



FACT SHEET

Our Mission

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 to increase global cooperation at the local level. Headquartered in Washington, DC, Sister Cities International promotes sustainable development, youth involvement, cultural understanding, and humanitarian assistance. As an international membership organization, Sister Cities International officially certifies, represents, and supports partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states, and similar jurisdictions in other countries to ensure their continued commitment and success. The Sister Cities International network represents more than 2,500 communities in 134 countries around the world.

Goals

- ◆ Develop municipal partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states and similar jurisdictions in other nations
- ◆ Provide opportunities for officials and citizens to experience and explore other cultures through long-term community partnerships
- ◆ Create an atmosphere in which economic and community development can be implemented and strengthened
- ◆ Create stimulating environments where communities can creatively learn, work and solve problems together through reciprocal cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional and technical exchanges and projects

Benefits of Membership

- **Grants:** Eligibility to participate in all Sister Cities International grant programs, such as: “The Sister Cities Network for Sustainable Development,” “The Sister Cities International Youth and Education Network,” “Wheelchairs for Peace,” “Open World Program,” and our YES program
- **Publications:** Subscription to all Sister Cities International publications, including bimonthly issues of *Sister Cities International Newsletter*, e-Newsletter, the annual membership directory, and instructional guides covering all aspects of local program development
- **State Coordinators:** Receive support from a dedicated and experienced volunteer in your area, who will make personal visits to your community. State Coordinators supply a mentor element to communities that are interested in developing sister city partnerships but need advice on how to get them started. They also offer their professional expertise to already-established programs that want guidance in developing or reorganizing their programs
- **Meetings and Conferences:** Sister Cities International’s Annual Conference provides an opportunity for sister city programs from around the world to network, learn about new innovations and share

their experiences. State Coordinators also hold regular meetings to provide these same opportunities at the state level. As a member you will receive reduced cost registration to the Annual Conference.

- **Awards Programs:** Eligibility to participate in Sister Cities International's Annual Awards Program and the Sister Cities International Showcase of Young Artists, where your community can gain international recognition for its achievements
- **Insurance:** Opportunity to purchase discounted supplemental medical traveler's insurance, board member liability insurance, and event insurance
- **Access to Sister Cities International's Web site** at <http://www.sister-cities.org>, which features:
 - ❖ Three different types of instantaneous online translation tools, so that everyone in your community can e-mail your counterpart(s). E-mails can be translated to and from Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Japanese, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, Russian, and English
 - ❖ Direct access to an innovative funding "search engine" for foundation, corporation and government grants
 - ❖ Ability to post a request for a sister city and peruse detailed community profiles and contact information for both U.S. and international requests in our "Cities Seeking Cities List."
 - ❖ Ability to report, track and compile the tools and techniques that promote outstanding sister city programs
 - ❖ Ability to feature your sister city Web site on Sister Cities International's Web site, which reaches hundreds of people each day

History

Sister city, county and state affiliations between the United States and similar jurisdictions around the world began shortly after World War II, and developed into a national initiative when President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed a people-to-people program at a White House conference in 1956. Originally a part of the National League of Cities (NLC), Sister Cities International became a separate, nonprofit corporation in 1967, due to the tremendous growth and popularity of the sister city movement.

The International Network

Sister Cities International is the international membership association for sister city, county and state programs in the United States and similar jurisdictions around the world. As the official organization that links jurisdictions from the United States with communities worldwide, Sister Cities International recognizes, registers and coordinates sister city, county, municipality, province, prefecture, region, and state linkages.

In every region of the world, sister city partnerships play a significant role in supporting long-term community partnerships through reciprocal exchange programs. Sister Cities International strives to ensure that each project that is undertaken by its members reflects the diversity of its network. Specifically, Sister Cities International promotes the inclusion of ethnic and racial minorities, people with disabilities, youth, women and people of diverse socio-economic status in all sister city activities.

Sister Cities International promotes and supports new sister city partnerships in all corners of the globe, reaching areas traditionally underserved by other community development organizations. As international cooperation gains importance, city-to-city programs become increasingly significant to overall global development.

Sister Cities International
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 850
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-347-8630 • Fax: 202-393-6524
e-mail: info@sister-cities.org • Website: www.sister-cities.org