supplier.
4. Ask for delegates permission to include a delegate list in the information pack for the day so that Fairtrade suppliers can also do some follow-up contacting.
5. Keep a business database with delegate names and emails, and share any case studies or information that may inspire and help others to take action.

Jenny Foster

Bristol and South West Fairtrade Co-ordinator

December 2013