



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 2,000 U.S. communities partnered with 136 countries on six continents. 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.

Our Programs

Sister Cities International's programs are developed around three key areas: the Global Citizen Initiative, the Sustainable Communities Initiative and the Muslim World Partnership Initiative.

Annual Conference & Youth Leadership Conference

Each year, Sister Cities International hosts government officials, community leaders and youth from around the globe to advance the goal of world peace through citizen diplomacy. The 2011 Annual Conference will be held March 2–5 in Washington, DC. The Youth Leadership Conference will be held July 19–23 in Eugene, Oregon.

Young Artists and Authors Showcase

The Young Artists and Authors Showcases encourages youth ages 13–18 to express their vision of the sister city mission through original works of art and composition. The 2010 theme is “Your World.” This program is currently funded by the Carvey Family.

Sister Schools

The Sister Schools program links youth in collaborative projects through a classroom, school or after-school activity. Students can engage in letter, video, or webcast exchange, leadership-building projects, fund-raising campaigns or projects tailored to their interests.

Student Exchange Partnership

Sister Cities International offers youth exchange opportunities to our members. Through this partnership with American Cultural Exchange Service (ACES), sister city members can nominate and sponsor high school students from their sister city to study in the U.S. for a semester or a school year. The students live with host families and participate in local activities.

September Concert

Sister Cities International partners with The September Concert Foundation to sponsor a series of free musical performances held in sister cities around the world on September 11 of every

year. The concerts help to bring people of all nations together—reaffirming our hopes for world peace and celebrating our lives and universal humanity.

Africa Urban Poverty Alleviation Program

In 2009, Sister Cities International launched the Africa Urban Poverty Alleviation Program, a three-year project to alleviate poverty in 25 African cities through water, sanitation and health initiatives led by U.S. and African sister city programs. U.S. sister cities will collaborate with their African counterparts to identify and address the most critical problems in these sectors, which form barriers to sustained development in urban areas. This project is funded by a \$7.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Innovation in Sustainable Development

With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, Sister Cities International added an energy category to its Annual Awards program. In 2009, three exemplary sister cities programs in Duluth, Minnesota; Boulder, Colorado; and Chicago received the award for innovations in energy technology.

Safe Drinking Water Initiative

In 2008, Sister Cities International engaged member cities to pilot the Safe Drinking Water Initiative (SDWI). SDWI was created with the goal of distributing approximately 300,000 packets of P&G's PUR through sister city networks in Ethiopia and Nigeria, purifying more than 3 million liters of water.

Partnership & Peace Tours

Partnership & Peace Tours are developed for members and friends who want to experience a region or country with a sister city program focus. The travel program delegation enjoys networking, learning about the needs of sister city communities through joint activities, discussions about pursuing the cause of peace, and access to unique locales and events unavailable to the average visitor. Previous trip destinations include Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Morocco, and South Africa.

Muslim World Partnership Initiative

Since 2001, Sister Cities International has maintained a focus on increasing the number of partnerships with cities in predominately Muslim countries. Sister Cities International aims to establish a proactive recruiting program to double the number of partnerships and increase media and member awareness of Muslim Partnership Initiative success stories.

Muslim Youth Programs

The Youth Exchange & Study and the Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange are two examples of how sister cities have engaged youth from countries with significant Muslim populations to learn about leadership and cultural understanding.

Open World Program

Sister Cities International and World Serves of La Crosse, Inc., partner to administer the Open World Program. Since 2002, U.S. sister city communities have hosted nearly 400 leaders from Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Uzbekistan to learn more about accountability, transparency and citizen participation in government. The Open World Program is sponsored by the Open World Center, which is affiliated with the U.S. Library of Congress.

Member Benefits

- Member Directory
- Community Through Social Media tools
- Cities Seeking Cities Database
- Tool kits
- Visa resources
- Volunteer opportunities
- Staff assistance and expertise

Visit www.sister-cities.org to learn more or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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