
CITY-TO-CITY COOPERATION

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for North American Cities applying to IURC

IURC North America

Last update: May 26th, 2021



“The information provided in this document is for informative purpose only and cannot be considered as binding”



This document was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the IURC North America program and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

1. General Questions: What is it? How does it work? ...

Question	Answer
<p>1.1 What is the IURC program, and who finances it?</p>	<p>Implemented since 2017, the European Union's International Urban Cooperation (IUC - first phase) contributes to the objectives of the <u>New Urban Agenda</u>, the <u>Agenda 2030 (SDGs)</u>, the <u>Urban Agenda for the EU</u> and the <u>political objectives of the European Cohesion Policy</u>, through city-to-city diplomacy to overcome common challenges. IUC has become the world's largest city-to-city cooperation program involving 165 cities from the EU and non-EU countries across America and Asia.</p> <p>The new phase of the program launched in early 2021 and now called the International Urban and Regional Cooperation Program (IURC), aims to capitalize on the results and lessons learned from the first phase to optimize the added value of international cooperation, transforming the new program into an international network of reference for urban innovation and sustainable urban development.</p>

<p>1.2 How does it work?</p>	<p>Successful applicants from Canada and the USA will be matched with partner cities from Member States of the European Union, which are tackling similar sustainable urban development and innovation challenges. The selection and matching process will take place in the summer of 2021. Participating cities will become part of a wide community of peers and stakeholders engaging in the following ways:</p> <p>⇒ GLOBAL NETWORK: Cities will be invited to participate in thematic and networking events, as well as technical sessions and trainings on specific topics. These will be organized in person and virtually across the international program. Through this Global Network, cities and key stakeholders will meet with other cities working on the same sustainable urban development/innovation topics.</p> <p>⇒ ONE-TO-ONE PAIRINGS: Selected cities from the Member States of the EU will be matched with the USA and Canadian cities based on a range of selection criteria, including shared interests in one or more thematic cooperation areas. Representatives from participating cities will take part in learning exchanges, knowledge sharing, and capacity building activities (e.g., study visits, site visits, trainings, networking, and thematic events) and will develop together an action plan which will serve as a road map over the course of the cooperation, including actions and pilot projects that can produce transferable results.</p> <p>⇒ CLUSTERS: Pairings will have the opportunity to participate in small clusters to facilitate the sharing of solutions and knowledge on similar challenges and cooperation topics.</p> <p>Participating cities will be encouraged to include in addition to city staff other stakeholders from academia, business, and civil society who will benefit from cooperating with EU cities.</p>
<p>1.3 How long is the cooperation intended to last?</p>	<p>The cooperation through the program will last between <u>18-24 months.</u></p> <p>IURC encourages cities to continue their cooperation beyond this time, such that they commit appropriate resources to continue a rewarding cooperation into the future.</p>
<p>1.4 When does it start?</p>	<p>Indicatively, city pairings or clusters are expected to kick off their cooperation activities in <u>September – October 2021.</u></p>

<p>1.5 How broad or narrow are the cooperation topic(s) expected to be?</p>	<p>The cooperation areas are pre-defined by the program in Thematic Networks and related sub-themes (see table on p.8-9). Cities must select their preferred themes and subthemes in the application. Cities will be matched – <i>as much as possible</i> – according to these preferences and interests. Once pairings and clusters begin cooperating, they will receive support from the IURC North America team to further refine their specific topics according to their relevant needs, strengths, and interests.</p>
<p>1.6 What are the expected results from our participation in the program?</p>	<p>One of the program's main objectives is to show concrete progress and impact resulting directly from bilateral and multilateral cooperation on the pre-defined themes and sub-themes of the program.</p> <p>The concrete focus and roadmap for the cooperation will be set out in Urban Cooperation Action Plans (UCAPs). As an iterative planning tool, your UCAP will be developed jointly by collaborating cities over the course of the cooperation program and will include objectives and activities to be developed during that period and others that may be carried out beyond the duration of the IUC program.</p> <p>Pairings and clusters will also be expected to gather lessons learned and case studies that can be successfully scaled and implemented.</p>
<p>1.7 When is the Urban Cooperation Action Plan expected to be drafted and to start being implemented?</p>	<p>The UCAP will be completed in three phases throughout the program. The final version of the UCAP should be completed one month before the closing of the program in 2023.</p>
<p>1.8 Is it possible that we will work in a one-to-one pairing and in thematic clusters?</p>	<p>Yes. If several pairings in North America are working on similar challenges, they will have the opportunity to form a small cluster to collaborate and share best practices and knowledge.</p>
<p>1.9 What is the amount of staff time needed over the 18-24 months for a successful collaboration? How often do the city-to-city meetings happen? How much preparation work should</p>	<p>First, cities meet approximately once a month for video calls that last between 1-2 hrs. There will be time required to prepare for these meetings where one or both cities present on initiatives and programs implemented. In many cases these presentations may be done by other stakeholders from the city, such as a different agency, department, or organization. Planning for the study visit that will take place in your city will require coordination with the core team and other stakeholders to host meetings and field visits.</p> <p>Second, selected cities will also be required to work on the joint Urban Cooperation Plan (UCAP), which is a document that includes the concrete focus and roadmap for the cooperation. As an iterative planning tool, your UCAP will be developed jointly by collaborating cities over the course of the cooperation program and will include objectives and activities to be</p>

