

Strategic policy

International Relations

Corporate Plan reference:	<p>A smart economy</p> <p><i>A prosperous, high-value economy of choice for business, investment and employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong local to global connections
Endorsed by Council on:	18 February 2014 (SM 14/1)
Manager responsible for policy:	Head of Economic Development

Policy purpose

The International Relations Policy provides the foundation to support Council's participation in international relationships to pursue its strategic economic policy objectives.

The International Relations Policy is directed at maintaining and enhancing Council's national and international reputation and providing a robust and transparent framework for Council's relationships and engagement with international entities.

Policy outcome

Council has in place:

- An evidence based rationale and robust arrangements for international engagement
- Appropriate criteria to ensure any international agreements are outcomes focused and targeted at appropriate international locations.
- A transparent evaluation process that ensures clear economic outcomes are progressed through international engagement.

Policy scope

This policy applies to all engagement with the following entities:

- Foreign governments, their agencies or affiliated organisations
- International business organisations and/or associations
- Foreign commercial and not for profit entities

This Policy is supported by guidelines contained in the following attachments:

- Attachment 1 - Establishing an International Agreement
- Attachment 2 - Agreement Types

Policy statement

A key economic policy priority for the Sunshine Coast is to strengthen the region's economic foundations, support local business and create an environment that encourages investment and the establishment of enduring high value employment and career opportunities. To achieve significant change in terms of investment, infrastructure provision, employment and prosperity, the region needs to shift from a consumption-based economy to one that is outwardly focused, investment oriented and connected to global and emerging markets.

Research undertaken by Federal and State Governments and other respected institutions highlights the criticality of exploiting the potential of key growth markets globally as a plank to developing prosperity and facilitating delivery of major infrastructure.

The Sunshine Coast is well placed to capitalise on its strengths and the growing opportunities the region presents. Appropriate and targeted engagement with foreign governments, commercial and not for profit organisations is warranted in order to position the Sunshine Coast in key global markets that offer the best prospects for success for the region.

The primary vehicles through which Council can engage with international entities are:

- International agreements;
- Hosting international delegations; and
- Participating in international missions.

Sunshine Coast Council recognises the long-standing and underlying concept of goodwill that underpins international relationships. However, Council's priority is to seek tangible and quantifiable economic benefits for the region from its international agreements and engagement activities.

The key economic benefits that Council seeks to achieve from its international agreements and engagements include (but are not limited to):

- Promoting the region's export capabilities (goods and services) in high-value industries – notably education and research; tourism, sport and leisure; agri-business; health and well-being; aviation and aerospace; clean technologies; and knowledge industries and professional services.
- Fostering regional access to trade and export opportunities in new markets.
- Profiling the region as a competitive destination for visitation; business, property and infrastructure investment; and securing such investment.
- Advancing the region's learnings from international best practice and locations of excellence.
- Establishing networks of significant business and other contacts.

Council will support associated cultural and community initiatives that facilitate the community's broader cultural awareness and appreciation where this better enables the achievement of economic outcomes for this region.

Guiding principles

Council's interactions, engagements and relationships with international entities will at all times:

1. contribute to achieving the outcomes of Council's Corporate Plan and regional strategies.
2. be underpinned by mutual respect, understanding and diplomacy.
3. be conducted in a manner which maintains and enhances Council's credibility and reputation.
4. support increased export, investment and business development opportunities for the region.

