

Policy

Title: International Relations

Category: Corporate Governance

Date Adopted: 28 August 2023

1. Scope

As the capital city of Tasmania, City of Hobart’s international relations activities include:

- Welcoming visiting diplomats, delegations and officials to the City
- Participating in Trade and Investment Missions
- Representing the City at international conferences and forums
- Adopting international policies, principles and commitments
- Members of international organisations such as Mayors of Peace
- Sister city and friendship city relationships and international partnerships
- Leading Antarctic Gateway City

2. Policy aims

With this policy we aim to:

Principal aims	Strategic aims
Be an advocate for international peace and goodwill.	Future-proof Hobart’s position as a leading Antarctic Gateway.
Enrich the City with a broader understanding of other nations, their traditions, customs and cultures.	Establish a strong foundation for trade and inbound investment attraction through leveraging our recognised strengths and competitive advantages.



Show leadership in adopting leading international policies and commitments, especially around climate change.	Raise the profile of Hobart as a premier visitor and conference destination.
Show our support for policy positions that align to the national interest.	Exchange knowledge, skills and resources which adds to the vibrancy and future prosperity of the city.
	Progress specific international relations objectives set out within City of Hobart strategies and plans.
	Facilitate international engagement opportunities that benefit Greater Hobart.

3. Strategic alignment

The City of Hobart's *Capital City Strategic Plan 2019 – 2029* sets out several specific priorities for international relations, including:

- 1.1.3 Share knowledge with and learn from other cities that have maintained or built a strong sense of place in the face of economic, environmental, social or other pressures.
- 4.3.7 Support the City's existing international relationships and respond to new opportunities, in line with the community vision.
- 4.3.8 Develop greater community involvement in international relations programs.
- 6.2.6 Learn from and contribute to global best practices on the natural environment.
- 8.2.4 Position the city regionally, nationally and internationally to achieve positive outcomes.

4. International Engagement Guidelines

Both elected members and City Officers have a role to play in building, maintaining and growing our international relationships.

When engaging with representatives from international governments, organisations, institutes and businesses, all City of Hobart representatives are to:



- Be an Ambassador for the City
- Be welcoming to all
- Show leadership as a Capital City
- Advocate the strengths of our City
- Be open to sharing and learning opportunities

Engagement in any international relations activity, be it welcoming a diplomat, participating in a Trade and Investment Mission or an international conference or forum is to be prioritised and participated in based on the City's international policy aims.

Elected members and Officers engaging in these activities should always look to understand the cultural considerations, geo-political issues, local linkages and opportunities for City to support their involvement.

Further, any international relations activities that require formalising a relationship (i.e. through signing an agreement) will be subject to the below 'International Partnerships Framework'.

5. International Partnerships Framework

City of Hobart has two international relationship models from which it can build a formal relationship with an international partner, including city-level governments.

Model 1 – Strategic Partnership

- All of City of Hobart's international relationships will start out as Strategic Partnership.
- Strategic Partnerships can be multilateral or bilateral – meaning there can be more than one party involved in the partnership.
- Strategic partnerships will have an agreed timeframe of up to three years.
- They will have a defined focus, with a Forward Plan of activities developed to meet a series of short-term goals i.e. delivery of a project.
- A range of instruments can be used to set up this type of relationship, for example Friendship Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, Strategic Partnership Agreement or Letter of Intent.
- Instruments are to be signed by representatives from all parties.
- The City is open to having multiple Strategic Partnerships within the same country.
- A Strategic Partnership with a city-level government can be upgraded to Sister City Relationship either at the conclusion of the partnership, or at a minimum, after two years if there is a desire and support to do so, and if the relationship has met all of its intended objectives.



