



## Iowa Partner States Program Overview

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### Overview

- Definition
- Iowa's partner states
- Purpose
- Process
- Oversight structure
- Program components
- Primary contacts

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## Partner State Relationship

A partner state is a foreign territory (state-equivalent or country) that participates in a commitment with Iowa to be friendly partners.

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## Iowa's Partner States



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## Purpose

To serve Iowans by providing opportunities to further civilians' engagement with the world in cultural and economic capacities.



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## Partner State Process

- o Organic friendships among citizens
- o Conversations between governments
- o Establishment
  - Partner state status is established via a memorandum of understanding that outlines areas of cooperation such as industry sectors, education and the arts.
- o Maintenance
  - Government leaders, their staff and citizens are responsible for recognizing, enjoying and maintaining partner state relations.



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## History of Oversight of Partner State Relationships

- Informal volunteerism 1960–1983
- Iowa Friendship Committee 1983–1988
  - A committee designated by the governor, partially funded by the State of Iowa, to manage sister state relationships.
- Iowa Sister States 1988–2023
  - Nonprofit, a contractor of the state, formed to exclusively manage Iowa's sister state relationships.
  - Largely focused on cultural activities with Iowa volunteers and engaging government delegations.



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## Present

- IEDA and Iowa International Center 2023–present
  - Management transitioned to IEDA.
    - International Relations Coordinator role created.
  - Name changed to “partner states” to avoid confusion with Iowa Sister States.
  - Beginning in 2024, IEDA contracted with the Iowa International Center to oversee cultural activities.



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## Program Areas

- Governmental
  - Communicate goodwill, resources and plans for official delegation visits
- Economic — People don't do business with people they don't know.
  - Foster international business connections
    - International Relations Coordinator is part of IEDA's Global Business Team
  - Provide resources to Iowa businesses wishing to export and international businesses exploring expansion opportunities in Iowa
  - Host trade missions and inbound delegations/prospects
- Cultural
  - Maintain authenticity to partnerships
  - Encourage Iowans to volunteer with Iowa International Center
    - Cultural activities are planned by volunteer committees for each partner state.

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## Primary Program Contact



### Public Diplomacy

- Government (State and Municipal)
- Trade and Commerce
- Business Investment
- Agriculture
- Judicial
- Military (National Guard)



### Citizen Diplomacy

- Social
- Education (K–12, University)
- Health
- Sports
- Arts

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**THANK YOU**

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