



Green Gown
Awards 2017



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Finalist's case study



UWE Bristol and The Student Union at UWE Food and Drink Fairtrade – making a world of difference at UWE Bristol



Profile

- Higher Education
- 28,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3000 staff
- Urban

About the project

Summary Fairtrade's vision is to support farmers and workers in developing countries to access fair terms of trade and to secure sustainable lifestyles. UWE Bristol, in partnership with the Students' Union at UWE, made it their mission to support Fairtrade's vision and to put power into the hands of students and staff to get farmers a better deal through simple shopping choices. To this end in 2013, UWE Bristol pledged to increase its annual Fairtrade sales by 25% by 2020. In the event sales increased from the 2012 baseline of £78,000 to £820,000 by 2017, a rise of nearly 800%! In the process, Fairtrade proved an ideal vehicle for raising awareness of social environmental and economic inequalities and for realizing global citizenship in a practical everyday way.

Project partners

The project involved staff and students from the Services, the Students' Union and cross Faculty student and staff networks.

The results

In the event sales increased from the 2012 baseline of £78,000 to £820,000 by 2017, a rise of nearly 800%!

The problem

The problem was how to achieve a significant increase in Fairtrade sales.

The approach

The approach was multi-pronged:

- To address our systems of delivery and to maximize opportunities for selling and providing Fairtrade.
- To adopt a range of communication and engagement techniques in a variety of settings, from the lecture theatre to the farmers' market, so as to have an impact on as broad a range of people as possible.
- To train key staff and students involved in delivery of the project on the meaning and impact of Fairtrade so as to give them the motivation and confidence to pass on the message.
- To engage with the wider world: to give greater motivation to those involved, to increase the impact of our work on campus and to learn from others.



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Our goals

To embed and increase Fairtrade products in all Catering and shopping outlets in order to achieve the maximum impact on sales figures.

To communicate and engage with people in as many ways as possible to raise awareness of the issues and to increase the likelihood of them buying Fairtrade.

To include and increase the study of Fairtrade in the curriculum and thus to increase awareness.

To gain external recognition and maximize impact and learning through the South West Fairtrade awards so as to maintain the profile and to further assist the ongoing embedding of Fairtrade in all our systems and ethos at the university.

Obstacles and solutions

Identifying staff and student time and resources to run events and campaigns was an issue but we maximised our impact by working through our established Sustainability staff network and our Student Union Green team and through setting student projects in the curriculum eg to do surveys.

The future

Top 3 learnings from implementing your project

1. It is vital to have appropriate structures and institutional backing to deliver change - from a University Sustainability Plan with stated targets through to staff and student networks.
2. In terms of increasing sales it is vital to offer FT products only in certain categories eg coffee tea sugar cookies, and at key sales points in high footfall areas such as at our coffee cart and cafes.
3. It is essential to have a stakeholder group involving key people in the university who can act as champions and affect change – eg from Hospitality, the Student Union, Volunteering, Sustainability team

Sharing your project

We have shared our project with other organisations in the Bristol and South West area through the South West Business Fairtrade awards. In particular we have worked with the local school and FE college.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

Being a Green Gown finalist has already served to further raise the profile of Fairtrade and our work.

Further information

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/about/corporateinformation/sustainability/sustainabilityservices/fairtrade.aspx>

<https://www.thestudentsunion.co.uk/ents/event/7437/>

<https://www.thestudentsunion.co.uk/ents/event/7436/>

<https://www.thestudentsunion.co.uk/ents/event/7447/>

<https://info.uwe.ac.uk/news/uwenews/news.aspx?id=3573>