



FAIRTRADE

EDUCATION STRATEGY AND IMPACT CONSULTANCY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Saran Brazier

30/07/2026

1. Background

Fairtrade is at a pivotal moment in the evolution of its education and youth engagement work. Building on a strong legacy of school and university programmes, Fairtrade is seeking to ensure its education offer is coherent, demonstrably impactful, and positioned to unlock long term investment. The Future Fairtrade University Programme plays a critical role within this wider education ecosystem, mobilising students, institutions and partners across higher education to take action on global justice, climate justice and fairer trade. As expectations around impact, alignment and funding increase, there is an opportunity to strengthen how the university programme fits within and adds value to Fairtrade's broader education strategy.

Fairtrade is therefore seeking a consultant to support both:

- Development of a theory of change and impact measurement framework for Fairtrade's education portfolio of work across schools and universities. This should show how our longstanding work in the education sector broadly supports Fairtrade's global theory of change.
- Linked to our global theory of change and education theory of change, development of a theory of change and impact measurement framework for the Future Fairtrade University Programme. This programme should be designed to be fundable from external (donor) sources.

2. About the Fairtrade University Programme

The Fairtrade University Programme sits within a wider group of formal programmes run by Fairtrade Foundation for education institutions and local communities. The University Programme is one of the UK's most established and trusted university programmes for global justice and sustainability, and is highly valued across the sector, with long standing engagement from universities, students, and catering and procurement partners.

For many institutions, it provides a recognised and credible framework for action on global justice, ethical and responsible procurement, and sustainable supply chains. The programme works in alignment with key institutional agendas including the People & Planet University League, ethical procurement frameworks, climate commitments, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings.

The delivery of the programme is undertaken in partnership with SOS UK, bringing deep sector expertise, delivery capacity, and experience in student engagement and institutional relationships.

Fairtrade spent 2025 reviewing the impact and opportunities within its programmes with a desire to grow and deepen institutional commitment and student led action within higher education.

As a first step we are investing in the future resilience and relevance of the Universities programme recognising it as a key opportunity to grow support for and social norm Fairtrade, meet our strategic direction to create an intergenerational movement, increase our credibility, and generate long term institutional engagement.

3. Context

The landscape in which universities and students are operating is changing rapidly. Universities face increasing pressure from both government and prospective students to demonstrate impact, relevance, and leadership in response to the climate crisis, widening global inequalities, and growing scrutiny of supply chains. At the same time, students are seeking more meaningful opportunities for campaigning, skills development, and leadership, while funders are demanding clearer evidence of outcomes, impact, and contribution to systems change.

4. Goals

1. A diverse group of students, academics and university support staff are part of a nation-wide, intergenerational movement calling for systemic change for people and planet and delivering positive change within their universities.
2. Students in the Fairtrade Movement are supported to develop the skills, experience and employability to build a fairer and more resilient trade system that support people and planet
3. University staff across the UK are supported through our programme to effectively deliver the core UN SDGs across their university:

SDG 4 Quality Education

SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals

SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

5. Purpose of the Consultancy

Building on the credibility and reach of the existing Fairtrade University Award, this work will establish the strategic backbone needed for the next phase of the programme - one capable of scaling sustainably, with strong evidence of impact and unlocking new opportunities for greater delivery of Fairtrade's mission, influence and funding.

The consultancy will ensure the Fairtrade University Programme is fit for the future we are trying to build by:

- Supporting Fairtrade to define how it's education work creates impact, and how this is meaningfully evidenced
- Supporting Fairtrade to build an updated education theory of change that articulates clear pathways linking student led and institutional action to demonstrable outcomes and wider systems change for farmers and workers. This theory of change will need to clearly sit under our Global Theory of Change for all our work.
- Supporting Fairtrade to build a simple, clear and accessible impact management framework for our education work. This will need to be integrated with our wider organisational impact management work.
- Supporting Fairtrade to create a specific theory of change for the Future Fairtrade University Programme, with associated impact management approach, strengthening its positioning with potential funders, partners, the UK government and education institutions.

6. Objectives

This consultancy will support Fairtrade to strengthen the strategic coherence, impact and investment readiness of its education work, with a particular focus on the role of the Fairtrade University Programme within the wider education and youth engagement framework.

Specifically, the consultancy will aim to:

1. Develop a clear and compelling Theory of Change for Fairtrade's education work, with a clearly linked and complementary Theory of Change for the Fairtrade University Programme, suitable for use with funders, partners and internal teams.
2. Articulate a clear, coherent education wide impact framework, setting out how Fairtrade's schools, youth and university programmes collectively contribute to our shared global outcomes of [sustainable livelihoods, strong supply chains and shared commitment](#)
3. Strengthen Fairtrade's ability to evidence impact across education settings, by developing a practical impact management framework that captures student led action, institutional change, and contribution to wider systems change, integrated into our wider organisation impact work
4. Demonstrate how Fairtrade's education and university programme outcomes align with donor trends and investment opportunities, strengthening the case for long term funding, partnerships and scale across the education and youth engagement landscape.

