



International  
Trade  
Centre

ALLIANCES  
FOR ACTION

# THE COFFEE GUIDE NETWORK

Hosted by International Trade Centre  
under the Alliances for Action initiative



The Coffee Guide Network is a global community of coffee experts that **creates, curates, and disseminates** neutral, practical resources and knowledge for the coffee sector.

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It is housed by the Alliances for Action programme of the International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

This pre-competitive network serves as a vehicle to promote collaboration and partnerships to address pressing coffee sector challenges. It was born out of the unique collaboration to co-create the International Trade Centre's acclaimed publication, The Coffee Guide, 4th Edition, in a bid to take coffee sustainability off the page and into policy and action.

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The Coffee Guide Network exists to develop industry knowledge and make it accessible to all. We seek to evolve the coffee sector through collaboration across the value chain in partnership."

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE NETWORK



In less than two years, the Coffee Guide Network has grown from **70 to over 154** engaged participants motivated to contribute their expertise toward building a more equitable, thriving, and sustainable coffee sector.

**These include:**



**They contribute** through learning and research initiatives chosen by the network each year to inform and update the Coffee Guide content.



Coffee professionals  
from government  
agencies



Private sector  
roasters



Traders and  
trade associations



Small producer  
organizations and  
associations



Nonprofits and  
consultancies

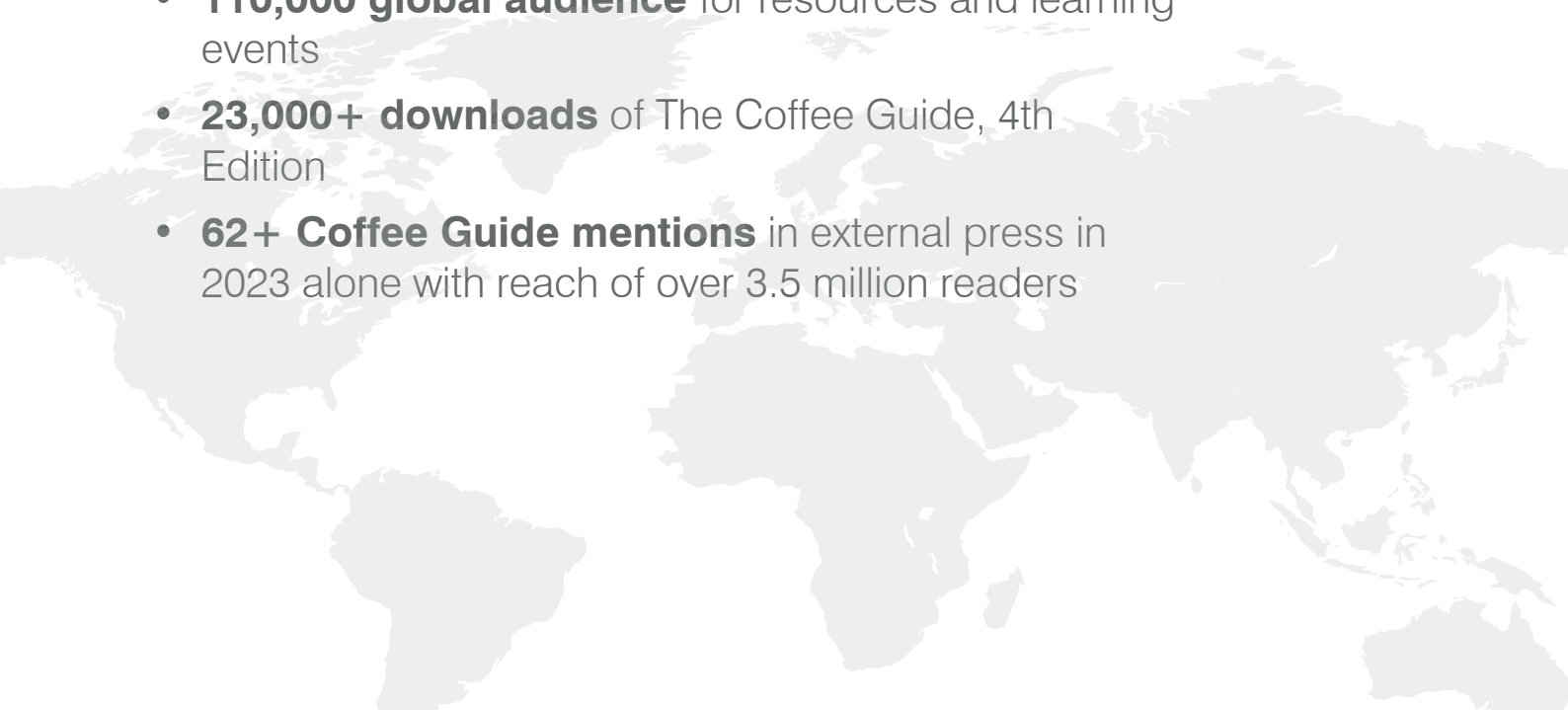


High caliber  
academic  
institutions

# OUR GOAL

is to produce practical resources that bridge information gaps for coffee sector professionals, policymakers, academia and consumers and to promote widespread sharing of these knowledge tools through co-creation.

## OUR GLOBAL REACH TO DATE

- **154 engaged** participants, representing organizations in 25 countries across 6 regions
  - **1,000+ mailing list**
  - **9 official partnerships**
  - **60,000 social media** impressions
  - **890 participants** from **small and medium enterprises** trained on Coffee Guide content
  - **110,000 global audience** for resources and learning events
  - **23,000+ downloads** of The Coffee Guide, 4th Edition
  - **62+ Coffee Guide mentions** in external press in 2023 alone with reach of over 3.5 million readers
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Practical resources  
for the coffee sector,  
by the coffee sector

Building from The Coffee Guide, we aim to become the industry's go-to resource for comprehensive and curated coffee sector information with up-to-date data, insights, and tools.

