



**GEORGES
RIVER
COUNCIL**

SISTER CITY POLICY

July 2017

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Dates	Policy approved 03/07//2017 This policy is effective upon its approval. Policy is due for review July 2021
Approved by	Council Meeting 03/07/2017 Council Resolution CCL136-17
Exhibition Period	4 May to 31 May 2017
Policy Owner	Manager Community and Cultural Development, Community and Culture
Related Documents	Georges River Council Mayor and Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy (in development) Georges River Council Code of Conduct (in development)
References & Legislation	<i>Sister Cities and International Alliances Research Paper</i> Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government 2015
Document Identifier	Policy #: Pol-015.01 Doc #: D17/117832
Breaches of Policy	Breaches of any policy will be dealt with and responded to in accordance with adopted codes and/or relevant legislations.
Privacy	All documents and information obtained in relation to the implementation of this policy will be kept in accordance with the NSW State Records Act 1998, Georges River Council's Corporate Records Policy and adopted internal procedures.

PURPOSE

Council's Sister City Policy guides the formation and maintenance of Sister City relationships between Council and other cities, both international and within Australia.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to the formation and maintenance of all Sister City relationships whether initiated by Councillors, staff of Council or the Georges River community.

The Policy applies to all Councillors, staff of Council and community members carrying out their responsibilities as part of a Georges River Council Sister City relationship.

The Policy does not preclude Council from entering cooperative relationships with other metropolitan Councils, as required.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
<i>Community</i>	A term which encompasses both the entire body of constituents in the Council local government area or Sister City, and individual groups (whether they be cultural, sporting, industry or other) within the local government area or Sister City.
<i>Council</i>	Georges River Council
<i>Sister City</i>	A formally recognised mutually beneficial relationship between Council and another international or Australian city.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy has been developed to ensure Council forms Sister City relationships which are meaningful, beneficial and accountable to the Georges River community.

1. Principles of Sister City Relationships

The following Principles provide the criteria for the establishment, maintenance and review of Sister City relationships.

1.1. Council's Sister City Relationships must meet all of the following criteria:

- a) are between cities which share historic, cultural, social, economic or geographic similarities or synergies;
- b) clearly demonstrate a meaningful reciprocal relationship or activity built on mutual respect, understanding and a commitment to shared objectives;

- c) are purposeful and established with clear motives, obligations, objectives and outcomes;
- d) show that the communities of both cities have a demonstrated commitment to, and interest in, forming and maintaining the relationship; and
- e) align with the Community Strategic Plan.

2. Establishment of Sister City

2.1. A proposal to establish a Sister City, whether from the Georges River community or a potential Sister City, must be put forward to the General Manager with a rationale outlining the purpose of the relationship and how the relationship addresses the Principles of Sister City Relationships.

2.2. An interest or pre-existing relationship of a Councillor or Council staff with the proposed city must be declared. The proposal will be considered if any conflicts of interest are overcome.

2.3. In evaluating the proposal, the General Manager will consider:

- a) how the proposed Sister City relationship aligns to the Principles;
- b) the purpose of the relationship; and
- c) the relevance and value it has to the Georges River community.

2.4. The proposal will also be considered in relation to:

- a) Australian Federal and NSW government international programs, policies or relationships;
- b) the nature and scope of existing Council Sister City relationships; and
- c) Council's capacity to support and resource the proposed relationship.

2.5. The General Manager will develop an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) between Georges River Council and the proposed Sister City based on the details of the relationship and the Principles of Sister City Relationships.

2.6. If approved by the General Manager, the new Sister City relationship must be formally adopted at a Council meeting.

3. Relationship Management

3.1. The Principles are central to a Georges River Council Sister City relationship

3.2. Council acknowledges that delegations and face to face contact are only one aspect of maintaining a Sister City relationship.

3.3. A Sister City Relationship must:

- a) have Council support and acknowledge the primary role of the Mayor;
- b) be fully accountable to the *Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy*, (currently called *Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to the Mayor and Councillors Policy adopted May 2016*) former Hurstville City Council and Kogarah City Council *Gifts and Benefits Policies*, and the *Code of Conduct*;
- c) demonstrate measurable ongoing Council and community activity, relevance and benefits throughout the relationship;
- d) be adaptable to meet changing community needs
- e) be reviewed and can be exited if Council and community outcomes are not demonstrated; and
- f) be established on a fixed term (of five years) with renewal dependent on successful evaluation.

4. Budget and Expenses

4.1. The budget and approved expenses are managed in accordance to this Policy and the Draft Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy.

5. Gifts

5.1. The receiving of gifts will be in accordance with the Gifts and Benefits Policy as amended from time to time.

6. Evaluation and Review

6.1. A robust review by the General Manager will be undertaken at the end of the Sister City term (of five years or as defined in the Memorandum of Understanding) in which the motives, obligations, objectives and outcomes stated at establishment are evaluated.

6.2. A review of the relationship may also be undertaken mid-term if:

- a) the relationship appears to have stalled or there are no demonstrable community outcomes of the relationship
- b) the Sister City Relationship Principles are not met or are breached.

6.3. The outcomes of the review will determine whether the Sister City relationship continues for another term, or is exited.

6.4. A Sister City relationship may be successfully evaluated each fixed term and continue over many years.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility
<i>General Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept proposals for Sister City relationships • Consider proposals as outlined in Item 2. Establishment of Sister City in light of the Principles of Sister City Relationships • Approve if appropriate and prepare a Memorandum of Understanding based on the details of the relationship for Council approval • Direct appropriate Council staff to undertake the activities to achieve the agreed purpose of the relationship • Prepare and approve budget and expenses for Sister City relationships to achieve the agreed purpose, including the obligations, objectives and outcomes • Undertake an evaluation of Sister City Relationship as outlined in the policy after the prescribed period (usually five years) and recommend whether the relationship be renewed or exited.
<i>Mayor and Councillors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Sister City relationships which are adopted by Council • Fulfil civic responsibilities and relationships to maintain the Sister City relationship • Be accountable to related policies including Georges River Council Code of Conduct (in development at time of adoption) and Georges River Council Mayor and Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy (in development at time of adoption).
<i>Council Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the obligations, objectives and outcomes of Sister City relationships as directed by the General Manager and outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding
<i>Community Organisations initiating a Sister City relationship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a proposal to Council's General Manager with a rationale outlining the purpose of the relationship and how the relationship addresses the Principles of Sister City Relationships. • Be familiar with the Sister City Policy and use this as a guide in the establishment, maintenance and evaluation of the Sister City relationship • Undertake the required activities to achieve the agreed purpose and details of the Sister City relationship as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Amendment Details	Policy Owner	Period Active
1.0	New Georges River Council Sister City Policy	Manager Community and Cultural Development	03/07/2017