

FAIRPHONE

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FairTEC collective launches to encourage responsible and sustainable technology

Fairphone, /e/, TeleCoop, Commown, WEtell and the Phone Co-op join forces to provide a more sustainable digital ecosystem

Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 26.05.2021 - Fairphone, the Dutch social enterprise building a market for ethical smartphones; /e/, the company that makes user privacy accessible to everyone; the first French cooperative telecoms operator, TeleCoop; French cooperative Commown, provider of hardware-as-a-service; German sustainable mobile communications provider WEtell and British ethical phone, broadband and mobile provider the Phone Co-op, are pleased to announce the launch of FairTEC. FairTEC is a collective of European companies working together to create and offer sustainable and ethical integrated smartphone solutions - a centralised proposition that will enable users to rent or buy a fair smartphone, select a more sustainable sim card and use an operating system that respects their personal data.

German users will be able to visit the FairTEC [website](#) and pick their preferred combination of sustainable products, such as renting a Fairphone “as a Service” through Commown with /e/OS pre-installed and a WEtell sim card. French and UK users can do the same, renting a Fairphone “as a Service” through Commown with /e/OS pre-installed and a TeleCoop sim card in France or buying a Fairphone with /e/OS pre-installed and a Phone Co-op sim card in the UK.

In the wake of the pandemic, people have become increasingly reliant on technology, yet the majority are unaware of the negative societal and environmental impact of their digital dependence. In turn, large global conglomerates are promising a greener future, when they should act now to offer solutions and services that limit the industry’s impact and support behavioural change today. For many, fairer technology isn’t just about devices or software, but it is also about more sustainable business models that not only protect user data but the environment.

FairTEC was founded as a collective of actors committed to digital sustainability. The group is working together to offer credible and sustainable alternatives in order to create a paradigm shift to a more responsible way of operating in the technology sector. From the hardware to the operating system, from the network to its business model, FairTEC offers an alternative ecosystem that addresses numerous parts of the smartphone value chain. FairTEC is working to create a combined proposition that offers end-users a solution that will make a genuine impact. For the collective, a more sustainable digital ecosystem means:

- Reducing the impact of smartphone production by focusing on modular and repairable design that integrates ethically and responsibly sourced materials
- Choosing a more privacy-friendly operating system that does not store large amounts of data to profile users or sell them unwanted adverts

- Selecting a mobile subscription that cares for the climate, user data security and is a fair and transparent service
- Choosing an economic model that favours longevity by using smartphones as a service to allow multiple and longer life cycles for the devices and their components

Eva Gouwens, CEO at Fairphone states: “We’re proud to be part of an initiative that makes a positive impact on the technology industry. In an age where we’re all more dependent on technology than ever before, the sector needs to encourage responsible and sustainable solutions and services so that we limit our impact on society and the environment. FairTEC wants to draw attention to the actors addressing and raising awareness around the key issues within the industry but also offer a proposition that makes a genuine impact. We want to provide Fairphone users with phones that are not only sustainable but that make an overall positive impact on the world, whether that’s with an operating system that protects privacy, a more sustainable mobile subscription or a service leasing model that takes us one step closer to a circular economy.”

"A significant segment of /e/OS users is looking for more ethical technology on top of data privacy. It was therefore obvious to us that combining forces with other organisations that share the same goal would only be beneficial. This European initiative can redefine how we use and own technology and make a lasting and positive impact for millions of users on the continent," comments Gaël Duval, founder at /e/.

Marion Graeffly, TeleCoop’s co-founder, states: “At TeleCoop, we think digital technology should be used for the common good to combat its negative environmental and social impact. With this objective in mind, we think partnerships with projects that share these values are key to supporting and developing that vision. We joined and helped establish FairTEC because we think of a telecoms operator as the digital gateway that has a key role in creating a new path for the industry. Tech needs to be designed in a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly way because of how important it is in our daily lives. Providing an ecosystem of concrete alternatives is key to reaching that objective.”

“Without radical change, the technology sector will soon face an existential crisis much like the airline industry is facing today. Opening up another, more sustainable way forward through cooperation between committed actors at a European level is essential,” says Adrien Montagut, co-founder at Commown.

Jacci Marcus, Head of Digital Customer Experience, The Phone Co-op, comments: “As part of The Midcounties Co-operative, our co-op values are completely aligned to those of Fairphone, and we’ve developed a close working partnership that has delivered for our members and business customers.

“Customer experience isn’t just transactional. Changing perceptions, educating, giving options and sharing new ways of thinking are more important for us. We’re in this to be brave and bring about change.”

