Meet the Sisters

Currently, 72 communities in Hokkaido have sister-city or friendship agreements with 115 cities in 19 countries. Many of these cities are located in Canada, the United States, Russia, China and other northern countries or regions with climates or scenery similar to Hokkaido. Here are just some of the exchange relationships that are between Hokkaido communities and cities of the world, right now.

Shenyang (China) Nov. 1980
Shenyang in China gain momentum. Subsequent links between schools, citizens groups and businesses, as well as links within the fields of art, culture, economics and sport have helped deepen friendship and understanding between both parties.

Novosibirsk (Russia) June 1990
The relationship with Novosibirsk came about as a result of the city’s participation in the Siberia Expo that was held in Sapporo in 1974. Both cities share similar histories and are of similar scale, and are both the central cities of the regions in which they are located. The agreement was made to actively carry out a variety of exchanges in numerous fields, including art and culture, and youth-related activities.

Daejeon (South Korea) Oct. 2010
The signing of the sister city agreement with Daejeon Metropolitan City took place between Sapporo’s Mayor Ueda and Daejeon’s Mayor Yeom Hong-chul under the watchful eye of over 250 participants, including residents of both cities. Subsequent exchanges between citizens groups in a wide range of fields have helped build permanent friendships and contribute to the peace and prosperity of both nations.

Harbin (China) Nov. 1995
Capital of the Chinese province of Heilongjiang, with a population of approximately 9.92 million, Harbin is a city in the north of China, bordering Russia, China and other northern countries or regions with climates or scenery similar to Hokkaido. Here are just some of the exchange relationships that exist between Hokkaido and Harbin.

The port city of Portland is located at the junction of the Willamette and Columbia rivers in the northwest of the state of Oregon, at almost the same latitude as Sapporo. Both cities were developed by pioneers and have similar climates and scenery, prompting the relationship that kick-started Sapporo’s history of sister city agreements.

Portland (USA) Nov. 1959
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Munich (Germany) Aug. 1972
Munich and Sapporo—two cities famed for their beer and for hosting the summer and winter Olympic Games, respectively in 1972. The cities have numerous things in common, including being located at similar latitudes and having similar populations. Hokkaido and the German state of Bavaria, where Munich is located, are both agricultural areas in which stockbreeding is an important industry. The sister city agreement was signed at the City Offices in Munich on the 3rd day of the Munich Olympics.

Suwon (South Korea) Oct. 1989
The provincial capital of Gyeonggi Province, approximately 40 km south of the Republic of Korea’s capital, Seoul. The city has a population of approximately 1.1 million, and thriving electronics, chemical and food industries. Steeped in tradition, the city has many historical remains, including the Hwaeseong Fortress (World Heritage site), which was built in the 18th century.

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (Russia) Nov. 1967
Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk is the capital city of the Russian island of Sakhalin and has a population of approximately 182,000. As well as thriving metal processing, food and paper industries, the city also boasts a joint national university and scientific academy research institute and is the industrial, administrative and cultural center of the province.

Halifax (Canada) Nov. 1982
In response to citizens’ calls for an overseas sister city relationship, the agreement with Halifax—a similar type of city famous for the star-shaped Halifax Citadel similar to Hakodate’s special historic Goryokaku fort site—was established as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations of Hakodate being made a city.

Vladivostok (Russia) July 1992
The agreement with Vladivostok was made to commemorate Hakodate’s 70th anniversary as a city, and brought about the opening of the Russian Far Eastern National University Campus in the city. Exchange visits by administrative, economic and civic groups from both cities regularly take place, as do observation tours by city employees, medical technicians and economic study groups, not to mention exchanges in the fields of youth education, sport and culture.

Tianjin (China) Oct. 2001
Thanks to charter flights between Hakodate and the city of Tianjin, many local residents visit the respective sister cities, taking advantage of the services operated with the aim of establishing a scheduled international route. Various exchanges have subsequently blossomed, including those in the fields of administration and education.

Goyang (South Korea) Aug. 2011
The city of Goyang is easily accessible from the capital of Seoul and Incheon International Airport, to which scheduled international flights from Hakodate Airport have begun. Sustainable, practical exchanges in the fields of economics, tourism, education, culture and sports are expected from the sister city relationship, with sporting and educational links already beginning in the private sector.
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Asahikawa
Located in Mclean County in the state of Illinois, USA, Bloomington and Normal are twin cities with respective populations of 77,000 and 52,000. The two cities form the center of commerce, industry and agriculture in the state, and are academic communities where the state university is located.

Bloomington and Normal (USA) Oct. 1962

Shenyang, the capital of the Chinese province of Liaoning, is located approximately 40 km south of the Republic of Korea’s capital, Seoul. The city has a population of approximately 1.1 million, and thriving electronic, chemical and food industries. Steeped in tradition, the city has many historical remains, including the Hwaseong Fortress (World Heritage site), which was built in the 18th century.

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (Russia) Nov. 1967
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Harbin (China) Nov. 1995
Capital of the Chinese province of Heilongjiang, with a population of approximately 9.92 million, Harbin is a strategically important hub for the rail, waterborne transportation and road networks of the region, and one of China’s prominent heavy-industry cities. It is famous for its ice festival, which is held every year.

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Hakodate

Halifax (Canada) Nov. 1982

Vladivostok (Russia) July 1992

Hakodate

Lake Macquarie (Australia) July 1992
The sister city agreement with the City of Lake Macquarie in Australia also took place as part of the 70th anniversary celebrations of Hakodate becoming a city. Administrative, economic, civic and youth exchange activities take place between the two communities.

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (Russia) Sept. 1997
Relations between the two cities began with the opening of the Hakodate – Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk international scheduled air route between the two cities’ airports in April 1994. Subsequently, homestay programs for junior high school students, as well as exchange programs for civic groups and members of economic circles have also taken place.

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Lake Macquarie (Australia) Lake Macquarie

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (Russia) Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk

Shenyang (China) Tianjin (China)

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