



City-to-City Cooperation

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) US Cities

16 March, 2018



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1 City-to-City Program

Question	Answer
<p>1.1 What is envisioned for city-pairs to do within the program?</p>	<p><i>Chosen cities must commit to cooperating intensively with their partner city for at least 18 months, and to share in their progress. Representatives from each city will take part in study tours, staff exchanges, trainings and seminars, etc. In addition, cities will have access to a wealth of resources through an online knowledge-sharing platform, currently under development.</i></p> <p><i>The experiences the cities gain through these activities and materials will aid them in developing together Local Action Plans on the identified knowledge-sharing priority. After this period, cities commit to reporting on their progress and on concrete actions to be carried out in the future. Each city will sign a Partnership Agreement to this effect.</i></p> <p><i>The Local Action Plan will follow a common methodology to be determined jointly by the cities. One possible methodology is the EU-funded URBACT program which involves more than 550 cities. Local Action Plans should be developed through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process. These actors should be included in a multi-level and multi-stakeholder (e.g. academia, business, etc.) partnership, through the planning, roll-out and implementation of the Local Action Plan. Each city will develop its own Local Action Plan which must include activities and economically viable pilot projects that are capable of being realised in the short term, thereby opening up market opportunities and encouraging the involvement of research institutions, businesses, other levels of government and the local community.</i></p> <p><i>Participating cities will become part of a large community of peers and stakeholders engaging on sustainable urban development. In order to ensure a successful exchange and roll-out of measures and actions, cities need to commit an adequate amount of time and resources to implement the work. These resources should be sufficient to the ambition of the actions planned.</i></p> <p><i>Measures and actions to be implemented will contribute to achieving the objectives of the UN 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, the Urban Agenda for the European Union, the Sendai framework and the Paris Agreement, enhancing quality of life in urban areas.</i></p>
<p>1.2 How long is the (IUC-funded) city-to-city cooperation intended to last?</p>	<p><i>The cooperation will last at least 18 months, during which the IUC program will fund incidental costs of selected activities (see question 2.1). In addition, the online knowledge-sharing platform would be available to participating cities through the whole duration of the program.</i></p>



		<i>The program encourages cities to continue their cooperation beyond this time, such that they themselves commit appropriate resources to continue a fruitful cooperation into the future.</i>
1.3	When will the selected cities begin their work as pairs?	<i>Indicatively the first pairings will kick off their activities in November 2017. The precise timing of implementing the program varies across the different regions and countries, which also have different application timings.</i>
1.4	When is the Local Action Plan expected to be drafted and to start being implemented?	<i>Local Action Plans should be drafted within the 18 months of cooperation. The identification of the pilot projects to be carried out should also take place within this timeframe. Where possible the identified pilots should be kicked off by the partnership within the 18-month timeframe of the pairing. An engagement plan and/or a business plan could also be developed for the actions.</i>
1.5	How broad or narrow are the topic(s) and mandate of the Local Action Plan expected to be?	<i>The topics of the cooperation should be selected jointly by the cities taking part in the pairings. There is no limit or restriction to the fields of cooperation, but they should of course relate to sustainable urban development. A series of exemplary fields for cooperation have been listed in the application</i>
1.6	How many pilot projects is each city expected to implement/initiate several during the duration of the pairing program?	<i>At least one. Though the pilot project(s) outlined in the Local Action Plan are not necessarily meant to be realised within the 18 months of IUC-funded cooperation, but should at least start their implementation in this timeframe and then be fully-implemented within the following 1-3 years.</i> <i>One of our objectives is to show concrete progress/impact resulting directly from the pairings.</i>
1.7	What would be considered an “economically-viable” pilot project within the IUC program?	<i>By “economically-viable” we mean those actions that can be financed – the IUC program does not supply funding of these pilot projects – and rolled out within a period of 1-3 years from the beginning of the pairing. In this respect, the development of a business or financing plan is recommended.</i>



