



Our Vision

Red Wing thrives as a vibrant, creative river town that values its natural environment, welcomes all people, and unlocks opportunity for everyone.

Our Mission

We strive to create a sustainable, healthy, accessible, resilient, and equitable community where every person feels at home.

Meeting Announcement and Agenda Sister Cities Commission Workshop Community Development Building, 419 Bush Street, Red Wing, MN Wednesday, August 26, 2026, at 5:15 PM

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comment

This period is reserved for public comment on matters not on the agenda. If a public comment is desired on an agenda item, please inform the presiding officer (Chair) or Executive Director before the meeting begins. Otherwise, be prepared to promptly seek recognition when the agenda item is considered.

3. Workshop Items

3.A. **Welcome to New Commission Member** - Kelly Marrs

3.B. **Finance Report** - Lisa

3.C. **2027 YAAS Theme Released - "A Tapestry of Cultures and the Threads that Connect Us"** - Need to establish a new committee chair and additional committee members. Contest opens September 1, 2026, and closes April 1, 2027 for Sister Cities International. Our dates will need to close by March 1 to allow for judging.

3.D. **2026 Ikata Student Exchange Wrap-Up/2027 Ikata Student Exchange Kick-off** : Discuss what went well, any potential issues to address or changes to look at making, feedback from Kelly on the time in Japan, any feedback from Andrew to share. Plans to advertise the program to students, any new avenues to explore? How do we work with the high school to promote the exchange? Any committee changes to be made?

3.E. **Quzhou Friendship Delegation** - Nothing to report, no response has been received from Quzhou regarding request to move delegation visit to Spring 2027.

3.F. **September Meeting Date** - Reminder this meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, at 5:15 pm. This is a week later than usual since I will be on vacation the week prior.

4. Adjournment

Accommodations for signing interpreter, Braille, large print, etc. can be made. Call City Hall at 385.3600 seven days prior to the need. Hearing assistance devices are available during meetings.

Red Wing Sister Cities Commission Financial Report -August 2026

101 Account - General Fund			248 Account - Sister Cities		
	Budget	Actual	Goal	Actual	
Income			Income		
From General Fund	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Student fundraising 2026 (bagging)	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,965.39 56.14 received that will go for 2027
			2026 Donations	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 10,800.00
			Carry over from previous fundraising & City transfers	\$ 25,614.10	\$ 25,614.10 Chaperone subsidy & student scholarships will be pulled from this account
			Downpayments and addtl payments from families	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,491.23 All six and then additional from Dereck, Lillian and Tanner
			Money returned to families (excess funds raised)		\$ 434.81 Hazel, Piper and Torrey
Total Income	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 40,614.10	\$ 46,305.53
Expenses - General			Expenses - General		
Young Artist Showcase Prize	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00		\$ -	\$ -
Young Artist Expenses	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
River City Days Parade	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00		\$ -	\$ -
Postage & Copying	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00		\$ -	\$ -
Misc. Expense	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 566.95		\$ -	\$ -
Total General Expense	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,116.95		\$ -	\$ -
Expenses - Ikata			Expenses - Ikata		
Chaperone Background Check	\$ 75.00		Airfare & travel agent fees & Insurance	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 21,967.61 55% increase in airfare cost (total trip was 57% increase over 2025) -
Gifts sent with Chaperone	\$ 200.00	\$ 151.03	Tour	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 3,760.54 This is based on the quote we received from andrew. Actual will depend on the value of the yen at the time of payment (includes WT fee of 161.92)
Welcome Event & Farewell Picnic	\$ 1,450.00	\$ 833.10	Chaperone Subsidy**	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,870.32 Covers the balance of airfare not covered from bagging groceries. Apprv 5/27/2026 (\$327.46 more than originally budgeted for)
Tree Planting	\$ 325.00		Student Subsidy*	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,887.26 subsidy approved 5/27/2026
T-shirts	\$ 100.00	\$ 74.06			
Miscellaneous (tickets, events, student gift bags, etc)	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 291.60			
Total Ikata Expense	\$ 3,450.00	\$ 1,349.79		\$ 22,200.00	\$ 31,485.73
Expenses - Quzhou					
Delegation to Quzhou (gifts, etc.)	\$ -	\$ -	Additional Quzhou expenses	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
Total Quzhou Expense	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
Total All 101 Expenses	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,466.74	Total All 248 Expenses		
Balance of 101	\$ -	\$ 2,533.26	Balance of 248		\$ 14,819.80