Model 2 - Sister City Relationship

- Sister City Relationships are bilateral relationships between two cities.
- Sister City Relationships are highly symbolic and to build on the strong connections built having participated in a highly successful Strategic Partnership.
- Building on these connections, Sister City Relationships will be supported by the community through either proactive Community Associations or Council-led Sister City Committees.
- Sister City Relationships will have a broad focus and have a long-term commitment of ten years.
- Activities to support these relationships are to be agreed at a joint committee meeting every two years.
- City of Hobart will only consider one Sister City Relationship per country.

A 'Pathway for establishing partnerships' has been developed to support investigating, negotiating, establishing and managing international partnerships as well as providing a mechanism for reviewing the City's existing relationships and bringing them into line with this policy.

6. Pathway to establishing partnerships

Stage 1: Establishing mutual interest between cities

- This process will be initiated by either an international partner, stakeholder, City Officers or elected members identifying an opportunity for a partnership to be explored.
- The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will be notified that the City wishes to investigate forming a partnership and asked to provide support for Officers from the Smart Economy Unit to engage in discussions with the potential partner city to understand the mutual interest and inform the development of a business case.
- In presenting a request to ELT for endorsement, a high-level brief will be provided detailing how the potential partnership came about, key insights into the potential partner city and commentary on potential opportunities and alignment to policy aims.

Stage 2: Developing a business case for the partnership

- Once endorsed by ELT, a business case is to be prepared by the City Officer responsible for International Relations to inform Council decision making.



- The business case is to be prepared using the 'Business Case for Establishing an International Partnership' template and should include:
 - Profile of the potential partner/s including key demographics, economic profile, geo-politics
 - Assessment against essential and non-essential criteria
 - Assessment of likelihood to meet policy aims and expected outcomes
 - Overall score
 - Identified risks and mitigation
 - Recommendation to Council including partnership type, timeframe, estimated budget

Stage 3: Deciding to enter partnership

- Based on the information provided in the business case, it is the role of City of Hobart's elected members to decide whether to enter an international relationship.
- If agreed, the Lord Mayor will write to the other party to advise of the outcome and look to progress to discussions.

Stage 4: Developing partnership agreement

- Once approved, City of Hobart will work with the partner/s to confirm a Forward Plan that will lead to achieving the objectives of the partnership.
- Activities included in the Forward Plan may include but are not limited to:
 - inbound or outbound delegations, including participating in Government-led Trade and Investment Missions
 - committees/ meetings
 - localised events or activations
 - exchanges of people, knowledge or resources
 - writing letters of support
- The Forward Plan will form the basis for the agreement, which once finalised will be signed by all parties.
- A copy of the signed agreement is to be submitted to the Australian Government's *Foreign Arrangements Scheme*, if partnership involves a foreign Government.

Stage 5: Regularly reporting on activities and reviewing outcomes of partnership

- Half yearly updates on the activities which have been undertaken to support the partnership are to be provided to Council to ensure they are continuing to meet the agreed objectives.



- Partnerships may be dissolved upon agreement of all parties or if City of Hobart determines the partnership is unable to meet its objectives, no longer aligns to our policy aims or is unable to be resourced.
- If this is the case, the Lord Mayor will write to the relevant partner/s advising of Council's decision.

Stage 6: Progressing to Sister City Relationship

- A Strategic Partnership can transition to a Sister City Relationship either at the conclusion of the partnership, or at a minimum, after two years if there is a desire and support to do so, and if the relationship has met all its intended objectives.
- Stages 2-5 of the 'Pathway for establishing partnerships' are to be revisited to support Council determine whether to progress to a Sister City Relationship.
- The business case should detail fit with the Sister City Relationship model and the long-term benefits and provided to Council for decision.
- The Sister City Agreement itself, will be high-level and symbolic and a copy must be submitted to the *Foreign Arrangements Scheme*.
- Annual updates on the activities been undertaken to support the Sister City Relationship are to be provided to Council to ensure they are continuing to meet the agreed objectives.
- The relationship may be dissolved upon agreement of all parties or if City of Hobart determines the relationship no longer has strategic alignment or is unable to be resourced.
- If this is the case, the Lord Mayor will write to the sister city advising of Council's decision.
- On the expiry of a Sister City Relationship, there will be an opportunity to review it to ensure it continue to fit with the Council's policy aims. If this is the case, Council can decide to renew the relationship.

