

1301 Pennsylvania Ave Suite 850  
Washington, DC 20004  
Phone 202.347.8630  
Fax 202.393.6524  
[www.sister-cities.org](http://www.sister-cities.org)



Promoting peace through  
mutual respect, understanding  
& cooperation - one individual,  
one community at a time.

---

## About Sister Cities International

### ***Our Mission & Purpose***

Our mission is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, & cooperation - one individual, one community at a time. Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. As an international membership organization, we officially certify, represent and support partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states and similar jurisdictions in other countries.

### ***Who We Work With***

Our network represents more than 700 U.S. communities partnered with nearly 1,800 international communities in 134 countries around the world. We promote and support sister city partnerships in all corners of the globe, reaching areas traditionally underserved. We promote the inclusion of ethnic and racial minorities, people with disabilities, youth, women and people of diverse socio-economic status in all sister city activities.

### ***What Our Network Does***

Sister city programs provide opportunities for people to experience and explore cultures through long-term community partnerships. We build environments where communities can creatively learn, work and solve problems together. Reciprocal cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional and technical exchanges and projects are often the result of sister city programs.

### ***Key Program Areas***

***Sustainable Development*** - a network focused on developing communities today while supporting future needs. Project areas: good governance, energy systems, clean water, healthcare, economic development, environmental conservation, poverty alleviation, accessibility and disaster reconstruction.

***Youth & Education*** - a network building multicultural awareness and understanding among youth globally. Project areas: youth exchange, Young Artists Competition, teacher exchange, youth adult partnership, youth in governance, virtual classrooms, e-exchanges, scholarship programs and sister schools.

***Humanitarian Assistance*** - programs helping communities address today's needs with long-term solutions. Project areas: Wheelchairs for Peace, Gifts in Kind partnership, International Partners for Peace, Operation Iraqi children, tsunami relief.

***Arts & Culture*** - projects conducted at the local level that connect communities in understanding through appreciation of music, cultural affairs and art. Project areas: Showcase of Young Artists, music and art exchanges, theater and drama exchanges, gardens, community parks, festivals, culinary appreciation and language exploration.

## **Services Provided to Communities Joining Sister Cities International**

**Grants** – apply for seed grants to support your community’s sister city projects.

**Official Recognition of Your Sister City Relationship** – be listed in our directories and recognized by other agencies working in international development.

**Network Membership** – join the Sister Cities Network for Sustainable Development or the Sister Cities Youth & Education Network. Qualify for special grants, services and discussion groups.

**Publications** – e-newsletter, newsletter, annual membership directory, toolkits and instructional guides.

**Partner Benefits** – benefit from our relationships with organizations like AYUSA International which assists with securing J-1 visas for exchange students and Gifts in Kind International, which links businesses and nonprofit organizations together to improve communities.

**Affordable Insurance** - discounted medical traveler’s insurance, board member liability insurance, and event insurance.

**Discounted Conference Rates** - receive reduced registration rates for our Annual Conference, which is loaded with workshops and networking opportunities.

**Online Resources & Translation** – access “members only” on [www.sister-cities.org](http://www.sister-cities.org), with instantaneous translation in 10 languages, look up contact information for other sister city programs, capacity-building guides, a “Sister City Stories section to share your successes with others, learn what other sister city programs are doing, and more.

**Young Artists Competition** – showcase artwork from youth to your community and the globe through this outstanding program.

**Mentoring** – on-site support to develop your sister city program from a state coordinator. Note: only available in states where a state coordinator resides.

**Cities Seeking Cities** – our online matchmaking service to help communities link together.

**Annual Awards Program** – be recognized for your community’s sister city achievements through our acclaimed awards program.

**Online Fundraising** – raise funds for a sister city project through [www.SupportSisterCities.org](http://www.SupportSisterCities.org), our online fundraising tool for local sister city programs.

**Legislative Advocacy for the Sister City Movement** – our online legislative center keeps you up-to-date with the latest policy news and helps you advocate on behalf of citizen exchange and international understanding.

**Publicity Opportunities** – connect your community to national publicity about the sister city movement and be considered for publications and news releases issued by the international office.

**Staff Consultation** – talk or email with knowledgeable staff persons who can help support your sister city program’s growth and development.

## **Our History**

Sister city, county and state affiliations between the United States and similar jurisdictions around the world began shortly after World War II. They developed into a national initiative when President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed a people-to-people program at a White House conference in 1956. Originally part of the National League of Cities, Sister Cities International became a separate, nonprofit corporation in 1967. In 2006, we are celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the citizen diplomacy movement.