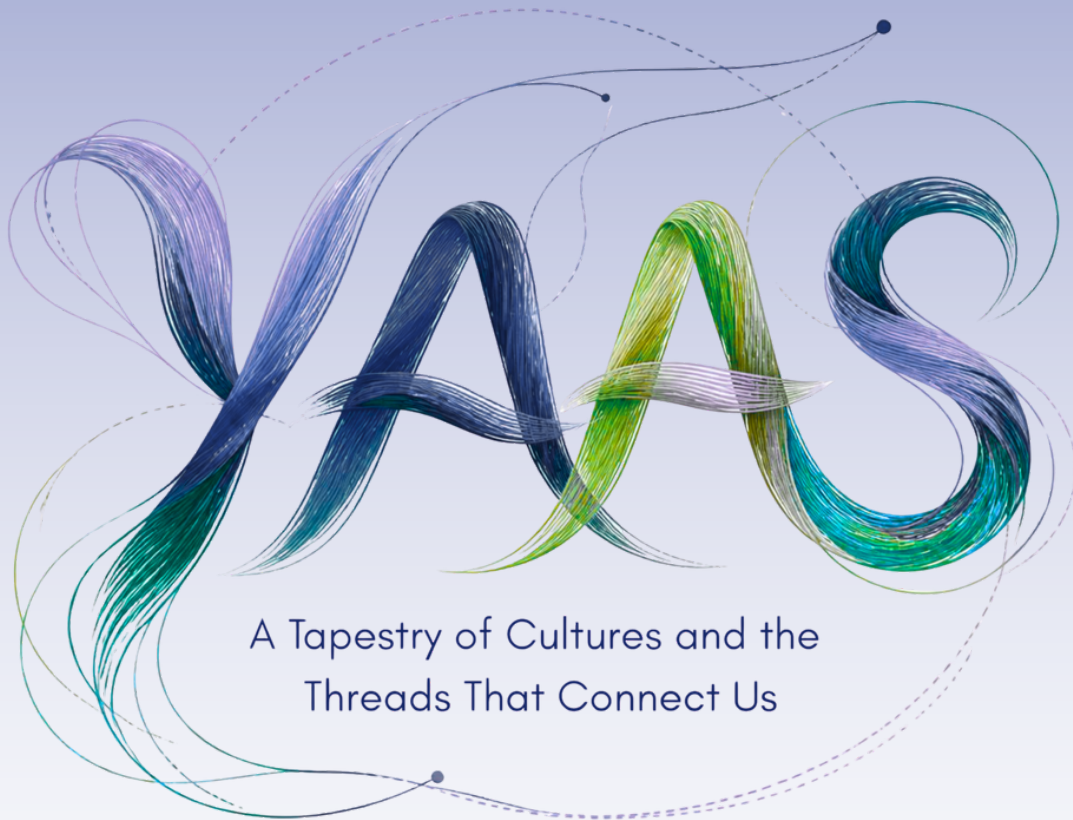
*All totals balance with GL in finance software as of 8-19-2026

6 students and 1 chaperone = 2026 Ikata Exchange

** This is a combination of funds donated, raised and transferred from the GF since 2020,figure provided by finance 2/3/2026

* Student subsidy is a "scholarship" of up to \$250 per student if fundraising falls short (raised to \$500 this year)

2027 Young Artists & Authors Showcase (YAAS)



A Tapestry of Cultures and the
Threads That Connect Us



CLASSIC ART



DIGITAL ART



PHOTOGRAPHY



ESSAY



POETRY



ORIGINAL MUSIC

What is YAAS?

The Young Artists and Authors Showcase (YAAS) is Sister Cities International's annual global competition that invites young people to explore the power of international friendship and cultural understanding through original creative expression. Participants submit original works of art, writing, photography, and music inspired by the annual theme, bringing the mission of Sister Cities International to life through their unique perspectives.

Who Can Apply?

YAAS is open to youth worldwide in two age divisions: 12-14 and 15-18. Awards are presented separately in each age group and artistic category, with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners recognized.

Prizes

In each age division and artistic category, 1st Place winners receive \$1,000, 2nd Place winners receive \$500, and 3rd Place winners receive \$250.