2 Budgetary

Question	Answer
2.1 Which costs are covered by the program?	<p><i>The program can cover certain incidental costs (e.g. travel or accommodation costs) related to the implementation of the exchange aspects of the city-to-city cooperation, but only during the duration of the pairing (i.e. 18 months). Please note that the pairing envisages one incoming and one outgoing visit (financed from the IUC program) for a small delegation from each the paired cities.</i></p> <p><i>All other resources (staff capacity, expertise, cooperation with other sector, co-funding, etc.) will <u>not</u> be covered and will have to be provided or found themselves by the cities involved in the pairings (e.g. through cooperation with private sector actors, financial institutions, community organizations, external funds, etc.).</i></p>
2.2 Is there a set budget for city pairings?	<p>No, though there is an overall program budget planned. However, the budgets are assigned to specific activities carried out by the city-pairings. Ultimately the budget depends on a variety of factors, such as which regions are involved (e.g. varying travel costs) and the nature of the activities being conducted within each pairing.</p>



3 Eligibility and calls for submissions

Question	Answer
<p>3.1 Will applications be accepted from regional/provincial authorities?</p>	<p>No, at this time, we are only accepting applications from cities, not provinces/regions.</p> <p>Otherwise, sub-national governments, such as regions and provinces, are invited to support cities applying, but they will not be considered eligible applicants themselves. For information on applications from metropolitan areas, please see question 3.2.</p>
<p>3.2 Can groups of (small) towns apply together in a joint application?</p>	<p>Yes, as long as a clear project lead/coordinator has been identified from one city/municipality and provided within the application to officially represent the consortium of municipalities. It is not necessary that the consortium be a formal, legal body – it is sufficient to have a formal agreement providing the group’s lead/coordinator.</p>
<p>3.3 Are there size limitations for cities applying?</p>	<p>Yes. Cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants are eligible to apply.</p>
<p>3.4 When is the call open for US cities to pair with global regions?</p>	<p>The open call for US cities opened on Thursday, 1st March.</p>
<p>3.5 Is there a possibility to expand the countries involved in city pairings?</p>	<p>No for now. Currently the program is limited only to pairing cities with cities from the EU's 28 Member States.</p>
<p>3.6 Is there a list accessible with those EU cities which are available and their interests, challenges, characteristics, etc.?</p>	<p>No. The selection process will be handled internally. IUC will match your city with an appropriate counterpart from the European Union.</p> <p>Please note that cities are encouraged to mention existing relationships and cooperation with other cities in the European Union which may factor into the matching process.</p>



4 Application process

Question	Answer
<p>4.1 Which are the steps for US cities applying for the city-to-city program?</p>	<p>1) Check your eligibility.</p> <p>2) Fill in the application form. It includes requests for brief explanations on your city's sustainable urban development interests, any project/action ideas that you have started developing and what capacity you would foresee to be able to commit for their development. It also includes questions related to your city's previous experiences on sustainable urban development.</p> <p>3) Cities will be notified if they have been selected or not.</p> <p>4) If your city has been successfully selected, your city and your selected city-pair will initiate work together to develop Local Action Plans to implement measures in the field(s) you chose in your applications for at least 18 months.</p>
<p>4.2 Is preference given to pair together cities which already have established a previous working relationship?</p>	<p>Not necessarily. While IUC would like to build upon cities' existing connections, such as sister cities, one of our key goals is to bring in added-value that would not have occurred otherwise.</p> <p>We do not plan to exclude already-established connections by any means (so you may freely apply with a preference for a sister city or previous partner), but it is important to our program that pairings are not simply duplicating efforts already done or planned to be done anyway.</p> <p>In the application form, there is space to clarify your previous city pairings and relate them to how you envision our IUC program can facilitate sustainable urban development. You should make it clear in your submission how exactly added value would be created if you prefer to work with a sister city or partner. Nonetheless, you should still remain open to the possibility of pairing with totally new cities, if your city is selected at all, since there are of course many benefits to be gained from exchanges with new colleagues as well.</p>
<p>4.3 If a city indicates a preferred city, country or region in its application, does this mean their preference will get fulfilled?</p>	<p>Not necessarily. Though the selection process aims to accommodate submitted preferences, it is not possible that all cities will get what they want. For the selection process, it is much more important that selected city-pairs match each other in terms of sustainable urban development plans, mutual challenges, similar characteristics, etc. Only after such criteria, will preferences enter the selection process.</p>
<p>4.4 Is the "team leader" expected to be an elected representative at a political level or a staff member at a technical level?</p>	<p>The team leader should be in charge of the cooperation with the paired city. It is up to the city itself to decide who should take this role. The team leader should ideally have a solid track-record of experience in international cooperation and should be able to act as a delegate for decision-making on the activities of the project.</p>



