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Birmingham students to redress for fairtrade in collaborative fashion show

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One of the first UK Universities to receive fairtrade status is to host an ethical fashion show for Fairtrade Fortnight, which is encouraging you to 'show off your label' to improve the lives of clothing manufacturers in developing countries.

Now in its second year, Redress Fashion: The Cotton Edition will take place in the University of Birmingham's Great Hall on Friday 11 March at 6.30pm and will demonstrate that ethical clothing can be cool, chic and cheap. Collections on display include clothing made by women in Ethiopian self-help groups supported by the University of Birmingham-based charity LUCIA, eco-friendly fashion from Bibico and green garments by People Tree, the fair trade company which boasts Harry Potter star, Emma Watson, as one of its designers.

Students at the University of Birmingham in collaboration with Birmingham City University, Aston University and University College Birmingham, have organised the event which will be the focal point of Birmingham's Fairtrade Fortnight celebrations. Clothing designed by BCU fashion students will feature in one of the shows with students from all institutions strutting their stuff on the catwalk.

Event organiser, Samm Lewis, a final year law student at the University of Birmingham, will be showcasing a finale dress by her label, Art-Hole Apparel, commented:

"We hope that this event will encourage people to question where the cotton which makes their clothes comes from, questioning big fashion mass production manufacturers. I want to raise awareness that fairtrade fashion isn't just hessian potato sacks fashioned into coarse ill-fitting dresses.

"Fairtrade fashion provides people with a better working environment so they can financially support their families effectively. The wool and cotton which are used to create the fabrics are ethically grown and harvested which means that they are lacking the pesticides which can cause skin complaints."

Jane Colbourne Procurement Manager, Hospitality and Accommodation Services added:

"Fairtrade improves lives in so many ways and we are hoping that this event will draw attention to the fact that ethical clothing does not need to be boring or old fashioned.

"A great deal of money is spent on fashion in the western world but buying fairly traded goods helps to eliminate child labour, and gives producers a fair wage for their goods, helping people to work their way out of poverty."

As well as a glimpse of the latest fairtrade fashions, there will also be stalls selling Fairtrade and ethical products, with students from University College Birmingham selling cakes made from rustic-style ingredients. There will also be entertainment from circus acts, dj iggytech and poet Vaughan Solomon.

This is one of the highlights of the University's events for Fairtrade Fortnight, a national campaign to raise awareness of fair-trade and offer 7.5million people in the developing world a more secure future. This year, Fairtrade Fortnight takes place between 28 February and 13 March.

Redress Fashion: The Cotton Edition is on Friday 11 March in the Great Hall at the University of Birmingham. The show starts at 6.30pm and tickets are £10 on the door or £8 in advance, available across campus. For more information, please contact Jane Colbourne via 0121 414 5957 or **j.a.colbourne@bham.ac.uk (mailto:j.a.colbourne@bham.ac.uk)** .

Notes to editors

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