The 2027 YAAS Theme

A Tapestry of Cultures and the Threads That Connect Us

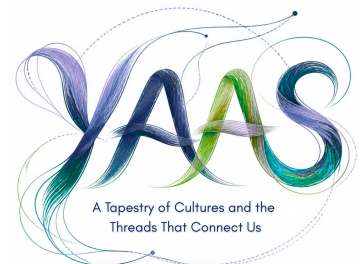
Every culture, community, and individual contributes a unique thread to the tapestry of our interconnected world. While our traditions, languages, histories, and perspectives may differ, each enriches the whole, creating stronger communities built on mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration.

This year's theme invites young artists and authors to reflect on the relationships that connect people across cultures and borders. Through friendship, cultural exchange, and shared experiences, we weave a future of peace—one shaped by curiosity, compassion, and a commitment to understanding one another. Participants are encouraged to explore how people-to-people connections can bridge differences, celebrate diversity, and inspire positive change within their communities and beyond.

The tapestry is a powerful metaphor for Sister Cities International's mission of building peace through citizen diplomacy and cultural exchange. Just as every thread contributes to the strength and beauty of a tapestry, every individual has the ability to strengthen the bonds that unite communities around the world. Through art, photography, music, poetry, and writing, participants are invited to interpret the threads that connect us and demonstrate how creativity can foster dialogue, deepen understanding, and contribute to a more peaceful and connected future.



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2027 Young Artists and Authors Showcase **Information Packet**

What is YAAS?

The Young Artists and Authors Showcase (YAAS) is an annual contest that encourages youth worldwide to express the mission of Sister Cities International through original artwork, literature, photography, and music.

2027 Theme

Sister Cities International is proud to present the 2027 Young Artists and Authors Showcase, inviting youth from around the world to express their creativity through the theme “A Tapestry of Cultures and the Threads That Connect Us.”

Every culture, community, and individual contributes a unique thread to the tapestry of our interconnected world. While our traditions, languages, histories, and perspectives may differ, each enriches the whole, creating stronger communities built on mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration.

This year's theme invites young artists and authors to reflect on the relationships that connect people across cultures and borders. Through friendship, cultural exchange, and shared experiences, we weave a future of peace—one shaped by curiosity, compassion, and a commitment to understanding one another. Participants are encouraged to explore how people-to-people connections can bridge differences, celebrate diversity, and inspire positive change within their communities and beyond.

The tapestry is a powerful metaphor for Sister Cities International's mission of building peace through citizen diplomacy and cultural exchange. Just as every thread contributes to the strength and beauty of a tapestry, every individual has the ability to strengthen the bonds that unite communities around the world. Through art, photography, music, poetry, and writing, participants are invited to interpret the threads that connect us and demonstrate how creativity can foster dialogue, deepen understanding, and contribute to a more peaceful and connected future.

Open to artists, writers, photographers, and musicians aged 12–18, the Showcase provides a unique platform to explore how creativity can unite communities, celebrate shared humanity, and envision a better future. Submissions are accepted across

various mediums, including classic art, digital art, essay, poetry, photography, and original music. Winning entries will be featured across Sister Cities International's global network, inspiring people and partnerships around the world.

We encourage our youth to be creative and examine all aspects of this year's theme, including but not limited to:

- What cultures, traditions, or experiences have shaped who you are, and how can you share them with others?
- What "threads" connect people across different cultures, countries, and communities?
- How can learning about other cultures help us build understanding, empathy, and respect?
- What traditions from the past should we carry forward, and how might we weave them into the future?
- If you could weave together ideas, traditions, or values from different cultures, what would you create?
- What does a future of peace and intercultural understanding look like to you, and what role can young people play in creating it?
- How can cultural exchange bring people together even when we come from different backgrounds?
- What is one thing you wish people around the world understood about your culture or community?
- If the world were a tapestry, what would you add to it?
- What new connections can we create today to make the world more peaceful and united tomorrow?
- How can Sister Cities partnerships bring people from different cultures together to weave stronger connections and build a more peaceful world?

Deadline and Application

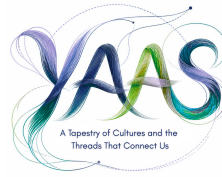
The application will be open from September 1, 2026 to April 1, 2027. The deadline for applying is April 1, 2027. To apply, go to sistercities.org.

