

SSCC Q&A

Does Madison have a Sister City Program?

In 1998 the City of Madison established a Sister City Program. Current Sister City Programs are; Arcatao, El Salvador (1986), Bahir Dar, Ethiopia (2018), Camaguey, Cuba (1994), Freiburg, Germany (1988), Kanifing, The Gambia (2016), Mantova, Italy (2001), Obihiro, Japan (2003), Tepatitlan, Mexico (2012) and Vilnius, Lithuania (1988).

What is the purpose of a Sister City Program?

In accordance with City of Madison Resolution 44907 in 1998, "Madison has established and supports Sister City relationships in the belief that person-to-person ties are the strongest and to work for peace and better understanding of all cultures. Sister City relationships are created to develop lasting friendships on the human level and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and views".

What are the guidelines for starting a Sister City Program?

There shall exist, areas of mutual interest and involvement with the prospective city in the areas of culture, business, technology, education, agriculture, sports or humanitarian goals.

There should be evidence of strong, diverse, local community support for the prospective Sister City relationship in order to assure an adequate financial base and ongoing interest in exchanges.

There should be an active local organization to support and commit to the creation of a committee and its work.

How does one apply to become a Sister City?

In 2011, the City of Madison Sister City Coordinating Committee was established with the primary purpose to coordinate Sister City activities. The committee was also charged with reviewing applications of proposed Sister City Relationships and passing their recommendations onto the City Council for action.

The Madison Committee, prior to consideration of the proposed sister city, shall meet the following conditions:

Shall have a formal structure with officers and appropriate subcommittees

Shall submit to the Sister City Coordinating Committee a work plan including activities and goals, accompanying the proposed resolution requesting an official Sister City relationship, showing how the activities of the committee will further the objectives of the Sister City Program for the next 12 months, as well as a report on all activities the committee has been involved in during the previous 12 months

Shall present to the Sister City Coordinating Committee, a budget for the first year's activities following the request for a formal affiliation, showing the funds available to meet the budget

requirements and indicating how the committee plans to fund its activities in the future There shall be a counterpart organization in the prospective sister city, with which, the Madison Committee has corresponded and obtained a written agreement concerning affiliation; or the Madison committee must have obtained a positive written indication from the government of the foreign city that a sister city relationship would be welcome within a period of two years following approval of the Madison City Council of the Sister City relationship.

Shall apply for 501©3 status from the Internal Revenue Service or become fiscally sponsored by an established non-profit organization within two years from the passing of the resolution.

What are the responsibilities of a recognized Sister City Program?

Submit to the Sister City Coordinating Committee annual work plans/activities. As part of annual plan, provide specific plans for citizen participation in committee planning and trips

Make arrangements for all trips, activities, events, ceremonies, documents and gift selection and assume responsibility for related expenses and payments

Take steps to achieve formal status as tax exempt organization (IRS 501©3 designation) within a two-year period following approval of the Madison City Council of the Sister City Relationship. Tax exempt status must be maintained as long as the sister city relationship is determined to be active by the Sister City Coordinating Committee.

Clear all requests for functions involving Mayoral, members of the City Council or City Staff appearances with the Mayor's Office.