

The Fairtrade Foundation



Job Title: Product Certification Officers
Reports to: Product Certification Manager
Staff reporting: None - supervision of volunteers may be required
Based at: 3rd Floor, Ibox House, 42-47 Minories, London EC3N 1DY

Background

The Fairtrade Foundation is a passionate and ambitious development organisation committed to tackling poverty and injustice through trade. We are best known as the independent, not-for-profit body behind the FAIRTRADE Mark, a product label assuring consumers that their purchase helps disadvantaged farmers and workers in developing countries secure a better deal.

We undertake our certification and product labelling work as the UK member of Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO), a global network of organisations working to common standards and verification systems. We are one of the largest and fastest growing of the 21 Labelling Initiatives in FLO, working with hundreds of companies on thousands of products that generated sales of £800m in 2009. FLO's membership also includes Producer Networks in Africa, Asia and Latin America/Caribbean, as co-owners alongside the Labelling Initiatives, and the Fairtrade Foundation is playing a leading role in enabling the Networks to play a larger role in the system.

The Foundation is also responsible for building public support for Fairtrade and for bringing together producers and consumers in a citizens' movement for change. The growing number of Fairtrade towns and cities, faith communities and schools and universities are a testament to the efforts of our grass-roots supporter networks.

In the UK, the Foundation employs over 100 staff across six distinct areas: Certification, Commercial Relations, Communications & Policy, Finance & Resources, Marketing and Producer Partnerships.

We are currently implementing our Tipping The Balance strategy (2008-12) to achieve a step change in the impact of our work on producers in developing countries by changing consumer behaviour and business practices in the UK.

Job Purpose

1. To manage, within accepted parameters and escalate as necessary, all aspects of product certification from the point of formal submission from licensee for specific product categories in order to maintain the integrity of the FAIRTRADE Mark
2. To build and develop relationships with established licensees and registered operators in specific product categories to ensure that they are trading in accordance with Fairtrade Standards and the requirements of their licence agreement, including keeping informed of industry requirements in order to provide relevant guidance.
3. To make qualified decisions on the product certification of registered operators' products based on their compliance with Fairtrade Standards in accordance with the Quality Management System.

4. To ensure the certification team delivers a consistently high level of customer service, both internally and externally.
5. To collaborate with FLO, FLO-CERT and LIs as necessary for the purpose of consistency in certification

Key Tasks

1. Product Certification Management

- a. Interpret and apply the Fairtrade Standards in terms of their application in specific Fairtrade product categories.
- b. Engage strongly and collaboratively with applicant companies to ensure their full understanding of Fairtrade Standards and certification requirements to maximise their compliance.
- c. Support applicants and registered operators in completion of their self-assessment questionnaire and assess their capacity to comply with Fairtrade Standards and report accurate data on all Fairtrade transactions and movements
- d. Manage the application process from the point of formal submission by the licensee through to the final approval or rejection for all Fairtrade product applications and amendments, including compliance of supply chains and where relevant exception/derogations, escalating cases to the PCM where necessary
- e. Make decisions on product approval for sale in the UK based on assessment of applications in terms of compliance with Fairtrade Standards and Foundation requirements, escalating cases to the PCM where necessary.
- f. Contribute to panel decisions on exceptions/derogations to Standards for particular products, or, where relevant, escalate as necessary to PCM.
- g. In conjunction with the PCM, systematically prioritise workload over a short and medium term timescale to ensure accurate and timely management of product certification application assessments

2. Audit and Compliance Management

2.1 Flow of Goods Reporting

- a. Ensure that registered operators are reporting as required and on time.
- b. Analyse and validate flow of goods reports, checking for completeness, accuracy, internal consistency and compliance with Fairtrade Standards. This includes validating payment of Fairtrade price and premium.
- c. Make decisions on ongoing certification based on report validation and, where required, raise non-compliances and assess corrective actions.
- d. Calculate licence fees and pass billing information to Finance

2.2 Physical Audit

- a. In conjunction with the PCM, who has overall ownership of physical audit processes, conduct the following tasks in relation to physical auditing:
 - i. Communicate to operators the requirements for physical audits and give them guidance in their preparation for audit and in any actions required following an audit
 - ii. Liaise with and provide guidance to auditors to ensure that audits are being conducted and audit reports are being completed in line with the Foundation's requirements
 - iii. Analyse physical audit reports to ensure they are complete and accurate and assess the registered operators' compliance with Fairtrade Standards

- iv. Make decisions on certification based on physical audit reports and, where required, raise compliance forms and assess corrective actions, escalating issues to the PCM where necessary
- v. Present a sample of certification decisions based on information in audit reports to the Certification Committee.
- vi. Undertake physical audits on licensees and registered operators as appropriate and required

2.3 Changes to Certification Requirements

- a. Liaise with the relevant people within the Foundation to assess the impact of changes to the FLO Standards or suspension/terminations of Fairtrade operators' suppliers, escalating to the PCM where necessary
- b. Ensure registered operators understand the actions they are required to take in order to maintain their compliance based on these changes.

3. Administration

- a. Maintain accurate information regarding certification and mass balance and sales data including using the LASER system or other spreadsheets/databases as appropriate, and provide data to the PCM to be input for Cumulative Analysis as required, working with PCM to resolve queries where necessary
- b. Handle relevant enquiries received by the Certification Team and ensure these are dealt with promptly, efficiently and courteously either personally or by reference to another team member as appropriate.