Age Categories

This year, we are hosting two separate competitions based on age groups. Applicants aged 12-14 will compete in one showcase, while those aged 15-18 will compete in another. In each age group and each art medium, there will be a first, second, and third place winner.



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Prizes

Grand prize winners in each age group and each art medium will receive a \$1,000 prize. Second place winners will receive a \$500 prize, and third place winners will be awarded a \$250 prize.

Criteria Per Category

(1) Classic Art

- Media Accepted: Oil, acrylic, watercolor, charcoal, colored pencil, and mixed media on paper or canvas.
- Submission: A clear, high-resolution photograph or scan of the artwork in .jpg or .png format.
- Originality: All submissions must be the artist's own original work. AI-generated or AI-assisted artwork is not permitted. Any AI-generated content will be automatically disqualified.
- Restrictions: Only two-dimensional (2-D) artwork will be accepted.

(2) Digital Art

- Requirements: Minimum resolution of 1350x1080 px. Moving or animated pieces will not be accepted. Pieces should be created using digital programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Procreate, digital painting platforms, etc.
- Submission: Save the final artwork as a .jpg or .png file.
- Originality: All artwork must be original and created entirely by the student. AI-generated or AI-assisted work is strictly prohibited and will be automatically disqualified.

(3) Photography

- Requirements: Only two-dimensional (2-D) works will be accepted.
- Digital Edits: Limited digital edits (filters, lighting, color correction, cropping) are permitted, but adding or removing key elements is not allowed. If major edits are applied, submit under the Digital Art category instead.
- Submission: High-resolution photo in .jpg or .png format.

- Originality: Photographs must be taken by the student and must not include AI-generated or manipulated elements. Any AI use will result in automatic disqualification.

(4) Essay

- Requirements: Essays may be narrative, reflective, or creative nonfiction. Must be written in English and not exceed 500 words.
- Submission: Submit as .pdf or .doc file, including a title.
- Originality: All writing must be the student's original work. AI-generated or AI-assisted writing (including paraphrasing tools) is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.

(5) Poetry

- Requirements: Poems may be in any style or form (free verse, rhymed, haiku, etc.) and must be written in English. Maximum 200 words.
- Submission: Submit as .pdf or .doc file with a title.
- Originality: All poems must be original and written by the student. AI-generated or AI-assisted poetry will result in automatic disqualification.

(6) Original Music

- Requirements: Audio-only submissions; no videos. Maximum length: 4 minutes. Submissions may be instrumental or include lyrics and can be produced using instruments or music software.
- Submission: Submit as an MP3 file.
- Originality: Music must be original. Covers, reinterpretations, or remixes are not accepted. All compositions must be created entirely by the student. AI-generated or AI-assisted music (melodies, lyrics, or production) is strictly prohibited and will be automatically disqualified.

Eligibility Criteria

Please read the following details carefully. All additional questions can be directed to youth@sistercities.org.

- Students must be between 12 and 18 years of age at the time of the April 1, 2026 deadline.
- The student must be affiliated with and have a direct point of contact with a dues-paying member of Sister Cities International or an international community partnered with a dues-paying member.

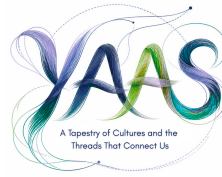
- Each student can only submit one art piece across the whole YAAS competition.
- All entries must conform to the Sister Cities International policy on plagiarism found [here](#).
- All entries must be submitted and received through the application on Submittable by due date. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Frequently Asked Questions

- I am an individual located in X country/city, am I automatically a part of a Sister City organization?
No. If you have not contacted your local sister city organization before, you are not automatically part of their network. If you have attended any events through their local programming, you might be in their network. However, all sister city organizations have their own membership procedures. There might be fees and other conditions for being part of their network. Therefore, please contact your local organization to learn more about your current status.
- Is there a sister city organization near me and how do I find my Sister City program information?
If you have any questions about your affiliation with a dues-paying member of Sister Cities International, please contact SCI Membership Manager, Ashleigh Manuel (amanuel@sistercities.org).
- I didn't know I had to be a part of a sister city program to submit my artwork. Can I still submit without their approval?
No, all submissions must be coordinated with your local sister city program.
- I am interested in hosting a competition within my local sister city program, how do I do this?
Click [here](#), to view a guide on How to Organize Your Local Competition.
- Is my school teacher my sister city contact?
Usually, your Sister City contact is different from your teacher. Almost all Sister City organizations designate one person to be the point of contact for the Showcase. However, if your teacher is directly involved with your local Sister City program, they can be your Sister City contact. Please clarify this with your local program before submitting your application form.
- Can I provide my school email address when I am filing out the submission form?
No. Please do not provide a school-affiliated email address (.edu, k12.net, etc). Most school email addresses have a security function that prohibits



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us from contacting you. Our main contact method will be email. Therefore it is essential that you provide an email address you check regularly. Lastly, please do not forget to check your spam folder as our emails will be considered “external” and might not show in your inbox.

