



Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia

Sister City FAQs

Which cities are our Sister Cities?

Washington, DC has signed relationships with 14 cities around the world. They are: Bangkok, Dakar, Beijing, Brussels, Tshwane (Pretoria), Paris, Athens, Seoul, Accra, Sunderland, Rome, Ankara, Brasilia, and Addis Ababa. You can read the agreements on our website at www.os.dc.gov.

What is the role of the Steering Committee?

Steering Committees for the Sister-City relationships serve as a way to involve District residents in the city's international relationships. Steering Committee members are volunteers who help to foster the relationships between our Sister City partners through their work on specific projects.

Who can join a Steering Committee?

Steering committees are open to all members of the community, and we would like all committees to include DC residents, business owners, and former residents of the proposed sister city. There is no requirement that committee members have the national background of the city, nor that they speak the language spoken in our sister cities. We encourage all those interested to participate, whether young, older, retired, working, familiar with the foreign culture, or just interested in learning about the culture.

How are the relationships funded?

The short answer is: they are not funded at all. However, the District has a mechanism through which we can accept donations for special projects. The Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (www.opgs.dc.gov) must review all requests to solicit for donations before any ask is made. The Office of the Secretary will help coordinate this process for steering committees.

Can the Steering Committee be a nonprofit organization?

The District of Columbia government cannot use a free-standing nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organization to manage our sister city relationships. We do have mechanisms through which nonprofits can participate in the relationship, but the committee itself cannot be a separate organization.

How do I join a Steering Committee?

Thanks for your interest! All you have to do is let us know that you are interested in participating, and you're in. Please call the Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia at 202-727-6306, or e-mail us at secretary@dc.gov. Let us know which city you are interested in, and we will add you to our contact list.