



For immediate release

Increasing consumer demand to know the footprint behind products sees fair-trade event achieve “phenomenal” growth

An event started three years ago by a Melbourne banker determined to make the world a fairer place, has now become Australia’s largest fair-trade and ethical festival – as consumers increasingly demand to know the footprint behind products they’re purchasing.

Susanna Bevilacqua launched Moral Fairground, with fellow banker Boby Vosinthavong, after visiting some of the poorest countries in South East Asia and witnessing first hand the working conditions and environmental impact of mass consumerism.

Despite never organising an event before, Susanna set out to seek corporate sponsorship and a venue, to build awareness and educate about ethical, socially responsible and environmentally aware businesses through a series of events.

Within months she had Federation Square on board as a venue, and support from some of Australia’s most renowned brands – Oxfam, Cadbury and Lush – and signature event Fair@Square was born.

In the first year alone, more than 40 Australian businesses took part in the event which attracted 20,000 visitors.

Just two years later, they have doubled that, with more than 80 businesses involved in this year’s event and visitor numbers predicted to hit more than 75,000.

The event is now so valued; the City of Melbourne is supporting it.

Councillor Dr Cathy Oke, who has more than 15 years experience in the sustainability sector, says it’s fantastic to see Melbourne leading the way in educating about, and promoting, fair-trade and ethical products.

“It’s a timely event too, just weeks before Christmas, and will encourage sustainable purchases when more often these days people want to give gifts with meaning or purpose.”

Chair of the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand, Cheryl Kernot, which also supports the event, says growth of the event over the last three years has been phenomenal and a clear reflection that consumer demand for products with purpose and meaning is on the rise.

She says fair-trade labelled products were only launched in Australia in 2005 and last year had already reached AUD \$120 million.

Research of fair-trade awareness undertaken by Mobium Group in conjunction with FTAANZ in 2010 also revealed 90% of adult consumers want retailers to offer eco-labelled products and more than 80% of Australians wanted clearer and simpler information on its benefit and impacts.

“The Fair@Square event offers a great opportunity for people to see the range of fair-trade products on display and meet with the growing number of social entrepreneurs who work directly with the producers to ensure quality products that are made sustainably.”

Susanna says the Fair@Square event aims to not only nurture that consumer interest but build on it, educating about about why it’s so important to move to a more ethical way of life.



“It’s about not just doing what’s right by the environment, but doing what’s right by those who are sourcing the materials used, and ensuring people are treated fairly for the work they do, regardless where they live.

“We are determined to create events which educate about the importance of fair-trade and ethical products and help drive industry change.”

For more information: <http://moralfairground.com.au/fairhighlights.html>

For high resolution images and interview requests:

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About Fair@Square

Fair@Square demonstrates how Australians can take action to create a sustainable future that values and respects all people and the preservation of our planet.

The festival showcases goods and services produced by a wide range of ethical producers including Oxfam, Cadbury, Lush and Adorn – to name but a few.

It offers workshops, talks, market stalls, music, fashion and art.

Still a relatively new concept, it’s just three years old, and will this year expand into a three day event from December 2 – 4.