How can Fairtrade and Academia collaborate?
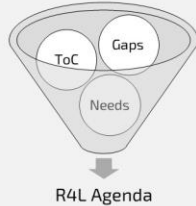
Our goal: Enable the creation of high-quality, independent research to constantly improve Fairtrade's work for the benefit of farmers and workers.

FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL

What research topics is Fairtrade interested in?

Fairtrade research is guided by a Research for Learning Agenda

Fairtrade's research for learning (R4L) agenda condenses priority topics for research needs within the Fairtrade system. It reflects current system needs, research gaps and is aligned with Fairtrade's Theory of Change (ToC).

Fairtrade has maintained this agenda for several years to guide research in areas where it is most needed and relevant. The agenda is updated on a bi-annual basis in consultation with representatives of Fairtrade Member organisations.

ToC / Gaps / Needs

R4L Agenda

Priority Topics

- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Fairtrade Minimum Price
- Distribution of Value along the Supply Chain
- Digitalization for Traceability and Transparency
- Youth and the next Generation of Farming
- Workers' rights
- Gender and Vulnerable Groups
- Environment, Deforestation and Biodiversity

Example Research Questions

"What is the impact of the Fairtrade Minimum Price on the willingness to adopt farming innovations among smallholder farmers?"

"Does the Fairtrade Minimum Price have an impact on (farmers'/workers') resilience? And if so, how does its effectiveness compare to other resilience-building measures?"

"Under which combination of factors do we see youth either continuing or moving away from farming?"

"Which adaptation measures by smallholder farmers are most effective to address challenges posed by climate change?"

What can a collaboration with Fairtrade offer you?

Access to key Fairtrade stakeholders
- A research collaboration with Fairtrade offers access to key stakeholders across the Fairtrade, across countries, products, and themes, from the field to the boardroom

Access to Fairtrade monitoring data
- Fairtrade already collects a wealth of data across different topics – data relevant to key performance indicators, producer satisfaction, premium use and more can complement primary data collection

Access to previous research
- Fairtrade has been very active in generating research to learn more about the impact and mechanisms of its work
- Previous research about Fairtrade is collected in a public library and an additional research repository that any future research can build upon

Greater visibility
- Partnering with Fairtrade creates visibility for your research and connects you to the world of voluntary sustainability standard schemes

Ability to develop joint research grant proposals
- Fairtrade is systematically collecting information and growing a database of suitable research grant opportunities
- With continuing sustainability challenges and upcoming legislations, funding opportunities for sustainability research is likely to increase

More real-world research impact
- Research with Fairtrade creates practical value for real people
- Robust and independent knowledge on what works and what does not is key for evidence-based decision making

What entails a research collaboration with Fairtrade?

Joint identification of research questions
- Mutual research interest, reflecting shared needs and priorities as well as academic and practical relevance
- State-of-the-art, publishable research questions and methods (e.g. Impact Evaluations, Modelling, Timeseries Analysis, Qualitative Comparative Analysis etc.)

Medium to long-term partnership
- Grounded in formal agreements such as partnership agreement, data sharing agreement, NDA, publication guidelines etc.
- Guided by tried and tested policies (e.g. ethics, student research policy)
- Working on complex research questions, likely PhD-level and beyond

Ability to develop joint research grant proposals
- Potential to build up and work together in a thematic cluster
- Grant application led by academic partner and supported by Fairtrade

Professional collaboration
- Academic independence
- Practical knowledge and support by Fairtrade during the data access, collection and validation phases of the research

Benefit for farmers and workers AND research
- The goal: Producing and presenting robust findings that can inform the development and review of Fairtrade's strategies, policies and instruments with scientific evidence – to continuously improve Fairtrade's work for the benefit of Fairtrade farmers and workers.

Are you interested in exploring ideas for an academic collaboration together with Fairtrade?
Get in touch!
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