- Do I need to send my artwork to the SCI National Office in Washington, DC?
No, all applications will be taken virtually.

Acker, Lisa

From: Bethany Borgschatz <baborgschatz@rwps.org>
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2026 2:40 PM
To: Matt Handy; Johnny Johnson; Jacobson, Diane M; Ashley Kimmell; Gloria Machado; Acker, Lisa; Mandy Arden
Subject: Open House

Good Afternoon!

Thank you to those who have signed up already for an Open House table. If you haven't already, please do so by this Thursday, August 13. This will help with planning and ensure set-up goes smoothly. I won't be there the night of, but **I will have your table labeled with your name on it so you know which one is yours!**

Community Partners Open House Table

If you have any other questions or need anything before that, please let me know.

Thank you!

-Bethany

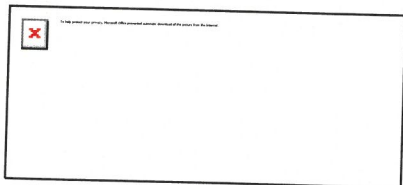
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Bethany Borgschatz

Assistant to the Principal

Graduation and Local Scholarship Organizer

Graduation Information: Class of 2027

651-385-4603



Hazel - 12-2
Torrey 2-4
Kelly M - 12-430
Tammy + Ella - 430-6
Ingrid 6-7

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Red Wing Sister Cities 2026 Committee Assignments

Updated 6/25/2026

Quorum number will be 6 for 2026 based on 10 voting commission members. All committees can now have 5 voting members and no limit on non-voting members.

Ikata Student Exchange Committee (2) – Dani DeWitt and Ashlyn Werner– will be the go between for these two committees and keep things on track.

Subcommittee 1- advertising the program to recruit a chaperone and students, make changes/review chaperone materials, interviews, organizing parent meeting, fundraising (grocery bagging deposits/letter writing with students), reserving hotel for students & chaperone from Ikata, and organizing the cultural and language meetings with the students and chaperone.

1. Austin Knott
2. Ingrid Hokanson
3. Tammy Jaynes
4. Ashlynn Werner
5. Dani Dewitt

Subcommittee 2 – Reserves Colvill and organizes welcome dinner, reserves Baypoint and organizes farewell dinner, sets up the activities in Red Wing for exchange (including parade), gets the gifts for the students and Ikata commission and works with Dawn on t-shirts.

1. Ashlyn Werner
2. Dani DeWitt
3. Tricia Perau
4. Kendal Swanson
5. Open

Ikata/Quzhou Friendship Delegation Committee – Will need members and a chair once we gets some dates and an invitation to come to Quzhou.

1. **Tao Peng (continue as a volunteer after term ends 12/31/2025) – community volunteer**
2. Kim Clancy
3. Alexandra Klitzke
4. Open
5. Open

YAAS Artist Showcase

1. Renee Kreye - Chair
2. Dani DeWitt
3. Ingrid Hokanson
4. Open

Community Visibility Committee (no chair needed)

1. Lisa Acker – (Facebook) Staff Liaison and Instagram

Finance Committee

1. Lisa Acker – Staff Liaison
 - **If more than quorum is present during a meeting, conference call or email chain, it is considered a public meeting and must be posted beforehand.** You will be notified when the number for quorum changes as it varies depending on how many voting members are currently on the Commission.
 - **Committee Chairs oversee their respective committee** and will be responsible for **giving the committee updates during the monthly meetings**, if necessary.
 - Committee Chairs should notify the Commission Chair **at least ONE WEEK PRIOR** to the meeting if they want to bring something to a vote or want something discussed during the meeting. This allows the Commission Chair and Staff Liaison to add the item/s to the agenda and post it in a timely manner.