Equitable access to quality, neutral, and practical information is a fundamental precondition for creating more equity for value chain actors. We prioritize broad dissemination and translation of our resources into the top languages used in coffee producing countries.



Access to coffee  
knowledge for all

# WHY WE EXIST

We seek sector wide systems  
transformation



Systems  
Change toward  
a Sustainable  
Coffee Sector

Our inclusive, collaborative process is as important as the resources we create. This is what sets us apart. We leverage the notoriety of The Coffee Guide and the neutrality of the United Nations to convene actors from across sectors and geographies. There is significant power in whose voices are represented in the sector references we create. We need resources, definitions, and perspectives that equitably reflect and benefit all sector players.

The convening power of the network enables new cross-sector, public-private collaborations to address pressing, emerging and systemic challenges in the coffee sector.

# OUR WORKING PROCESS

**We work** through a simple, three-step process:

# 1

## COLLABORATE

by selecting research topics at network plenary meetings. These become working groups to deepen knowledge on the topic with topical experts and value chain actors outside the network as well.

# 2

## CO-CREATE

new, practical resources in a pre-competitive way, pooling data, information, case studies, and expertise from across the global coffee sector.

# 3

## DISSEMINATE

knowledge products to a global audience through

- the network
- integration into training materials and programs
- participation in industry events
- contributions to prominent coffee sector publications
- ITC's online Coffee Guide Resource Hub.

**We use** ITC's 'Alliances for Action' approach, which uniquely draws upon collaborations with other value chain actors and networks to achieve impact at a systems scale. This collaborative approach, combined with data driven action research, serves to catalyze broad systems change for the coffee sector.

# OUR CURRENT RESEARCH INITIATIVES

The growth in participation and interest in these three initiatives has shown the importance of them for the sector. We intend to build upon each of them to establish as on-going initiatives sharing important, reliable information to the coffee sector.

Each year, the network will prioritize new research initiatives that address pressing coffee sector needs.

## Coffee Guide Data Aggregation Initiative:

### Objectives:

- Produce reliable, neutral statistics that reflect the way coffee is traded today, using the Coffee Guide's three market segments: standard, premium, and specialized
- Vet this data across the coffee industry through a cross-sectoral, pre-competitive Data Aggregation Advisory Group

### Why:

To enable informed decision-making for all coffee sector actors through reliable historical data

### What's Next:

- Continue and build the Data Aggregation Advisory Group to improve data
- Publish annual export, production, and consumption data on The Coffee Guide Resource Hub

### Key Partner:

International Coffee Organization (ICO)

Advisory Group participation: 23 participants representing 16 organizations



### Objectives:

- Provide a comprehensive overview of sustainability initiatives within the coffee sector through an interactive online map, displaying who is doing what and where in sustainability
- Build a database that captures information on over 350 projects globally

### Why:

To promote collaboration, co-investment, and knowledge sharing to drive sustainable practices

To identify overlaps and gaps to inform strategic funding decisions toward a more sustainable sector

### What's Next:

- Collaborate with other global sustainability platforms to expand database, analyze findings, and share learnings
- Update the initiatives annually
- Expand dataset to capture more initiatives led by producing country organizations and governments

### Key Partners:

International Coffee Organization (ICO) via the Coffee Public Private Task Force Technical Workstream 3 and the European Commission DG INPTA

Collaborative effort with input from two networks representing 35 + organizations from the public and private sector

## Circular Economy Working Group:

### Objectives:

- Propose a definition for Circular Economy in the coffee sector
- Build knowledge, map and identify gaps in Circular Economy practices throughout the coffee value chain using a systemic design approach
- Contribute to the 2023 ICO Coffee Development Report

### Why:

To promote Circular Economy in practice as a mechanism toward environmental, economic, and social sustainability, transforming the traditional take-make-waste model into new, sustainable products that contribute to better living and economic conditions.

### What's Next:

- Promote Circular Economy in practice through the Center for Circular Economy in Coffee (C4CEC)
- Create a matchmaking mechanism for entrepreneurs to use byproducts as inputs for new products

### Key Partners:

Lavazza Foundation, Politecnico di Torino University, International Coffee Organization (ICO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and support in founding the new Center for Circular Economy in Coffee.

# ABOUT THE COFFEE GUIDE,

4<sup>th</sup> Edition, an ITC publication

**The Coffee Guide** is the world's most extensive, hands-on and neutral source of information on the international coffee trade. It covers trade issues relevant to coffee growers, traders, exporters, transportation companies, certifiers, associations, and authorities. The fourth edition is directly informed by the coffee industry, co-created by a network of over 70 experts across the coffee sector.

Since its release in October 2021, it has garnered overwhelming approval from the coffee industry at large. Available in 5 languages with over 23,000 downloads to date, it is regarded as the industry reference for coffee trade. Making the Coffee Guide free and available in coffee-producing languages ensures that industry professionals worldwide have the opportunity benefit from the wealth of insights shared in this publication.

Available in  
English, French,  
Portuguese,  
Spanish and  
Amharic



More info  
and download  
The Coffee  
Guide here.

By collaborating with the  
Coffee Guide Network, you can  
contribute to meaningful, sector-  
wide change and leverage our  
platform's extensive reach and  
expertise.

For more information and to get involved, please contact:

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