<p>cities anticipate for the meetings and site visits?</p>	<p>developed during that period and others that may be carried out beyond the duration of the IUC program.</p> <p>Third, city delegates will participate in at least 2 field “study visits” and 2 in person events that will take place in their city and other partner cities, both in the region of North America and the EU.</p> <p>Finally, the IURC program opens the opportunity for selected cities to participate in networking activities such as webinars, on-line technical exchanges, virtual and in-person thematic networking events, as a mean to share best practices with other delegates from IURC cities.</p>
<p>1.10 During the site visits / in-person exchanges, how many staff are anticipated to travel and participate?</p>	<p>For each study visit 2-3 delegates are expected to participate and at least 1 delegate to each event. Expenses such as plane tickets, meals and hotel will be covered by the program.</p>

2. Costs & Funding

Question	Answer
<p>2.1 Which costs are covered by the program?</p>	<p>The IURC program will provide technical assistance to implement a support package including at least the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A mission/field visit for every city involved to the respective paired city. Expenses such as plane tickets, meals and hotel will be covered by the program. - Participation of each city involved in the pairings in at least one of the Thematic Networking Events. - Technical assistance by an IURC North America pairing manager to facilitate the cooperation process and guide the elaboration of the UCAP, which may include study visits, participation to events and seminars.

<p>2.2 Is my city expected to pay any direct costs?</p>	<p>No. However, your city must commit to providing human resources (e.g., time from staff members as required) to support the cooperation process.</p> <p>Also, host cities may cover some hospitality costs such as local transport, coffee breaks, or welcome dinner for the study visits.</p>
<p>2.3 Is there any funding provided to implement pilot projects?</p>	<p>No. <u>The IURC program does not supply funding for the implementation of pilot projects.</u> However, the IURC North America pairing manager may be able to identify additional financing sources outside of IURC.</p>

3. Eligibility Requirements & Call Procedures

Question	Answer
<p>3.1 Who is eligible to apply?</p>	<p>Applicants from cities in the USA and Canada.</p>
<p>3.2 Are there population limitations for applications?</p>	<p>Cities with more than <u>100,000 inhabitants</u> are eligible to apply.</p> <p>Applications from cities with daytime populations of more than 100,000 citizens will be considered, even if their resident population is somewhat below.</p>
<p>3.3 When will the call be open for North American cities to apply?</p>	<p>The call opens on May 3rd, 2021 and the deadline has been extended to midnight ET on June 7th, 2021.</p> <p>Selected cities are expected to be notified between July and September 2021.</p>
<p>3.4 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. IURC 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 European Union cities, which may factor into the matching process.</p>