FRAMEWORK

Parameters relevant to all International Agreements, Delegations and Missions

1. All international agreements, missions and delegations undertaken by Council must contribute to the delivery of Council's Corporate Plan, the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy, the Sunshine Coast International Business Development Program and/or related objectives of another Council strategy that are clearly identified at the time of obtaining authorisation of the proposed activity.
2. All international relationships and engagement must promote respect, encourage connections between the participating communities and seek to improve opportunities for knowledge and skills transfer.
3. Subject to the laws of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Parliament of the State of Queensland, Council is the only legal authority that can enter into a binding or non-binding international agreement with an entity on behalf of the Sunshine Coast local government area.
4. Preservation and enhancement of Council's reputation, standing and resources is of paramount importance in any engagement or relationship with international entities. Council will not engage in new international relationships or agreements – and reserves the right to terminate an existing international relationship or agreement – where it considers the relationship or agreement may be detrimental to (or undermine) Council's reputation, standing and/or resources.
5. As a general rule, Council does not authorise a third party to act as its intermediary or representative in engaging with international entities. A third party shall only act as an authorised representative of Council if that party has instructions in writing from the Chief Executive Officer approving their appointment as a representative of Council. Any instructions issued by the Chief Executive Officer in this regard must (at a minimum) specify the scope, extent of authority, duration and expectations associated with the appointment of the authorised representative.
6. To maximise efficiencies, avoid duplication of effort and ensure the appropriate commitment and expenditure of Council resources, all engagements with international entities relevant to this Policy will be coordinated by the Economic Development Branch.
7. Negotiation of a Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement must be authorised by resolution of Council. The execution of an authorised Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement shall only be undertaken by the Mayor on behalf of Council.
8. The negotiation and authorisation of a non-binding Strategic Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding shall only occur by resolution of council and following a rigorous assessment of the need, benefits and risks associated with establishing an international agreement of this nature.
9. Council will:
 - consider proposed international agreements in the context of the work of other levels of government and other local governments to avoid duplication or any breach of protocol.
 - work with local industries, groups, institutions, organisations and other agencies to maximise benefits from developing international relationships.
 - where possible, look to adopt a flexible approach to new international relationships to maximise the prospect of achieving Council's strategic economic policy objectives. Ideally, all international relationships should be project based, have defined outcomes and specified time frames.
 - seek to maximise the utility and cost effectiveness of negotiating and maintaining international relationships through a range of tools such as electronic communications, video conferencing, and the services offered by State and Federal Government agencies.
10. In participating in international relationships, Council is not the agent or advocate of any individual Sunshine Coast business seeking international trade or investment opportunities.
11. Council is not – and shall not act as (or act on behalf of) - a migration agent.
12. All international agreements must have a nominated review date of between three and five years. If an existing international agreement does not contain a nominated review date, then the review date shall be three years from the date of the agreement.

Matters specific to International Agreements

International agreements may be used by Council as a tool to facilitate participation by an international entity in:

- furthering Council's strategic economic policy objectives; and/or
- key projects, relationships and/or partnerships that have economic and associated social and cultural benefits for the region.

There are four categories of international agreement that Council may consider in establishing a formal relationship with an international entity:

- Sister City Agreement
- Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement
- Strategic Partnership Agreement
- Memorandum of Understanding

The appropriate international agreement suitable for a particular international relationship shall be determined following an assessment of the location, benefits and risks using the assessment criteria and tools in **Attachment 1** and with consideration of the characteristics of the proposed agreement as outlined in **Attachment 2**.

A Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement shall only be entered into between:

- Council; and
- a lawfully recognised local or provincial government (or the legal equivalent in the jurisdiction where the entity is based).

There are to be no third parties to a Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement.

Unless approved otherwise by resolution of Council in a specific instance, a Sister City Agreement shall only be considered where:

- there has been a Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement, a Strategic Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding in place for at least two years and where there has been demonstrable benefit for the Sunshine Coast from having these agreements in place; and
- the agreement is with an international city or locality that adds value to, and enhances the standing of, the Sunshine Coast.

For a Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement, a Strategic Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding, these agreements are only to be considered where:

- there is a clear economic benefit for the Sunshine Coast from having the agreement in place; and
- the agreement is with a reputable international entity that adds value to, and enhances the standing of, the Sunshine Coast.

Council is at no time obliged to:

- Enter into an international agreement – and Council always reserves the right not to consider an international agreement;
- Renew an existing international agreement;
- Provide hospitality or meet the costs of visiting delegations from a location with which it has an international agreement (other than where a Sister City Agreement is in place – see Attachment 2).

An international agreement:

- Other than a Sister-City Agreement, must be a non-binding agreement.
- Will have a limitation of liability clause.
- Must in no way attempt to limit or fetter Council's statutory or regulatory responsibilities – or Council's exercise of its statutory or regulatory responsibilities.
- Must not be open ended and must include a review clause of between three and five years as considered appropriate for the agreement being considered and the objectives that it seeks to fulfil.
- Other than for a Sister-City Agreement, unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer, will not include obligations on Council to organise, host and/or support youth, student (adult or child) or cultural exchanges or visitor delegations (either inbound or outbound). Such exchanges can however, be organised, hosted and/or supported by appropriate organisations within the region (at their own expense) with an international entity with whom Council has an international agreement.

Matters specific to International Delegations

International delegations may be hosted by Council as a tool to facilitate:

- greater international exposure and awareness of the region and its attributes as a destination for visitation, investment and industry development;
- opportunities to showcase the region's products, services and expertise to potential export markets; and/or
- investor and/or participant interest in specific projects or activities of value to the region.

Council is under no obligation to consider a request to receive or host international delegations unless it is an agreed element of a Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement.

As a general rule, Council will not commit resources to hosting an international delegation where the delegates (or the delegation itself):

- are travelling to the region primarily for a holiday or for recreational purposes;
- are not travelling as members or representatives of an international entity;
- have not received a prior official invitation from the Mayor to visit the region;
- do not satisfy at least five of the assessment criteria nominated below.

Any requests for Council to host an international delegation must be notified in writing to the Mayor or the Chief Executive Officer. Requests to host an international delegation should clearly demonstrate the benefits that may reasonably be expected to accrue for Council, regional businesses and industries and/or the community.

The political climate, financial stability and international reputation of the location from where the delegation emanates shall be carefully considered when deciding whether to receive and host an international delegation.

The Head of Economic Development Branch may approve the hosting of an international delegation where the delegation meets at least five of the following criteria:

1. Identifiable economic benefits may potentially develop as a result of hosting the delegation.
2. Provides an opportunity for the region to promote its competitive strengths and export capability.
3. Enhances business, industry and government connections.
4. Clear potential exists to establish new trade opportunities for Sunshine Coast businesses.
5. Provides an opportunity to promote the region as a competitive destination for visitation, business, property and infrastructure investment.
6. Is relevant to developing and generating investment in one of the seven high-value industries identified in the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy.
7. Facilitates the region's learnings from international best practice and locations of excellence.
8. The delegation (or the location or region it represents) has an existing international relationship with the Sunshine Coast Council.
9. The location or region that the delegation represents has a government structure and/or an allocated representative to maintain and further international relationships.
10. The visit to Australia by the delegation is notionally supported by Trade and Investment Queensland.

Matters specific to International Missions

Council may participate in or lead international missions as a tool to facilitate:

- greater international exposure and awareness of the region and its attributes as a destination for visitation, investment and industry development;
- opportunities to showcase the region's products, services, expertise and investment opportunities to potential export and investment markets; and/or
- investment and/or participant interest in specific Council projects or activities of value to the region.

The political climate, financial stability and international reputation of the mission destination(s) shall be carefully considered when deciding whether to participate in or lead an international mission.

An annual program of international missions will be developed and presented to Council for consideration. The annual program of international missions will reflect:

- planned and known international missions proposed to be conducted across the nominated year;
- the rationale for nominating a specific mission and the potential benefits to the region of participating in the proposed mission;
- an indication of time frames in which the mission will likely take place;
- whether a Council representative/s are proposed to participate in or lead each proposed mission; and
- the estimated travel and accommodation costs associated with the Council representative participating in each proposed mission.

The annual program of international missions that is presented for consideration by Council should also be accompanied by a report on Council's international relationships and engagement in the preceding year.

Where an opportunity arises for Council to participate in or lead an international mission that has not been previously identified in the annual program of missions endorsed by Council, the opportunity shall be assessed by the Head of Economic Development Branch against the criteria nominated below and a recommendation made to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

Where the Chief Executive Officer determines that Council should participate in or lead an international mission that has not been previously identified in the annual program of missions endorsed by Council, the Chief Executive Officer may approve Council's participation in or leadership of the mission and:

- where the Council representative is to be a Council officer – approve the Council representative to take part in the mission; or
- where the Council representative is to be a Councillor – make a recommendation to Council in relation to Council's participation in the mission.

In assessing whether Council should participate in or lead a proposed international mission, the mission should meet at least five of the following assessment criteria:

1. Identifiable economic benefits may potentially develop as a result of participating in the mission.
2. Provides an opportunity for the region to promote its competitive strengths and export capability.
3. Enhances business, industry and government connections.
4. Clear potential exists to establish new trade opportunities for Sunshine Coast businesses.
5. Provides an opportunity to promote the region as a competitive destination for visitation and investment.
6. Is relevant to developing and generating investment in one of the seven high-value industries identified in the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy.
7. Facilitates the region's learnings from international best practice and locations of excellence.
8. The mission destination(s) has an existing international relationship with the Sunshine Coast Council.
9. The mission destination(s) has a government structure and/or an allocated representative to maintain and further international relationships.
10. The mission destination is located in a Tier 3 area nominated in **Attachment 1**.

Any international travel undertaken by a Councillor or Council officer as part of participating in an International Mission must be reported in Council's Annual Report for the relevant financial year.

Roles and responsibilities

Council is responsible for:

- Deciding whether to establish a Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement.
- Approving a Sister City Agreement or Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement
- Authorising an annual program of international missions in which Council will participate or lead
- Authorising international travel by the Mayor and/or Councillors as part of participating in or leading an international mission.

The **Mayor** is responsible for:

- Issuing invitations to recommended international delegations to visit the Sunshine Coast.
- Executing approved international agreements.

The **Chief Executive Officer** is responsible for the operational aspects of this policy including:

- Managing expectations and ensuring advice is provided to Councillors on Council's international relations processes.
- Approving Council officer participation in an international mission that is assessed to be of value to the region under this Policy
- Approving council officer participation in an international mission that may be identified after the approval each year of Council's annual program of international missions.
- Authorisation of programs developed within or as a result of an international agreement.
- Ensuring commitments are delivered in relation to international delegations and missions.

The **Head of Economic Development** is responsible for:

- Ensuring all options in relation to international relationships and engagement are objectively explored.
- Approving the provision of hospitality and gifts for members of an international delegation. The

Coordinator Investment Attraction is responsible for:

- Applying the guidelines, endorsed criteria and processes and overarching principles in this Policy to all international relationships and engagements progressed under this Policy
- Identification of benefits associated with international relationships and engagements
- Assessment and formulation of recommendations in relation to international agreements and missions.
- Approving Council hosting an international delegation.
- Maintaining a register of all international agreements and an appropriate record of all international engagements.
- Approving the provision of hospitality and gifts as part of Council's participation in an international mission.

The **Chief Legal Officer** is responsible for:

- Ensuring international agreements limit Council's legal liability.
- Ensuring international agreements comply with Queensland and Australian law.

To ensure the principles and accountability mechanisms in this Policy are appropriately activated, **Councillors and all staff** are responsible for advising the Head of Economic Development of any request received by Council to:

- Initiate an international relationship
- host an inbound delegation
- participate in an international project, activity or program or
- issue a letter of invitation to a prospective international delegation
- participate in an international mission

Measurement of success

A report compiled by the Economic and Community Development Group will be presented to Council every year providing an assessment of Council's international relationships and engagement in the preceding year.

This policy will be reviewed after two years of the date of its adoption by Council to:

- ensure it remains consistent with the strategic and resource priorities of Council at that time; and
- apply any specific learnings from the development and management of International agreements, missions and delegations.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

International Agreement means a Sister City Agreement, a Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement, a Strategic Partnership Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding.

International Entities are:

- Foreign governments, their agencies or affiliated organisations
- International business organisations and/or associations
- Foreign commercial and not for profit entities

International Relationships and Engagement include (but are not limited to):

- Activities associated with negotiating, executing and maintaining an international agreement
- Activities associated with planning, organising and participating in an international mission
- Activities associated with planning, organising and hosting an international delegation.

An **international mission** involves a visitation by an authorised representative(s) of Council to an international destination to:

- Promote the region's export capabilities (goods and services) in high-value industries – notably education and research; tourism, sport and leisure; agri-business; health and well-being; aviation and aerospace; clean technologies; and knowledge industries and professional services.
- Foster regional access to trade and export opportunities in new markets.
- Profile the region as a competitive destination for visitation; business, property and infrastructure investment; and securing such investment.
- Advance the region's learnings from international best practice and locations of excellence.
- Establish networks of significant business and other contacts.

An **international delegation** involves an approved visit to the Sunshine Coast by an international entity or entities to:

- Investigate investment opportunities in the region;
- Investigate and/or negotiate trade and export relationships with business, industry and/or not for profit organisations in the region;
- Such other activity as may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and stated in any official invitation from the Mayor to the international entity.

Culture is the way a community sees itself and shows itself to others. It's the way a community expresses its values that define it as a distinctive group; values that are to be celebrated, remembered and offered to future generations.

Related policies and legislation

Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 Constitution of Queensland 2001

Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 Local Government Act 2009

Documents

Civic Functions Guidelines Business

Investment Policy Cultural

Development Policy

Sunshine Coast – The Natural Advantage: Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013 - 2033

Organisations

Trade and Investment Queensland

Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Austrade

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.0	Create New		Council Resolution (SM14/1)	18/02/2014
1.1	Updated department name and branding	N	Corporate Governance	04/01/2017
1.2	Update as per new Organisation Structure		Corporate Governance	22/11/2017

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International Relations Policy – Attachment 1

ESTABLISHING AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT

1. Requests to establish an international agreement with the Sunshine Coast Council and an international entity must be received in writing and addressed to the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer. Requests must clearly articulate the key purpose and benefits of establishing the proposed agreement.
2. Any request for a proposed international agreement will be assessed by the Strategy and Coordination Branch against the assessment criteria below.
3. Key to the evaluation process is the assessment of the risk to Council associated in establishing the proposed international relationship and accompanying agreement. To inform the assessment of this risk, Council officers will consult with Trade and Investment Queensland (and their in-market representatives) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and other relevant and creditable sources to establish an understanding of the:
 - Political climate of the international location
 - Financial stability of the international entity
 - Credibility and integrity of the international entity
 - Reliability of information provided by the international entity
 - International reputation and safety of the location
4. In considering whether to proceed with a proposed international agreement, consultation may occur with industry, educational institutions, business representative and other relevant community groups to assess the potential value that may be realised from a proposed international agreement with the proponent.
5. Following assessment using the criteria identified below, the Strategy and Coordination Branch will make a recommendation (to either the Chief Executive Officer or Council depending on the form of agreement proposed) on whether an International Agreement should be developed and the appropriate agreement type.
6. As a general rule and subject to eligibility, an international entity will only be recommended for a Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement (or a Sister City Agreement if a Charter of Mutual Friendship has been in existence for more than two years), if the entity achieves an assessment score of at least 30 points against the assessment criteria nominated below.
7. Council's Legal Services Branch will be consulted and engaged in the process of developing all international agreements to ensure legal liability is considered and statutory compliance is achieved.
8. Individual legal advice should be sought by the entities that form part of Council's international agreements. Council is not responsible for providing legal advice to other entities whom may be party to an international agreement.
9. If a party to an agreement poses a risk to, or may undermine, Council's reputation, standing and/or resources, no further consideration should be given to an international agreement with that party. The assessment of this risk shall include consideration of media reporting and other relevant considerations which influence the international reputation, standing and profile of the party (and the location of the party) seeking an international agreement with Council.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

CRITERIA	SCORE
<p>Does the location of the other party exhibit similar population, demographics and economic conditions to that of the Sunshine Coast?</p> <p>Score: Lesser conditions = 1 point; Similar conditions = 2 points; Higher conditions = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party allow good access via ports, airport and rail facilities?</p> <p>Score: one of three facilities = 1 point; two of three facilities = 2 points; three of three facilities = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party share key industry sectors with the Sunshine Coast?</p> <p>Score: 6/7 of 7 Sunshine Coast nominated high value sectors = 3 points 4/5 of 7 Sunshine Coast nominated high value sectors = 2 points 2/3 of 7 Sunshine Coast nominated high value sectors = 1 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party offer new trade and investment opportunities within key industry sectors?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; High = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party provide a stable and safe investment environment?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; High = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party offer opportunities for people to people engagement through business or industry associations?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; high = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party have educational/academic institutions – Universities, colleges, research centres - of comparable scope to the Sunshine Coast?</p> <p>Score: Lower = 1 point; Comparable = 2 points; Higher = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party provide an opportunity for the Sunshine Coast to promote its competitive strengths?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; High = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party provide an opportunity to establish formal business, industry and government connections?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; Substantial = 3 points</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party offer opportunities for cooperation in commercially applicable research?</p> <p>Score: Low = 1 point; Medium = 2 points; High = 3 points</p>	

STRATEGIC POLICY – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

<p>Stability of political climate of the location of the other party (e.g. democratic, scheduled elections; incidence of civil unrest; incidence of intervention in lawful governance; existence of a formal international governmental agreement with levels of government in Australia).</p> <p>Score: High risk = 1 point; Medium risk = 2 points; Low risk = 3 point;</p>	
<p>Does the location of the other party have a governance structure in place to oversee and maintain international relationships</p> <p>Score: No = 1 point; Developing = 2 points; Yes = 3 points</p>	
<p>What tier does the location of the other party achieve on the International Destination Priority matrix?</p> <p>Score: Tier 1 = 1 point; Tier 2 = 2 points; Tier 3 = 3 points</p>	

INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION MATRIX

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Africa	United Kingdom	People’s Republic of China
Oceanic Countries	European Union	Indonesia
South America	United States of America	New Zealand (tourism, sport & leisure and education and research)
Mexico	Canada	Eastern Europe (including Russia)
All other destinations	Mongolia	United Kingdom and European Union (tourism and education and research only)
	New Zealand	Hong Kong
	Taiwan	Singapore
	Thailand	Korea
	Vietnam	India
	Papua New Guinea (Education and Research only)	Japan
	United Arab Emirates	

International Relations Policy – Attachment 2

AGREEMENT TYPES

<p>Sister City Agreement</p>	<p>A Sister City Agreement is a longer-term partnership which takes place between the recognised government authorities of cities or regions in two different countries that generally share similar population and demographic profiles and economic interests.</p> <p>A Sister City Agreement is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of mutual respect, cooperation, understanding and tolerance. • The alignment of vision and strategic direction set by both communities through their respective legislative and policy frameworks. • Collaboration, engagement and co-operation between the government and citizens of both communities. <p>These agreements should foster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation in areas of mutual economic strength. • The development of trade and investment related activity. • Cultural understanding and the exchange of information to stimulate economic development. • International perspectives on best practice local government <p>Formalities are limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exchange of information and salutations via written and electronic communication. • The exchange of gifts when an official visit has been arranged by prior mutual agreement. • Hosting a Civic Function on the occasion of any official visit that includes the Mayor (on equivalent office holder) of the visiting Sister City. <p>Council will meet the accommodation and in-region transport costs for the Mayor (or equivalent office holder) and up to two official government staff participating in an authorised inbound delegation from a Sister City of the Sunshine Coast Council.</p> <p>A limited liability clause will be included in all Sister City agreements.</p>
<p>Application: A Sister City Agreement enables the highest level of engagement with an international entity and is executed only with a location where high value, long term economic outcomes are expected for the Sunshine Coast.</p>	

Charter of Mutual Friendship

A Charter of Mutual Friendship Agreement is a formal government to government relationship entered into primarily for establishing friendly relations and promoting economic cooperation and understanding. It is based on:

- Principles of mutual respect, cooperation and local decision-making;
- Achieving alignment of vision and strategic direction set by both communities through their respective legislative and policy frameworks;
- Stimulating collaboration, engagement and co-operation between the government and citizens of both communities.

The Charter should:

- Encourage community-to-community connections in the areas of trade, business development, culture, education and training to foster understanding, respect and opportunities for knowledge and skill transfer – where no resource cost is allocated to Council.
- Consider opportunities to exchange human and material resources and sharing of experiences and information where beneficial outcomes exist for both communities – where no resource cost is allocated to Council.
- Provide appropriate public and private contacts to facilitate the introduction and establishment of relationships between economic and educational organisations within the two communities.

Formalities are limited to:

- The exchange of information and salutations via written and electronic communication;
- The exchange of appropriate gifts when an official visit has been arranged by prior mutual agreement; and
- Hosting a Civic Function on the occasion of any official visit that includes the Mayor of the visiting Friendship City.

The Chief Executive Officer will determine whether Council will meet the cost of in-region accommodation and transport for the Mayor and up to two government officials participating in a visiting delegation from a Friendship City.

In making that determination, the Chief Executive Office will consider the significance of the relationship and the circumstances of the specific visit.

A limited liability clause will be included in all Charter of Mutual Friendship agreements. A Charter of Mutual Friendship is to be a non-binding agreement.

Application: A Charter of Mutual Friendship should be executed as an initial government to government relationship agreement, potentially as a precursor to a Sister City Agreement. It enables both parties to engage formally, to explore the potential for sharing knowledge, opportunities and networks.

Strategic Partnership Agreement

A Strategic Partnership Agreement is a formal Agreement involving the development of a specific activity, project or related group of activities that deliver a defined economic benefit.

These agreements set out specific focus areas of the parties and establish an environment that encourages the sharing of information, resources, technology and research to advance a specific activity or project in high – value industries on projects of significance to the region.

These agreements are based on:

- principles of mutual respect, cooperation and collaboration understanding and tolerance
- a mutually compatible objective(s) for both communities collaboration, engagement and co-operation between the government and citizens of both communities

The agreement should foster:

- global competitiveness
- strategic partnerships to advance a specific objective(s)
- trade and investment activity
- collaborative research
- innovation

Formalities are generally restricted to:

- The exchange of information and salutations via written or electronic communication
- At the discretion of the CEO, hosting a Civic Function on the occasion of an official visit depending on the significance of the relationship and specific project.
- Official delegations and missions, both inbound and outbound
- Hosting critical meetings associated with advancing the objectives of the agreement

A limited liability clause will be included in all Strategic Partnership Agreements. Strategic Partnership agreements are to be non-binding in nature.

Application: A Strategic Partnership Agreement is executed with the intent of activating a specific project or program where a commitment of resources may be required. It provides the framework within which to work and clearly states the role, responsibilities and the commitment of resources by each party. This type of agreement is used to formalise projects developed in specific industries where a mutual advantage has been identified.

<p>Memorandum of Understanding</p>	<p>A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a document describing a bilateral or multilateral agreement between parties that articulates a coming together of ideas between the parties to pursue a common objective.</p> <p>An MoU provides a clear statement of intent and common line of action and focus on a particular subject, area of expertise or industry of mutual importance to the parties to the agreement.</p> <p>An MoU enables Council to work with the community and/or business networks and other levels of government to scope their roles and shared expectations. An MoU is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • principles of mutual respect, cooperation, and collaboration • mutually compatible objectives for both communities engagement and co-operation between the parties to the MoU <p>Formalities are generally restricted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exchange of information and salutations via written or electronic communication • Hosting critical meetings associated with advancing the objective(s) of the MoU <p>A limited liability clause is to be included in all MoU agreements. MoU agreements are to be non-binding in nature.</p>
<p>Application: A Memorandum of Understanding is an entry point relationship agreement - commonly a precursor to all other International Agreement types endorsed by Council. It enables the establishment, growth and development of international relationships against a set of agreed goals to be achieved within defined parameters.</p>	