



International Exchange & Multicultural Programs

Mission

The mission of the Columbia Association's **International Exchange & Multicultural Programs** (formerly Sister Cities Program) is to foster international understanding and to celebrate the diverse cultures of Columbia/Howard County.

Goals

1. Greater understanding, appreciation and respect for the diverse international cultures, customs and traditions present in our community.
2. Increased engagement and exchanges of professional expertise with residents who have international backgrounds, with international visitors to our community, and with people residing outside the U.S.
3. Increased knowledge and understanding of the relationships between local and global issues, as well as increased awareness of our community's place and role in the world.

Objectives

1. Create and promote opportunities for residents to develop relationships with people from diverse international backgrounds.
2. Promote, facilitate and administer international exchange opportunities (for youth and adults) with Columbia's existing Sister Cities, and develop new sister city relationships.
3. Develop new youth and adult exchanges with communities in other nations in the areas of culture, language, the arts, sports, technology and business.
4. Organize and promote multicultural events that celebrate the diversity of world cultures and support the native languages and cultures of residents.
5. Promote greater proficiency in world languages taught in local schools by providing opportunities for students to communicate with native speakers.
6. Promote and implement activities that attract international visitors, public and private resources, and interest in our community.