

HOW TO

# Lobby your university or college to endorse the Fossil Fuel Treaty



AUGUST 2023

Welcome to the global campaign for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. By working on your university campus to get support for this vital treaty to end the era of fossil fuels, you are part of a growing movement around the world for a #FossilFuelTreaty. It's great to have you on board!

## What's the aim of the campaign?

The call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is being led by seven of the Pacific Island nations who have been hit first and worst by climate change and whose very existence is now threatened.

Around the world there are currently 2,000 civil society organisations, 3,000 scientists, 90 cities, 101 Nobel laureates and over half a million individuals (and counting) who have endorsed the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. The overall aim of the campaign is to add as many voices as possible to this growing call and for that to translate into support at a national government level.

In Scotland, we're calling on the First Minister to endorse the call for a treaty. To build pressure on him, we're getting as many others as we can to add their support: from individuals signing our petition, to local Councils passing motions, MSPs adding their voice and universities supporting the treaty.

## What can students do on campus?

There's lots you can do on your campus to help the campaign. Here are a few ideas:

- Raise awareness of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty among students and staff at your university - via stalls, events, articles or any other ideas you may have - and get them to sign the petition to Scotland's First Minister.
- Get your student union, your university's University and College Union branch, or the University itself to pass a motion - or in some other way publicly support the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

## What's in this pack?

In this pack, you'll find:

- **A briefing** that explains what the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is, why it's important, how it would work (and how other treaties like it in the past have worked) and why Scotland should support the treaty
- **A short leaflet on the treaty**
- **A copy of the petition to the First Minister.** It's also online at [act.globaljustice.org.uk/ending-fossil-fuel-era](https://act.globaljustice.org.uk/ending-fossil-fuel-era)
- **A template student union motion**

We're sure you'll also have your own ideas about how you could campaign for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty on your campus - so be as imaginative as you like!

## Getting a motion passed

Many universities have declared a climate emergency (as have many governments). Despite this, the fossil fuel industry continues to expand. Calling for an endorsement of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty by your university can strengthen their commitment to tackling climate change, and encourage new commitments linked to phasing out fossil fuels specifically. Publicity from your university endorsing the treaty will help to signal clearly to the Scottish government that a transition away from fossil fuels must happen now.

There are a few different bodies on campus that you could persuade to pass a motion:

**Student Union (SU)** - This should be the simplest to try as many universities have regular Student Union or Student Council meetings where students can submit a motion to be discussed. This is then voted on at the meeting. You just need to submit a motion supported by another student. Often this can be filled in online. Sometimes this has to be done through a society, so it's worth checking beforehand what the process is on your particular campus.

**University and College Union (UCU)** - This is the main trade union of academics and support staff in further and higher education in the UK. Each UCU branch has General Meetings where they pass motions. Motions to branch General Meetings are the means by which the branch makes decisions, establishes local policy and submits to UCU Congress and Higher Education Sector Conference.

Since students are unable to join the UCU, you will have to build relationships with university staff who are sympathetic within your university's UCU branch for them to put the motion forward.

**University** - This is probably a longer process and possibly the most challenging. It will be easier once the UCU branch and the SU are on board. You will have to identify key people in the governing body and, through awareness raising on campus and lobbying, gather enough support to press for them to pass a motion on the university committee.

## Template motion

We've drafted a template motion that you can use and adapt as you need to. If you can add a reference to any commitments the SU or other body has already made on climate change that will strengthen it. The motion is currently drafted for your Student Union but can also be adapted for the UCU and university body.

The most important part of the motion is the wording at the end that commits the SU or other body to taking action – and in particular to writing to the First Minister, as this will really help add to the pressure on him to endorse the treaty. If the motion gets passed then this is what you can follow up on afterwards to ensure that it has been acted on.

## Building a campaign

In order to encourage people to vote for your motion, and encourage your university student union, UCU branch or administration to endorse the treaty, you will need to build an effective campaign on campus. This is the best way to ensure your motion receives the support required to become policy. It will also help raise awareness about the treaty amongst fellow students.

Here are a few ideas to get the ball rolling:

**Press** – Organise a photo opportunity, write a press release and try to get your university student newspaper to cover your campaign.

**Stall** – Hold a stall at a place where lots of students and staff walk past. This offers a great opportunity to interact with people and get students discussing your campaign. We can send you materials for the stall.

**Online** – Think about using social media and email to get your message across. Could a departmental secretary send an email round? Would any particularly influential figures on campus share your campaign on their social media?

**Visit Halls** – Go to Halls of residence, put up posters and speak to students.

**Join with others** - Persuading your university to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty might also support fossil fuel finance divestment campaigns at your university. It's worth getting in touch with university societies involved in divestment campaigning, to find ways you might work together.

## Keep in touch!

Do keep in touch with us to let us know how you're getting on. And don't forget, Global Justice Now is here to support you in your campaigning. We can provide advice and more resources, so please don't hesitate to contact us at [scotland.office@globaljustice.org.uk](mailto:scotland.office@globaljustice.org.uk).

To keep connected with the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty campaign and with other youth activist groups running campaigns in Scottish universities, sign up for updates at [www.globaljustice.org.uk/get-involved/act-locally/youth-network](http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/get-involved/act-locally/youth-network)



Global Justice Now works as part of a global movement to challenge the powerful and create a more just and equal world. Our local activist groups campaign around the country for a global economy where people come before profit.

Global Justice Now Scotland, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL • 0131 378 6540 • [scotland.office@globaljustice.org.uk](mailto:scotland.office@globaljustice.org.uk) • [www.globaljustice.org.uk/scotland](http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/scotland)