**Headlines from the Fairtrade National Campaigner Committee – 11th September 2019**

**Visa Applications for producers on producer tours of the UK**

Despite all the necessary documentation submitted as needed and also letters of recommendations from MPs from the Fairtrade All Party Parliamentary Group, visa applications for two producers last year were rejected. Visa applications for a number of producers on tours for other fair trade organisations were also rejected.

Having looked at different options on how to overcome this obstacle, the Fairtrade Foundation contacted the Home Office to propose a solution but unfortunately the Home Office was not receptive. The Foundation will adopt a pragmatic strategy for Fairtrade Fortnight 2020, which hopefully will bring success. The Foundation is seeking to influence the visa process overall by joining with other organisations, including the All Party Parliamentary Group for Africa, to lobby the Home Office. *[Please note all APPG committees have been suspended due to the general elections and this process will re-start in January].*

**Places of worship**

* At the moment, the Foundation are piloting the new online form with around 300 churches.
* Foundation staff have been meeting with Faith partners. There has been positive engagement with all the organisations whom staff have met with, including: Traidcraft, Christian Concern and the Salvation Army.
* Some of the partners have suggested that the Fairtrade Diocese scheme should not continue, as it would be better to invest the capacity and attention focused on it to facilitating the Fairtrade Church scheme. [Let your NCC Representative know if you have an opinion on this](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get%20involved/In-your-community/National-Campaigner-Committee).
* There are plans to meet other Faith partners over the next few months and progress conversations that have already started.

**Public fundraising**

The [Live Fair Box](https://action.fairtrade.org.uk/page/47898/donate/1?ea.tracking.id=67kxmijl) is the Foundation’s core fundraising offer and is aiming for 1,500 people to sign up by the end of 2020.

**Fairtrade Universities**

The Foundation plans to grow the partnership with the National Union of Students, aiming to recruit more universities to take part in the Fairtrade Universities scheme in the next couple of months. Foundation staff will spend time with the NUS to reach more students through and outside of the Universities Award – for example a student-facing campaign on Fairtrade cotton products on campus, tying in with Fashion Revolution in April 2020.

**Fairtrade Strategy 2021-2025**

* The aim is for the new strategy to be signed off by the general assembly in 2020.
* For the first time, the Foundation is focusing on a global strategy along with the rest of the Fairtrade network.
* The Foundation will be talking to their major stakeholders over the new few months to get their insights too.
* The main focus of the Foundation won’t change – it is a single vision organisation on trade. As a national organization, the Fairtrade Foundation will be focusing on the UK and feeding this into the global thinking.
* The current political, economic and social environment in the UK will affect Fairtrade in the next years and the Foundation recognizes the challenges that this poses on its work nationally but also globally affecting supply chains which may result in struggling to retain volumes.
* The Foundation will continue campaigning and will aim to capture it and build momentum around it, focusing on Fairtrade’s core message: “Unfair trade is a reality. Fairtrade is part of the solution – engage with Fairtrade”.
* Also, digital transformation is part of the plans of the global network. It is still very much paper based and needs to move on to new online systems.

**Suggestions from NCC representatives**

* There is a need to create materials and tools which will clearly demonstrate the difference between Fairtrade and other certifications.
* A campaign framed around how much farmers get for a coffee bag. Could there be a common cause between the consumer and the farmers with focus on who is profiteering in the middle? Could we target the top 10/20 coffee traders and publicize “who is paying the farmers what?”
* We need to go back to the core message of the cause and also keep talking about the FAIRTRADE Mark, as its purpose is not always clear in the minds of the shopping public.

[**Vacancies on the NCC**](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get%20involved/In-your-community/National-Campaigner-Committee)

There are currently vacancies for NCC representatives for the South-East, Eastern England and Northern Ireland. Please contact the Fairtrade Foundation at communities@fairtrade.org.uk for further information.