5. Ensure the Future Fairtrade University Programme is positioned as a core pillar of Fairtrade's education impact and movement building strategy, rather than a standalone initiative, while retaining its strong sector credibility and institutional relevance.

7. Scope of Work

Supported by internal Fairtrade staff and an advisory group of experts on the current programme and desired goals the consultant will develop:

A. An Impact Management Framework

- Review key documents outlining Fairtrade's education work, including how the university programme sits within the wider education and youth engagement offer.
- Identify strengths, gaps and opportunities to better articulate the impact of the education programme as a whole.
- Develop a practical, proportionate impact framework covering the Future Fairtrade University Programme, and its contribution to Fairtrade's mission.
- Propose clear indicators, evidence types, a data collection and retention process and learning questions.
- Ensure the framework balances credibility, usability and ambition, and supports both learning and accountability.

B. A Theory of Change Development (Education & Universities)

Building on existing work, the consultant will:

- Review and update the existing Theory of Change to create a clear, robust Theory of Change for Fairtrade's education programme, showing how different education strands contribute to the global Fairtrade theory of change.
- Refine a specific Theory of Change for the Future Fairtrade University Programme
- Ensure both are suitable for use with funders, partners, universities and internal teams.

C. A Funding Pathways & Investment Alignment

The consultant will:

- Analyse how the education and university Theory of Change can better align with current and potential Department of Education strategies and UK funding priorities.

- Strengthen the case for investment in Fairtrade's education programmes, particularly university based climate and justice work.
- Provide recommendations on positioning, framing and narrative for funders.

8. Key Outputs

The consultant will produce:

- A refined Theory of Change for Fairtrade's education programme.
- A refined Theory of Change for the Future Fairtrade University Programme, explicitly linked to the above.
- A practical Impact Framework with suggested indicators and evidence approaches.
- An opportunity summary with recommendations linked to the updated Theory of Change and new impact frameworks

Outputs should be accessible, clearly structured, and suitable for use with funders, partners and internal teams.

9. Working Arrangements

- The consultant will work closely with the Head of Campaigns, Education Campaigns Manager and other relevant Fairtrade staff.
- A small number of check-in meetings will be agreed at the outset.
- Work should be grounded in robust evidence, existing research, and sector insight, with scope for proportionate and purposeful primary engagement where this meaningfully adds value, subject to agreement.
-

10. Timetable, Budget and payment

- An indicative budget of £12,000 is available with a delivery date of 2 October 2026.
- We are flexible on which days are allocated to this project over this period and can discuss this with the successful consultant.
- Budget will be paid as follows: 25% (inception), 25% (draft outputs) and 50% (completion)

- Inception and workplan agreed: within 2 weeks
- Draft outputs: 21 September
- Final Delivery: 2 October

11. Submission Requirements

Tenders should include:

- Consultant / organisation details
- Relevant experience
- Proposed approach and methodology
- Team details
- Cost breakdown
- References

12. Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be assessed against:

- Relevant skills and experience
- Quality of proposed approach
- Understanding of higher education and movement building
- Value for money
- Alignment with Fairtrade values

13. Required Experience and Expertise

The successful consultant must demonstrate:

- A proven ability to assess, design and deliver high impact education programmes across one or more education settings (e.g. schools, youth, higher education) that shape practice, culture, and

institutional change, with a strong understanding of delivery realities, capacity constraints, and organisational complexity.

- A strong track record of articulating, evidencing, and communicating impact across education and youth engagement contexts, including the development of compelling, funder ready Theories of Change and practical, usable impact frameworks that work at both programme and portfolio level.
- Demonstrated experience securing, shaping, or contributing to funding for education programmes, with the strategic insight needed to position work as credible, investable, and aligned with funder priorities, outcomes frameworks, and systems change agendas.
- A nuanced understanding of young people's engagement across education settings, including activism, leadership and skills development, inclusion, wellbeing and burnout, and ethical, non-tokenistic approaches to participation, power sharing, and co-creation.
- Strong knowledge of the UK education landscape, with particular strength in higher education, including the strategic, cultural, policy, and accountability frameworks that shape institutional decision making, partnership working, and long term engagement.
- Demonstrated experience of co-designing programmes with students, educators, institutions, and partners, ensuring lived experience meaningfully shapes strategy, priorities, and outcomes across an education journey rather than within isolated initiatives.
- Experience working effectively with advisory groups, steering groups, or multistakeholder governance structures, and integrating their input in ways that strengthen strategic clarity, ownership, and pace of delivery.
- The ability to build on existing strategic work, synthesise learning across multiple strands of education activity, operate within tight timeframes, and add value without duplicating or restarting previous thinking.



THANK YOU

fairtrade.org.uk

Fairtrade Foundation
Unit 5.07, The Loom
14 Gower's Walk
London E1 3PY

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7 405 5942
Email: commercial@fairtrade.org.uk