“WEtell offers sustainable state of the art mobile communication services. With this we want to demonstrate that climate-friendly and ethical business is possible, even in the digital high-tech industry. Our long-term goal is to establish our values of climate protection, data protection, fairness and transparency in the mobile communications industry. In order to achieve this, we need strong partners to form an alliance with common goals. FairTEC offers a great opportunity to make the idea of ethical, sustainable and fair mobile communications strong across countries. Therefore, we are excited to be a part of it,” states Andreas Schmucker, CEO of WEtell.

To find out more visit the FairTEC website at <http://fairtec.io>.

About Fairphone

Fairphone is building a market for ethical phones and motivating the industry to act more responsibly. We design, produce and sell smartphones to uncover the supply chain behind our products, raise awareness for the most urgent issues, and prove that it's possible to do things differently. Together with our partners and collaborators, we're working to make caring for people and the planet a natural part of doing business.

Photos, videos, fact sheets and other materials are available at the Fairphone press page: <https://fairphone.com/en/about/press/>
www.fairphone.com

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About /e/

Founded by Gaël Duval, /e/OS builds mobile operating systems with pre-installed apps and online services that help users regain control of their personal data on their phones. Most Android apps can be used with the option for users to see how built-in trackers are hidden within each app, so they know in advance of any potential threat to their data. /e/OS is committed to providing better data privacy and security for individuals and corporations, along with a state-of-the-art user-friendly experience.

/e/OS is a global project, supported by an international core team of experienced entrepreneurs, developers and designers, and a vibrant growing community of contributors. Its mission is to make technology that makes user privacy accessible to everyone.

<https://e.foundation>

For additional information and interview requests, please contact: Véronique Loquet and Brittny Mendoza.

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About TeleCoop

TeleCoop was created by four people in April 2020: Pierre Paquot, Anne Barbarin, Julien Noé and Marion Graeffly.

TeleCoop's objective is to allow everyone to reclaim their digital usage and propose concrete solutions for digital sobriety. Telecoop is a cooperative society of collective interest. It is a company that is owned by its customers and partners, who decide together which projects TeleCoop does and how its profits are spent. This statute also guarantees the principle of limited profitability of the organisation in the interest of its environmental and social objectives.

TeleCoop offers a mobile subscription that allows everyone to take control of their mobile consumption by only charging their subscribers for the mobile data they actually use. The cooperative is committed to taking the time to accompany its subscribers in their digital life and to developing local employment thanks to a customer service based in France. Secondly, TeleCoop is

developing incentives to repair mobiles rather than replace them. Finally, TeleCoop offers awareness-raising activities on digital sobriety to enable everyone to grasp this essential issue.

For additional information and interview requests, please contact:

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About Commown

Commown, a cooperative society of collective interest, is part of the sustainable and ethical electronics movement. We believe that the key for structural changes is the economic model: selling leads to fast renewal of products. That is why Commown will never sell a device. Instead we propose fairer and repairable electronic products such as the Fairphone, as a service, with a monthly fee.

The offer for individuals and professionals includes repairable devices (smartphones, tablets, computers, headphones) and a Premium service (handling of breakdowns, dysfunctions, battery changes, assistance with use, etc.) to ensure that the devices last as long as possible. When for any reason a device comes back, it is repaired, refurbished and sent to another customer. If repairs are impossible, the parts will be used to repair other devices. By never selling a device, we can drastically extend their average service life.

<https://commown.coop/>

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About the Phone Co-op and Your Co-op Mobile

The UK's first co-operative telecoms provider, The Phone Co-op has pioneered fairer, more sustainable tech products and services for over 20 years, and our ethical approach is one of the main reasons our customers come to us. We've been a UK partner of Fairphone since the beginning, and it is now the flagship product for our new 'Your Co-op Mobile' brand.

The Phone Co-op joined Midcounties Co-operative, the UK's largest co-op, in 2018 and is now part of its Utilities Group, alongside Co-op Energy. We work with socially responsible organisations like WWF and The Green Party, who are keen to understand ethical supply chains and the wider impact of the mobile industry on the environment and society.

For additional information and interview requests, please contact: lee.thomson@thephone.coop

About WEtell

WEtell is a German mobile operator focusing on sustainability. Our core values are climate protection, data protection, fairness and transparency. We offer climate neutral mobile communication for private customers and companies, achieved via investing in bio-charcoal projects or construction of solar plants. The customers' usage data is deleted as early as possible, there is no linking of names and mobile communications behaviour with the network operator and no data is sold. And WEtell attaches great importance to fair and transparent dealing, such as easy pricing without hidden costs, no contract terms and best service.

Photos, videos, fact sheets and other materials are available at the WEtell press page (please contact us for English translation):

<https://www.wetell.de/ueber-uns/pressebereich/>

www.wetell.de

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