Simon Fraser University is the recipient of a 2014 Canadian Fairtrade Award, which celebrates the efforts and accomplishments of stakeholders that support farmers and workers in developing countries through fair trade policy.

“We are honoured to receive this prestigious award,” says SFU President Andrew Petter. “As Canada’s ‘engaged university,’ SFU is committed to being a model for community sustainability. We have done this not only by engaging students in the support and promotion of fair trade, but also by challenging companies to be more responsive to their communities.”

Fairtrade Canada presented SFU with the award in the Campus of the Year category at a ceremony yesterday in Ontario. SFU was considered alongside seven other Canadian institutions: University of B.C., McGill University, University of Ottawa, University of Guelph, Brock University, Trent University, and Selkirk College.

“SFU has played a leadership role in Canada within the fair trade campus movement because it believes that when we all work together, we can make a difference improving the lives of farmers, artisans and their families in developing countries,” says Mark McLaughlin, executive director of SFU Ancillary Services.

The university earned the Fair Trade Campus designation from Fairtrade Canada in 2012, solidifying its commitment to being a model for sustainable community development. It partnered with campus food vendors and the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) to alter their buying habits and embrace fair trade practices.

SFU also changed its procurement policies and embedded fair trade standards in the way it does business. For example, all tenders issued for catering or dining services on campus now include a requirement that vendors must provide fair trade coffee and tea.

“SFSS is proud to have been part of the initial grassroots movement for fair trade at SFU and we continue to promote fair trade practices amongst our students,” says SFSS president Chardaye Bueckert.

The university also purchases fair trade bananas, chocolate, sugar and pepper.
“Fair trade resonates with our students because they come to our university with the hope to make a difference and change the world,” says McLaughlin. “By supporting fair trade, they are indeed making an impact.”

Simon Fraser University is consistently ranked among Canada’s top comprehensive universities and is one of the top 50 universities in the world under 50 years old. With campuses in Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey, B.C., SFU engages actively with the community in its research and teaching, delivers almost 150 programs to more than 30,000 students, and has more than 130,000 alumni in 130 countries.