



Sister Cities International's Africa Poverty Alleviation Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the grant?

There are two primary goals of the program. The first is to perform collaborative projects in the areas of health, water, and sanitation through sister city programs in growing urban areas of Africa. The projects will aim to reduce poverty by addressing issues related to these areas which hamper economic development and undermine sustainable development. The second goal is to raise the organizational and programmatic capacity of the Africa Global Sister Cities Foundation so it can better serve its sister city programs in Africa.

Who provided the grant?

Funding has been generously provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

How large is the grant? How much will be spent on sister city programs?

The grant is for \$7.5 million. Each of the 25-27 programs chosen to participate will have access to a budget of up to \$115,000 to apply to their projects in their sister city.

How long is the grant?

The grant is for three years, beginning in Spring 2009 and ending in Spring 2012.

Will all the cities be performing activities at once?

In the first year 5-7 cities will participate, and during the second year an additional 20 cities will be selected to participate.

Who can apply for funding?

During the first year, any U.S. sister city program with an African sister city can apply for funding. The second round of applications will be open to U.S. sister city programs seeking to start a sister city relationship with an African city, as well as active partnerships with African cities.

Does our city have to be a certain size to be eligible?

Preference will be given to cities that meet certain demographic specifications such as population size and relative location to water. Demographic limitations are outlined in the application.

What countries are eligible?

All countries on the continent of Africa are eligible to participate.

How will cities be selected?

The selection process is open and competitive. In the summer of 2009 Sister Cities International will announce details of the application process, including required documents, plans, or other

materials. Each application will be judged by an independent panel of experts from relevant fields and winners will be chosen according to weighted rankings for specific criteria. Criteria will include past programmatic experience, organizational capacity of the U.S. and African sister city committees, technical and financial capacity of the committees, established partners of sister city programs, draft work plans, and other factors.

What if our city isn't selected in the first round?

Applicants who are not chosen in the first round will receive feedback on their applications and guidance on building their program in order to be more competitive for the second round of consideration.

Are there limits to the number of programs chosen per country?

No. Two or more sister city programs in one country may be chosen.

We have two sister cities in Africa. Can we apply for two grants?

No.

We share an African sister city with another local U.S. program. Can we collaborate on a project?

Yes, two U.S. cities may collaborate on a project in their shared sister city. However, their funding will be the same as single-program projects in the grant.

How much of the funding can be used for travel?

The vast majority of project funds is to be used on project implementation in the African sister city. However, grant funds have been designated to cover some delegation travel costs of U.S. and African sister city members.

Are there restrictions on the funding?

Yes. Work plans for selected cities will undergo a review and revision phase guided by Sister Cities International staff before funding is released. All projects must be aimed at issues in **water, sanitation, and health**.

Will there be opportunities for follow-on activities?

During the third year of the project a small number of the 25 selected cities will be provided with additional funding for follow-on activities. Local sister city programs are also encouraged to develop follow-on activities as part of their annual plans with their sister city.

What is the role of the Africa Global Sister Cities Foundation (AGSCF)?

AGSCF is a partner of Sister Cities International for this program. AGSCF will aid in the administration and execution of projects, help develop and provide support to African sister city committees, and promote the sister city movement throughout the continent of Africa.

How can I find out more about the grant?

Sister Cities International will update its members regularly on developments in the application process and administration of the grant. For more information please contact Adam Kaplan at akaplan@sister-cities.org. For media inquiries please contact Patrick Madden at pmadden@sister-cities.org.