<p>4.5 Does the term "team members" refer to municipal staff only, or also include stakeholders involved in the Local Action Plan?</p>	<p><i>The make-up of your team should be relevant to your own context and the activities you plan. In some cases, only municipal members are needed, while in other cases, the inclusion of stakeholders from other relevant sectors would be needed to facilitate activities. Similarly, the size of the team is likewise up to you. Whoever you deem important to include will benefit from the activities (e.g. capacity-building) and those limited costs actually covered by the program (see question 2.1).</i></p>
<p>4.6 If an action is already formally-planned (i.e. based on an official decision and/or strategy), but whose implementation has not yet begun, would it be considered to be a valid measure to be supported within the IUC program?</p>	<p>Yes, it would be valid. <i>The development of the action in cooperation within the pairing will allow for additional opportunities for knowledge-sharing and inspirations between the cities. The important point is that implementation has yet to begin.</i></p>
<p>4.7 What is the "common methodology, in line with the EU-funded URBACT program" which ought to be followed while crafting the Local Action Plan?</p>	<p><i>An adapted methodology for the implementation of the Local Action Plans will be developed by the program, based on the URBACT methodology and experience. Guideline documents, like the URBACT III Guide - Applying the Results Framework to Integrated Action Plans (2016) are available at the URBACT website.</i></p>
<p>4.8 What is meant by the application's question about "proposed actions/measures/ ideas"?</p>	<p><i>If you already have a plan or a specific action in mind that you wish to implement in a sustainable urban development field of your choice, you can briefly explain it. It might be a specific type of exchange activity or engagement plan, or even a concrete action to be integrated into the (still-to-be-developed) Local Action Plan.</i></p>
<p>4.9 What is the impact of previous involvement in other sustainable urban development initiatives on the evaluation of submissions from cities?</p>	<p>High. <i>The IUC is part of a long-term strategy by the European Union to foster sustainable urban development in cooperation with both the public and private sectors, with the aim to foster better ways to plan, finance, develop, govern and manage cities, and support the New Urban Agenda decided in Quito.</i></p>
<p>5.0 Should a city's best practices, experiences and partnerships from the past necessarily align with the areas of interest to which a city applies?</p>	<p>Not necessarily. <i>The idea of these questions is just to establish if the city applying already has a track record in cooperating successfully with other stakeholders – regardless of the specific field. The same applies for the best practices to be shared. The program is interested to collect and share as many good practices as possible.</i></p>



5.1 My city is very enthusiastic about the program but we have the following question: in the criteria, it says US cities can participate when they have more than 100,000 citizens. Our resident population is approximately 93,000 but our daytime population is closer to 200,000. Can we still apply to the program?

Yes, applications from cities with daytime populations of more than 100,000 citizens will be accepted and considered eligible for that specific criterion.

5.2 Are there any cities already participating in the IUC program?

Yes, through the IUC program cities and regions across Europe have entered into partnerships on sustainable development with counterparts from around the globe. In the US, the City of Austin is working with Bologna, Italy. [Here is a full list of pairings.](#)

5.3 Do applicants have veto power or a say in the pairing with an EU city or is it a blind application?

Applicants can indicate a preference for an EU city though this does not necessarily mean that the preference will be fulfilled (see 4.3). The US-EU city pairing is undertaken by the IUC Secretariat in Brussels taking into consideration the characteristics, suitability, interests and complementarity of each city.

