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International Relations Policy

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1. Scope

The policy applies to all Council representatives (Councillors, staff, and contractors). This policy covers all matters relating to international relations between the City of Ryde and international organisations, governments, and institutions (for example, Universities).

For clarity, the policy does not negate or circumvent any State or National policy and legislation governing international relations.

2. Purpose

Australia, New South Wales, and the City of Ryde attract international investment across various sectors. Macquarie Park, for example, is a Nationally significant place of innovation and investment attraction. Macquarie Park's major economic functions include the following:

- Education
- Research and development
- Health services, and
- Knowledge-intensive sectors (pharmaceutical, technological, and telecommunications).

These economic functions are global in their outlook.

The City of Ryde is also home to the economically diverse and growing centres of Eastwood, West Ryde/Meadowbank, Gladesville, and North Ryde.

To deliver economic outcomes and contribute to the outcomes aspired within Council's Community Strategic Plan, the City of Ryde will need to take a more strategic approach to international relations. A strategic approach relies on clear principles and objectives.

The policy seeks to establish clear principles and objectives for Council's approach to international relations. Supporting policy instruments (for example, guidelines, procedures, and templates) will be designed to operationalise the strategic direction outlined by this policy.

3. Policy principles

The following policy principles will guide Council's approach to international relations:

1. Investment attraction – Council's international relations activities will be guided by the desire to attract and retain international investment, in particular investment into businesses and education, into the City of Ryde.
2. Strategic outcomes – Council will take a proactive and strategic approach to international relations, seeking to build relationships that lead to social and economic opportunities for the City of Ryde.
3. Transparency – Underpinned by best-practice governance protocols, Council will be transparent in its approach to international relations. Best practice includes

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monitoring, reporting, and evaluating Council’s work and keeping the community informed of the efficacy of international relations activities.

4. Cooperation and collaboration – Council will seek out international partners who want to cooperate and collaborate in delivering positive outcomes for the City of Ryde. Cooperation and collaboration will be underpinned by a jurisdictional understanding of the roles and responsibilities (and thus limitations) between Council and its partners.
5. Deliver benefits – All international relations activities must deliver social, environmental, or economic benefits to the City of Ryde. These benefits need to be considered and evaluated as a part of Council’s international relations activities.

General Responsibilities

Stewardship

Within the City Shaping Group, Council’s City Economy team will be the stewards of this policy and take functional responsibility for Council’s approach to international relations.

The policy does not prescribe delegations for individuals; however, a risk-based approach will underpin the strategic work of the City Economy Department. This approach may escalate different operational matters to the attention of the Council for consideration.

Memorandums of Understanding

The City of Ryde will use a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to document a formal relationship with an international party. For an MoU to take effect, Council and the international party must agree to the MoU’s content. Agreement for the City of Ryde will require a resolution from Council endorsing the MoU and the Mayor signing the MoU on behalf of Council.

Council can only consider an MoU following an objective assessment of the merits of the MoU against this policy and any other applicable procedures or guidelines from Council staff.

For clarity, an MoU will be the only mechanism used by Council to formalise a relationship with an international party.

Existing sister cities, friendship agreements, and partnership agreements are not impacted by this policy.

4. Policy outcomes

Council’s international relations activities and projects will include the identification of objectives that align with the principles and outcomes of this policy. The International Relations Policy has been designed to support the following outcomes:

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| Theme | Desired outcomes |
|--|--|
| Encouraging international economic cooperation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In line with Council's Community Strategic Plan, Council's policies and strategies should seek to encourage international economic cooperation with the City of Ryde, specifically cooperation on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. economics and trade b. research and development c. tertiary and vocational education, and d. immigration and settlement |
| Fostering cultural exchange and understanding | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In line with Council's Community Strategic Plan, Council's policies and strategies should seek to foster cultural exchange and understanding through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. symbolic relationships with international cities and countries b. celebration of multiculturalism and diversity through social infrastructure, events, and experiences within the City of Ryde, and c. hosting and participating in international delegations |
| Advancing human rights and democracy | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. In line with Council's Community Strategic Plan, Council's policies and strategies should seek to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) promote international peace and security b) address global challenges, and c) promote international peace and security |
| Addressing global challenges | |
| Promoting international peace and security | |

5. References and Legislation

International relations as a function of local government are not governed by specific State or National legislation. However, international relations activities may be subject to State and National legislative requirements. Council must adhere to this legislation alongside applicable State and National policies, such as the *Foreign Arrangements Scheme*.

In addition to State and National legislation and policies, international relations activities must consider the impacts and implications of international laws. Timely risk assessments will be required for certain international relations activities and projects where international laws may need to be considered.

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