4. General

- a. Participate, as appropriate and required, in licensee events and conferences to provide information on certification issues
- b. Participate, as appropriate and required, in discussion/working/project groups with staff from other internal teams and externally with staff from other LIs, FLO and FLO-CERT to help to develop policy and procedures in order to continually strengthen the Foundation's systems and those of our international partners.
- c. Participate in and contribute to regular meetings of the Certification Team, Foundation staff and the Certification Committee, where requested to in relation to own specific portfolio of licensees
- d. Make recommendations on suspension and termination of Licensing, Registration and Certification Agreements based on the operator's ability to comply with Certification requirements
- e. Provide information and advice on product certification and trade audit issues to other departments in the Foundation, escalating this to the PCM where necessary
- f. Assist in the recruitment and training of new members of the certification team as required.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of working in a certification/audit/inspection type (or related) role
- Knowledge of systems and procedures-based working
- Ability to understand complex issues and to analyse information and data
- Excellent attention to detail
- High standard of literacy and numeracy with the ability to present data and information clearly both verbally and in writing
- Ability to solve problems and to handle difficult situations effectively
- High level of diplomacy and the ability to display discretion and respect for confidentiality
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, particularly Word, Excel, Outlook and Access (Currently using Office 2007)
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to communicate well with others, both verbally and in writing, and build relationships across different groups
- Ability to provide high levels of internal and external customer service with an excellent telephone manner
- Ability to work on own initiative and make reasoned decisions
- A flexible and enthusiastic approach to work and ability to operate as part of a team
- An organised, methodical approach to work and ability to juggle competing priorities to tight deadlines

Desirable

- Experience of working in a product certification scheme, such as for organic products
- Knowledge and experience of systems and procedures accredited to ISO Guide 65
- Interest in development issues and sympathy with the mission of the Fairtrade Foundation
- Experience of the voluntary sector

Review arrangements

The details contained in the job description, particularly the principal accountabilities, reflect the content of the job at the date the job description was prepared. It should be remembered, however, that it is inevitable that over time the nature of individual jobs will change; existing duties may be lost and other duties may be gained without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Consequently, the Fairtrade Foundation will expect to revise this job description from time to time and will consult with the post holder at the appropriate time.

Terms and Conditions

Post:	Product Certification Officers
Location:	The Fairtrade Foundation, Ibex House, 42 – 47 Minories, London, EC3N 1DY or if required at another location or office to be able to carry out the duties of the post
Contract:	Permanent contract is offered after successful completion of probationary period
Visas:	The Foundation does not currently have the ability to issue sponsorship certificates to individuals without the right to work in the UK
Salary:	£25,825 per annum at first scale point within the band £25,825 - £28,149 (pay award pending)
Hours:	35 hours Monday to Friday; flexible hours around a core working day of 10:30am – 4:00pm are available by arrangement with your line manager. Overtime payments are not normally made although time off in lieu will normally be given where excess hours are worked Some travel may be involved in the UK and mainland Europe
Probation period:	All new appointments are subject to a probationary period of six months
Holidays:	The holiday leave year runs from 1 January - 31 December. Holiday entitlement for full-time employees is 25 days per annum, plus three days between Christmas and New Year (pro-rata for part-time employees)
Pension:	Optional contributory pension scheme (sliding scale up to a maximum 6- 10% by employer, dependent on employee contribution from 1% - 5%)
Health care:	Corporate cover via Benenden Health is available to all staff
Training:	All staff have access to appropriate training
Season ticket/Bike loan:	An interest free season ticket or bike loan facility is available to all permanent staff
Home computers:	An interest free loan to purchase home computers is available to all permanent staff

Childcare vouchers: The Fairtrade Foundation operates a childcare voucher salary sacrifice scheme whereby you can sacrifice some of your gross salary to buy vouchers for childcare. This can be financially valuable to you as you don't have to pay tax or National Insurance contributions on the value of the vouchers

Bike purchase scheme: This is similar to the childcare voucher salary sacrifice scheme above, which offers employees the opportunity to make savings in respect of income tax and national insurance contributions on the cost of purchasing a bicycle to ride to work

Healthy lifestyle: The Fairtrade Foundation will provide a basket of fresh and dried fruit at the office once a week

Access: There is step-free access to our third floor offices by way of a passenger lift

Smoking policy: The Fairtrade Foundation has a non-smoking policy throughout the organisation

Equal Opportunities: The Fairtrade Foundation is an equal opportunities employer. We aim to ensure that no employee, job applicant, or volunteer receives less favourable treatment because of their colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, class, sex, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, marital status, family situation or disability.

Selection criteria and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will be given equal opportunity and access to training (within the limited funds available).

The Foundation is committed to making the policy effective and will bring it to the attention of all employees, applicants and volunteers. Anyone working with or for the Foundation is expected to abide by the spirit of this policy. A detailed implementation guide will be made available to anyone working for the Foundation in any capacity.

Application Procedure

An application form (CVs will not be accepted) can be found on the jobs and volunteering page of our website. If you have any queries, please e-mail jobs@fairtrade.org.uk, or call 020 7405 5942 and ask to speak to a member of the HR team.

Completed applications should be e-mailed to jobs@fairtrade.org.uk in Word or Rich Text Format or posted to:

Head of Human Resources
The Fairtrade Foundation
3rd Floor, Ibex House
42 – 47 Minories
London, EC3N 1DY

While we are happy to accept email applications we cannot be responsible for the quality of copy obtained.

The deadline for applications is **Monday 13 September 2010 (10am at the latest)**. Late applications will not be accepted.

First round interviews will be held on **Monday 27 September 2010** (we will contact successful applicants by **Friday 24 September 2010**)

Second round interviews will be held on **Friday 8 October 2010**.

If you have not heard from us by **Friday 24 September 2010**, then you have been unsuccessful on this occasion. We are sorry that we are unable to contact unsuccessful applicants due to the sheer volume of applications and limited resources.

However, thank you for your interest in working for the Fairtrade Foundation.