

## General Policy

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP POLICY**

- Intent** This policy establishes Council's formal position and policy framework with regards to International Relationships.
- Scope** To guide the decision making in establishing and maintaining international relationships.
- Context** This policy provides an overarching framework and is to be read in conjunction with the following General Policies :
- Sister Cities Management (1:06:21),
  - Council's Role in Regional Economic Development (1:05:02),
  - Entertainment and Hospitality Expenditure (1:02:43),
  - Arts and Culture (1:06:23),
  - Corporate Sustainability (1:04:01),
  - Staff Exchange and Secondments (1:02:51);
  - Conference Attendance Councillors (1:02:02) and
  - Investment Attraction Interim (1:05:11).

**Objectives**

International Relationships can generate considerable benefits for Council and the community. These benefits include access to knowledge, stimulus of innovation and creativity and opportunities in establishing long term economic, social, technological and cultural partnerships. Council intends to incorporate these benefits in its overall service delivery program and as such encourages and supports these relationships. The primary focus of International Relationships is to be congruent with Councils strategic priorities and in compliance with current legislation.

The Local Government Act 2009 provides the legislative framework governing international relationships :

s.9 Powers of local governments generally

(1) *A local government has the power to do anything that is necessary or convenient for the good rule and local government of its local government area.*

(2) *However, a local government can only do something that the State can validly do.*

(3) *When exercising a power, a local government may take account of Aboriginal tradition and Island custom.*

(4) *A local government may exercise its powers—*

(a) *inside the local government area; or*

(b) *outside the local government area (including outside Queensland)—*

(i) *with the written approval of the Minister; or*

(ii) *as provided in section 10(5).*

(5) *When a local government is exercising a power in a place that is outside its local government area, the local government has the same jurisdiction in the place as if the place were inside its local government area.*

**Definitions**

International relationships include international activities occurring within the areas of Sister Cities management, economic development initiatives, professional development, management of international events and international aid projects.

Specifically the roles and responsibilities of these activities are categorised below:

1. Sister Cities management.  
Sister City relationships affiliate Cairns with cities in other countries where such relationships have a significant positive influence on the communities involved and as such provides a forum for economic, social, technological and cultural interchange.  
While the Office of the Mayor is a key point of contact for protocol purposes, the Personal Assistant to the General Manager, Community Sport and Cultural Services is the primary resource for coordinating the activities of the Sister Cities Advisory Committee. This is described in General Policy 1:06:21 (Sister Cities Management) and further detailed in Administrative Instruction, Inbound National and International Delegations;
2. International economic development initiatives  
Local economic prosperity is contingent upon the export capacity of local business and industry. The Cairns economy is significantly export focused and international relationships provide the opportunities to foster and enhance this capacity
  - a. Outbound trade missions. These visits are jointly coordinated by the Office of the Mayor and the Economic Development and Innovation Branch and are preferably conducted in conjunction with external partner agencies such as State and Federal Government agencies and Tourism Tropical North Queensland. These arrangements are managed in line with existing operational reporting arrangements and responsibilities;
  - b. Inbound delegations – Business Development. The roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of these delegation visits are described in Administrative Instruction, Inbound National and International Delegations;
  - c. Inbound international events and activities (e.g. movie productions, international sport events). These are managed in line with existing operational reporting arrangements and responsibilities.
3. Professional development.  
Professional development refers to the acquisition and sharing of skills, professional profiling, best practice experiences and network development of Councillors and staff through
  - a. Outbound Councillor and staff engagements.  
Attendance at international conferences by Councillors is covered in General Policy 1:02:02;  
Staff exchanges and international secondments are covered in General Policy 1:02:51;  
Other staff travel of a professional development nature is managed in line with existing operational reporting arrangements and responsibilities;
  - b. Inbound delegations – knowledge seeking. The roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of these delegation visits are described in Administrative Instruction, Inbound National and International delegations.
4. International Aid projects.  
Council may provide technical support to a local authority in a developing country, participate in disaster relief efforts or form a capacity building relationship with a local government partner in another country.  
  
These activities are generally externally funded and governed under external programs such as the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme administered by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. Projects and activities are managed in line with existing operational reporting arrangements and responsibilities.

**Criteria** Council will be proactive in prospecting for new relationships with a strong focus on economic development outcomes, as well as being responsive to approaches received. Existing partnerships will be used to leverage new and extended opportunities for Council. Relationships will only be entered into if they are sustainable over the agreed period. Resource commitment is crucial in ensuring sustainability.

Requests for international relationship engagements will be assessed in line with the roles and responsibilities outlined above on the basis of congruence with:

- related General Policies. These are listed in the Context section of this policy;
- related Corporate objectives as described in Council's current Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Operational Plans;
- related current strategic planning including :
  - Cairns Economic Development and Innovation Strategy 2011-2014;
  - Tropical North Queensland Regional Economic Plan 2011-2031;
  - Cultural Plan 2009 – 2014;
  - Tropical North Queensland's Events strategy 2010 -2015;
  - Cairns Regional Council Events Strategy 2012 – 2015;
  - Community Development Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016;

Council's Sustainability Scorecard will be used where necessary to aid in any assessment.

Review periods will be incorporated into any new relationship, with an allowance to exit the relationship should it no longer meet its objectives.



**This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.**

**General Manager Responsible for Review      Human Resources and Organisational Change**

**ADOPTED: 7/3/2012  
DUE FOR REVISION: 7/3/2016  
REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:**