

**Location**

Worldwide

**Users**

Trade School volunteer organisers and community members

**Maintained by**

Trade School organisers and volunteers

**Duration**

2009 - 2019

**Category**

pedagogical, economy, social

**Nr. and Title**

U 068

# Trade School

**Initiator(s)**

OurGoods

**Description**

Trade School is a self-organised, alternative learning space that runs on barter. It was started in 2010 in New York's Lower East Side by Rich Watts, Louise Ma, and Caroline Woolard of OurGoods.org, a creative barter network. Over 800 students participated in 76 single-session classes during 35 days. Anyone can teach a class, and students sign up by agreeing to meet the barter requests of teachers. Barter items included homemade pickles, mix tapes, drawings, research help, cheese, and music tips. Subjects of past courses have included composting, ghost hunting, and community organising. Trade School celebrates hands-on knowledge and experience. It is a place to learn with other people who value practical wisdom, mutual aid, and the social nature of exchange.

**Goals**

Create an alternative, sustainable economy of mutual exchange, emphasising education as a communal, reciprocal resource.

**Beneficial outcomes**

The community – their needs, their interests – determine the curriculum. The project is an open model, and the organisers encourage its replication in new communities.

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