

International Relations Policy

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International Relations Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Wellington City Council's International Relations Policy is to establish links with the world in order to contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of the city.

International competitiveness is a key component in realising the Council's Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital vision. Links with the rest of the world are essential to achieving this vision. The Council is committed to attracting business, talented jobs and talented people, and workforce development. Through its international relations Council can facilitate the connecting of community organisations and businesses that have mutual interests, thereby contributing to these objectives.

As the capital city, Wellington is the political centre of New Zealand. It is the home to many international organisations and there is continual interaction between local and global environments. This happens regardless of the Wellington City Council involvement. However, the presence of these institutions allows the Wellington City Council ready access to influential individuals and agencies.

BENEFITS

Effective international relations contribute significantly to the city in all of the following areas:

- the economy
- the community
- the arts
- providing business with access to new markets
- developing offshore contacts and networks
- raising the profile of Wellington internationally
- promoting Wellington as an attractive city for migration, investment, and to live and do business
- promoting the city as a tourism destination
- education
- sports.

MECHANISMS

The Wellington City Council can use a variety of mechanisms to ensure effective international relations. Mechanisms include:

- engaging in city-to-city relationships
- hosting international delegations
- visiting foreign cities and attending international forums
- promoting the city as a destination for international investment, tourism, trade, and migration
- marketing education services to foreign fee-paying students
- negotiating memorandums of economic understanding
- supporting community groups involved in international cultural, sporting, and educational exchanges.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

- **Strategic focus** – international relations will support the Council’s strategic vision and goals
- **Economic development** – international relations will focus on realising opportunities for growing and developing the city’s, and the regions, economy
- **Sense of place** – international relations will add to our sense of place: the political, arts and culture centre of New Zealand; and to the vitality and diversity of the city
- **Consistency with Government foreign policy** – Council’s International Relations Policy will be consistent with the Government’s foreign policy
- **Productive relationships** – the Council will have a portfolio of city-to-city relationships which provide positive tangible results for the city
- **Fostering linkages** – international relations will provide the community and business with opportunities to connect with international cities
- **Enhancing understanding** – international relations will create opportunities for Wellingtonians to experience, explore and understand other cultures, and will enhance goodwill and understanding
- **Promotion of the city** – international relations will promote Wellington on the international stage as an excellent place to live, do business, and visit.

CITY-TO-CITY RELATIONSHIPS

City-to-city relationships are an important component of Council's international relations policy.

There are five categories of city-to-city relationships: sister city relationships, historical sister city relationships, friendly city relationships, community partnerships, and international partnerships. The table below provides a description of these relationships.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Sister city	A formal, long term relationship based on diverse linkages between the two cities including cultural, educational and business links. Require a high degree of commitment (including financial commitment) on both sides, and active involvement of a community committee.
Historical sister city	Relationship based on historical or ceremonial links.
Friendly city	Less formal and lower profile relationship than a sister city relationship. Likely to be a long term relationship, but the level of community support and involvement is not sufficiently high to warrant a full sister city relationship.
Community partnership	A relationship based on strong community linkages with another country, region and city.
International partnership	A time-bound relationship which is based on a specific project or initiative in which the city shares a significant interest with Wellington.

Principles defining the portfolio of city-to-city relationships

The principles that define the portfolio of city-to-city relationships are:

- City-to-city relationships will be formed with cities that present Wellington with opportunity for achieving its international relations objectives
- The Council may have any number of international partnerships per country, but will have no more than one sister city and one friendly city relationship per country
- The number of historical sister cities will not be increased.

Process and criteria for considering potential partners

Potential international partners are identified through two main routes: officers proactively identifying cities that present Wellington with good opportunities; and cities expressing an interest in partnering with Wellington.

Decisions to enter into sister city relationships, friendly city relationships, and community partnerships are made by Council. Decisions to enter into international partnerships are made by officers.

The following criteria will be considered when making decisions on whether to enter into a formal city-to-city relationship.

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Sister city</i>	<i>Friendly city</i>	<i>Community partnership</i>	<i>International partnership</i>
<i>Fit with strategic vision and direction</i>	✓	✓		✓
<i>Consistency with Government foreign policy</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Compatibility with sense of place</i>	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Opportunity for economic benefits</i>	✓	✓		✓
<i>Opportunity for non-economic benefits</i>	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Community support and connection</i>	✓		✓	

Note that historical sister cities are not included in this framework, given the policy not enter further historical sister city relationships.

Review of city-to-city relationships

City-to-city relationships established after August 2004 will be reviewed on an annual basis. The purpose of the review will be to ensure the relationship is realising the desired outcomes, agreed to for the relationship. The annual review will also enable changing priorities and opportunities to be reflected in the relationship, and will also keep the relationships refreshed and focussed on creating benefits for both cities.

If the relationship is not achieving the desired outcomes, each party will have the opportunity to terminate the relationship. The criteria on which the annual review will be based will be negotiated at the start of the relationship, and will then be reviewed annually. The criteria will vary – reflecting the unique nature of each relationship.

HOSTING INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS

Wellington will host selected international delegations, as resources allow. The cities to be hosted will be selected by officers, on the basis of the objectives of the International Relations Policy, and the criteria for assessing potential international partners.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Council will seek to achieve these objectives through a variety of programmes and partnerships. As already indicated in the policy objectives, Wellington City Council believes in fostering partnerships with other Wellington organisations. The Council's efforts should be co-ordinated and focused. This will be achieved through having clear programmes with specific and measurable objectives. Wherever possible, linked cities and our own community will be encouraged to jointly commit to specific roles and tasks identified as necessary to achieve those objectives. This will take the form of both formal and informal partnerships with community groups, the private sector, central government, and other organisations with international interests.

MONITORING

The International Relations Policy will be reviewed in three years to assess that its objectives are being achieved and that the mechanisms are proving the desired outcomes. Feedback will also be sought from community groups and the business community. At this point there is no formal monitoring plan.