4. Application Process

Question	Answer
<p>4.1 What are the steps for the USA and Canadian cities applying for the program?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure your city is eligible according to the information provided in these FAQs and the application form. 2. Complete the application form. 3. Applicants are expected to be notified if they have been selected or not between July and September 2021. 4. North American cities and their partners will sign a Partnership Agreement where they will specify the thematic areas of cooperation. 5. In September - October 2021, pairings and clusters will start to work together through online meetings. 6. In-person exchanges are expected to start in 2022, though their implementation will largely depend on pandemic-related travel restrictions.
<p>4.2 Is preference given to match cities that already have established a previous working relationship?</p>	<p>Not necessarily. While IURC would like to build upon cities' existing connections, 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. Still, it is important to our program that pairings are not simply duplicating efforts already done or scheduled to be done anyway.</p> <p>There is space to clarify your previous city cooperation experience in the application form and how you envision the IURC 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 current partner. Nonetheless, if your city is selected, you should remain open to the possibility of pairing with new cities since there are many benefits to be gained from exchanges with new colleagues.</p>
<p>4.3 If our city participated in the IUC program (first phase), can we apply to work again with the same partner?</p>	<p>If selected, North American cities that participated in the first phase of the IUC program and are now applying to IURC will be paired -if selected - with a new counterpart. However, it may be possible to continue cooperating with their former pair in a thematic cluster and/or through thematic networking events.</p>

<p>4.4 What profile and experience should the main contact/ coordinator from the city have?</p>	<p>The main contact/coordinator should be able to act as a delegate for decision-making on the project's activities, represent your city at international meetings and events, and ideally have a solid track record of international cooperation experience. The designated person needs to be fluent in English. Your team needs to have at least one person who can participate in international events in English.</p>
<p>4.5 Does the term "team" refer to city staff only or does it include stakeholders involved in the Urban Cooperation Action Plan?</p>	<p>The composition of your team should be relevant to your context and the activities you plan. In some cases, only city staff are needed, while in other cases, the inclusion of stakeholders from other relevant sectors (academia, business, and civil society) would be welcome. Whoever you deem important to include will benefit from the activities (e.g., capacity-building) and those limited costs covered by the program (see question 2.1).</p>
<p>4.6 Is it important to have a Sustainable Urban Development Strategy that aligns with the challenges that we want to exchange on?</p>	<p>Yes. The IURC intends to support the implementation of integrated strategies for sustainable urban development.</p>

The call opens on May 3rd, 2021 and the deadline has been extended to midnight ET on June 7th, 2021.

This document will be continuously updated with your questions.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

info-na@iurc.eu

Annex: Thematic Networks & Cross-Cutting Overall Challenges

Thematic Network 1:

ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION- GREEN DEAL (a Greener Europe)




Synergies

- Circular Economy, waste management, plastic
- Nature Based Solutions, greening, water management,
- Sustainable Urban Agriculture, healthy food, urban gardens
- Renovation Wave, decarbonized & energy efficiency in buildings

CITY- TO - CITY

- Sustainable Urban Agriculture, Agrofood Chain, Foods Systems, Technologies 4,0

REGION- TO - REGION

Thematic Network 2:

URBAN AND REGIONAL RENEWAL- URBAN POVERTY (A more connected & social Europe)




Synergies

- Urban Agendas/planning, SUD Strategies, public space, urban model (eg. 15 min. vision)
- Mobility & Transport, street for people, superblocks, metropolitan connections
- Urban Poverty, deprived neighbourhoods, housing, social cohesion

CITY- TO - CITY

- Industry 5.0 (Regions) bigger Competitiveness, Productive Diversification

REGION- TO - REGION

Thematic Network 3:

INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE & CARBON NEUTRAL ECOSYSTEMS AND STRATEGIC SECTORS (A smarter Europe)




Synergies

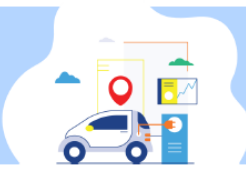
- Tourism & Culture
- Health, life science, elderly, bio economy
- Education, jobs & skills, Innovation centers, business clusters

CITY- TO - CITY


- Tourism & Culture, diversification- slow food & supplies
- Regional Innovation & Smart and Sustainable Specialization Strategies (RIS 4)
- Education, jobs & skills

REGION- TO - REGION



CROSS-CUTTING OVERALL CHALLENGES



DIGITAL TRANSITION & SMART CITY



ENERGY TRANSITION & CLIMATE CHANGE

POST COVID RECOVERY – SOCIAL JUSTICE & INCLUSION