

(Draft) International Relations Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of Wellington City Council's International Relations Policy is to enhance Wellington's reputation as an attractive city for migrants, a great place to invest and do business. While the Council's international relations policy has traditionally focused on cultural ties and tourism, this policy puts more emphasis on economic development.

2. Policy Objectives

- *Strategic focus:* support the Council's strategic vision – Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital.
- *Economic development:* pursue new city-to-city relationships that offer economic opportunities.
- *Productive relationships:* build on existing city-to-city relationships to develop economic partnerships and projects.
- *Foster linkages:* provide local businesses with access to new markets and networks.
- *Promotion of the city:* raise the profile of Wellington internationally as an attractive city and a great place to work, invest, do business, learn and live.
- *Identity:* Enhance Wellington's character and prosperity through well planned and managed relationships, partnerships and activities.

3. Principles

1. All international relationships must fit with the Council's strategic vision: *Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital*.
2. Any new economic partnerships or projects must fit with the common priorities and objectives as agreed between the Council and its international relations stakeholders (i.e. local business, tourism, education and political and diplomatic leaders).
3. New international relationships should be assessed on their potential to provide demonstrable social and economic benefits for Wellington.
4. Decisions on allocating the Council's limited international relations resources must be made with confidence that the ratepayer derives sufficient social, cultural or economic value to justify Council engagement.

4. Benefits

International relationships contribute to Wellington's:

Economy – access to markets, commercial opportunities, international investment in Wellington and the attraction of skilled migrants and international students and tourists all contribute to the city's economic prosperity.

Community and culture – people that visit and settle in Wellington support the vision for a creative, knowledge-based city and contribute to the capital's reputation for being diverse and open.

5. Policy outline

The Wellington City Council can use a variety of mechanisms to ensure effective international relations. The use of these will be guided by the following:

5.1 Focus international relations resources where Council has a distinct role and can make a difference

International relations activities will focus on opportunities and initiatives where the Council does not displace other actors and is best placed to be a facilitator, political or community leader. Decisions on allocating the Council's international relations resources must be made with confidence that the ratepayer derives sufficient social, cultural or economic value to justify Council engagement (partly demonstrated by assessment of actual or likely stakeholder participation, engagement and resource commitment).

5.2 Encourage local, regional, national and international collaboration

A key principle underlying the policy is partnering with local, regional, national and international organisations, recognising that the Council cannot act alone in achieving the aims. Significant skills and resources exist in other agencies (e.g. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise). Just as it is important for Council to focus effort on where it adds most value, it is important to ensure Council continues to be well linked in to key national agencies and to diplomatic missions, and to ensure our stakeholders can fully capitalise on the advantages of being the nation's capital.

Specifically, the Council will leverage its relationships and agreements with institutions (ie WOW) to promote Wellington internationally.

5.3 Council and stakeholder perspectives

There is a wide range of stakeholders who may participate in developing and maintaining Wellington's international relations. Stakeholder perspectives can inform Council's planning by helping to:

- Identify and prioritise opportunities
- Establish the level of stakeholder commitment to supporting International Relations activities. (Stakeholder commitment to engage directly in supporting international relations activities provides a useful proxy for stakeholder assessments of the value of specific initiatives.)

The following table identifies the main categories of stakeholder, their possible roles and interests, and Council's potential roles in respect of each category. This is not a complete list and other key stakeholders may emerge over time. Council will engage with stakeholders to inform forward planning of international relations activities:

Categories of stakeholder	Council's potential role(s)
Central and local government agencies.	Support local business – government interface. Ensure synergies between council and national government priorities. Leadership role as capital city. Collaboration with other Wellington region local authorities.
Local/ regional tourism, education and economic development agencies.	Cooperate to promote local and regional tourism, education and business opportunities.

Wellington businesses, business organisations.	Brokering, facilitation, political representation.
Individuals (visitors, overseas students in Wellington, Kiwi Expats Abroad)	Ensuring visitors/ students engage and positively identify with Wellington. Potentially facilitating ambassador role through easy access to relevant information material on Wellington.

5.4 City-to-city relationships

The purpose of city-to-city relationships is to foster cultural, historical, educational, sporting and economic links. Wellington City Council's city-to-city relationships fall into four sub-categories:

- *Sister city*: a formal, long-term relationship based on diverse linkages between the two cities including cultural, educational and business links. Sister city relationships require a high degree of 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.
- *International social, cultural or sporting partnership*: A time-bound relationship which is based on a specific non-economic project or initiative in which the city shares a significant interest with Wellington.

5.5 City-to-city economic development partnerships and projects

The purpose of economic development partnerships and projects is to facilitate investment in either ideas or capital in Wellington, to assist in the development of business and promotional opportunities for Wellington businesses in overseas countries, to promote people exchange (visitors, temporary and permanent migrants, and students) and to assist in the transfer of technical expertise and knowledge.

These would normally be a time-bound relationship which is based on economic development objectives in which the city shares a significant interest with Wellington. This category could include exchanges of technology and expertise (eg A city like Melbourne may not have sufficient cultural difference to Wellington to justify investment in improving cultural understanding, but may have sufficient common interest (eg earthquake technology) or common areas of business focus (eg leading edge IT) to justify an economic development partnership.

5.6 Leading, hosting and participating in international delegations

Council supports and participates in both inward and outward delegations with a wide range of business, political, educational and cultural purposes. Support for, or initiation of, delegations will be determined by an assessment of their fit with this policy.

It is acknowledged that official approaches by sending countries will be appropriately supported as part of generic hosting obligations.

6. Other mechanisms

The international relations policy has connections with other strategies and council activities including.

6.1 Tourism promotion, attractions and events

The Council funds Positively Wellington tourism, major and iconic events and support facilities that draw visitors to the city.

6.2 An integrated approach to attracting and retaining talent

Destination Wellington is a core component of the Economic Development Strategy that recognises the need to extend marketing beyond tourism. The initiative aims to target attraction of talent, businesses and investment to promote Wellington as the business capital of New Zealand. The Council is working with Grow Wellington and Positively Wellington Tourism on this.

6.3 Cultural and settlement activities

The Council's community, recreational and cultural activities provide opportunities for people to engage and feel connected to the city.

7. Monitoring and review

Monitoring will include:

- committee report backs on the outcomes of international delegations.
- quarterly and annual reporting on initiatives and relationships relative to that period.

The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.