

# Shared Earth

## The first Fair Trade franchise launches in the UK

**Y**ork-based franchisor Shared Earth launched its franchise operation recently, offering serious entrepreneurs, with an eye for a solid profitable business model, the opportunity to become part of the first Fair Trade franchising operation in the UK.

Established in 1986, Shared Earth has led the Fair Trade industry for over two decades, focusing on delivering products that consumers want by managing design and development in-house. Sales are buoyant across all of its retail outlets, showing significant opportunity and demand UK wide.

Jeremy Piercy, Fair Trade guru and founder of Shared Earth, has extensive knowledge of this particular industry and regularly travels to places such as India, Nepal and the Philippines to work with dedicated producers to ensure that exact specifications are met.

### Specialist

"We are unusual in the fact that we have a specialist team of in-house designers which spot trends and respond quickly to changes in fashion and consumer tastes," explains Jeremy. "We are unique in the way we work because we fit our product ranges around consumer needs, keeping a fresh customer-oriented focus, offering products that people really want to buy."

The franchise, which is fully supported by Jeremy and his team of experts within the Fair Trade industry, offers the right person a fabulous opportunity to build an ethical, profitable business.

"We have always aimed to address the imbalance of wealth, working together with people from different cultures while earning a decent living, and because we make good profits we are able to offer our suppliers in the third world a good and fair price for their products," adds Jeremy.

Shared Earth currently operates template franchises in Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and Liverpool, as well as its head office and foundation retail outlet in York, in an ideal location next to York Minster.

The head office premises is where all the magic happens, with a wide range of product samples, materials, colours and designs continually being reviewed against



current consumer trends. The retail shops themselves have a vibrant atmosphere, while large colourful graphics of the artisans at work keep customers focused on the 'feelgood factor' that the money they are spending is helping to make the world a better place.

### Ranges

Shared Earth imports its own branded unique jewellery, fashion accessories, wood, ceramics, paper, soapstone and kids ranges, which add to the sustainability of the retail operation and the exclusivity potential of the franchise, backed by the fact that Shared Earth is the largest retailer and wholesaler of Fair Trade products in the UK. With all this in mind, new franchisees will know they are in good hands.

With Fair Trade sales booming, more and more employment is being provided for artisans in developing countries, thus increasing the opportunity for future new product development and new supply channels for Shared Earth and its franchisees.

At a time when global conflict also seems on the increase, Shared Earth's partnerships with producers are an invaluable way of building bridges, showing that people can work together for mutual benefit, no matter what their race, religion or culture.

"We are looking for individuals with the right qualities who want to own an ethical, profitable business," says Jeremy. "We are only looking for a small number of franchisees initially so that they receive an excellent level of care." **WF**

A wide choice of territories are currently available, so it couldn't be a better time to get involved in this growing industry. For more information about a Shared Earth franchise visit [www.sharedearth.co.uk](http://www.sharedearth.co.uk), call 01904 636400 or email [franchising@sharedearth.co.uk](mailto:franchising@sharedearth.co.uk) to request an application form.

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