7. *Foreign Arrangements Scheme*

Australia's *Foreign Arrangements Scheme* provides for a systematic and consistent approach to foreign engagement across all levels of Australian government and ensures that arrangements with foreign government entities do not adversely affect Australia's foreign relations and are not inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

Under the Scheme, City of Hobart must notify the Minister, via the Foreign Arrangements portal, of its intent to enter a formal international partnership with a city-level government or government institution from another country.



8. Responsibility, resourcing and budget

The International Relations activities of Council are primarily led by the Smart Economy Unit within the Council's Connected City Division.

Funds to support these activities are primarily allocated within the Smart Economy Unit's operating budget, but may come from elsewhere within the organisation, as required.

Responsible Officer:	Director Connected City
Policy first adopted by the Council:	28/8/2023
Next Review Date:	September 2025
File Reference:	F23/96752

Business Case

Establishing an International Partnership

Potential partner/s			
Aim of establishing the partnership			
Profile of potential partner/s (<i>i.e. key demographics, economic profile, geo-politics</i>)			
Strategic assessment – Part 1			
Essential criteria <i>(All essential criteria must be met for assessment to proceed)</i>	Yes (10 pts)	No (0 pts)	Commentary
Australia and the nation in which the partner/s is located have good foreign relations and the partnership is aligned to Australia's national interests.			
All parties can dedicate funds and resources to successful achieve the agreed objectives.			
A high level 'Forward Plan' of activities can be jointly identified which will support achieving the partnership aims.			



Non-essential criteria	Yes (5 pts)	No (0 Pts)	Commentary	
City of Hobart and the potential partner share commonalities such as diaspora, culture, politics and/or geography.				
There are existing connections between the City and potential partner/s which can be leveraged.				
There is potential for cross Government and/or sector/ Industry collaborations to support the partnership.				
City of Hobart can access State and/ or Federal funding opportunities and participate in Trade and Investment Missions to support international engagement				
Strategic assessment – Part 2				
Likelihood of the potential partnership achieving City of Hobart's <i>International Relations Policy</i> aims.	Extremely likely (7-10pts)	Somewhat likely (4-6pts)	Not likely (0-3pts)	Expected outcomes
Be an advocate for international peace and goodwill.				
Enrich the City with a broader understanding of other nations, their traditions, customs and cultures.				
Show leadership in adopting leading international policies and commitments, especially around climate change.				



Show our support for policy positions that align to the national interest.				
Future-proof Hobart's position as a leading Antarctic Gateway.				
Establish a strong foundation for trade and inbound investment attraction through leveraging our recognised strengths and competitive advantages.				
Raise the profile of Hobart as a premier visitor and conference destination.				
Exchange knowledge, skills and resources which adds to the vibrancy and future prosperity of the city.				
Progress specific international relations objectives set out within City of Hobart strategies and plans.				
Facilitate international engagement opportunities that benefit Greater Hobart.				
Overall score <i>(A score of 100 or more is required for the partnership to be recommended)</i>				/150
Identified risks/ mitigation <i>(i.e. politics, resourcing)</i>				



Recommendation to Council	
It is recommended that City of Hobart enters/ does not enter a partnership with....	
Partnership type	Strategic Partnership or Sister City Relationship
Fit with partnership type	
Timeframe	
Est. budget	\$
Status	Approved/ Not approved (Date)

Subject to Council's approval, a Forward Plan is to be developed and which will form the basis of a non-binding agreement between parties.

If required, the agreement will be submitted to the Australian Government's *Foreign Arrangements Scheme*.

Preparing Officer:
Date:

