

Sister States of Maryland, Inc.  
Committee Structure

Sister States of Maryland, Inc. [501(c)(3)] is a private, not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of Maryland and partners with the Office of the Secretary of State's Maryland Sister States Program. Sister States of Maryland, Inc., is comprised of an extensive network of representative Volunteer Committees for development of Maryland's Sister State relationships. Together, the Sister States of Maryland, Inc. and the Maryland Sister States Program draw upon the expertise and experience of individuals from institutions, businesses, and organizations across Maryland to support these important subnational partnerships. When added to their overseas counterparts, these Volunteer Committees form a powerful network at home and abroad for fostering public/private cross-fertilization and social and economic growth.

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1. Volunteer Committees are the essence of the citizen-diplomacy, people-to-people aspect of Sister States programs. As state government administrations change, volunteer committees sustain partnerships.
2. Identify a committee chairperson; a state resident with particular interest or experience in the partner region. Via the committee chairperson's experience s/he will have a network from which to choose other members of the committee, including a vice-chairperson. The committee chairperson works closely with state government representatives on programs and projects, including choosing committee members.
3. Like the committee chairperson, committee members will also have interests and/or experience in the partner region.
4. There is no fixed number for how many people should serve on a Volunteer Committee. Starting with a smaller number is generally recommended. Committee members should understand the time commitment necessary. Sister State Volunteer Committees are working committees, not honorary positions.
5. Successful Sister State committees include a cross-section of representatives from different sectors: business, education, health/medicine, culture, sports, government etc.
6. The committee should not rely on funding from state government. Committee members will want to utilize the non-profit status of Sister States of Maryland, Inc. as a vehicle for fundraising and/or grant applications.
7. Sister State committee members will communicate regularly with their counterpart volunteer committee members in the Sister region to determine plans, programs, etc.