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**INDIANAPOLIS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S  
INNOVATION AWARD (ARTS AND CULTURE)**

WASHINGTON, DC – Indianapolis Sister Cities International (ISCI) won Sister Cities International's 2015 Innovation Award (Arts and Culture) for a city with a population greater than 500,001. The 2015 Sister Cities International Innovation Award (Arts and Culture) recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

The mission of ISCI is to promote international awareness and understanding through cultural, educational, civic and business engagement. Designing, creating and implementing cultural and educational initiatives are 80% of its framework and focus. Twenty-eight of its 41 projects completed in 2014 were culturally focused and included exhibitions at public libraries, partnerships with non-profits, and planning the third annual Sister Cities Fest in September.

Sister Cities Fest is a cultural street festival highlighting each of Indianapolis' eight sister cities. Live music, performances, and world sports examples from each of the international cities helped educate fest-goers. Sister Cities Fest brings in between \$16,000 and \$25,000 in profit for the ISCI program to help fund and conduct numerous programs and initiatives. Sixteen sponsors (including Lilly Foundation, IUPUI, Citizens Energy Group, Indy Eleven, and Westfield Outdoors), 31 exhibitors, 80 entertainers and over 200 volunteers helped make Sister Cities Fest 2014 a success.

Indianapolis Sister Cities estimated that over 50,000 individuals experienced a cultural program hosted by Indianapolis Sister Cities and its partners in 2014.

Sister Cities International's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts & Culture, Economic Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth & Education), Volunteer of the Year, and Youth Leadership. Award winners will be honored at a special ceremony on Saturday, July 18 during Sister Cities International's 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Sister Cities International 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will bring together elected and municipal officials, engaged citizens, diplomats, and business leaders in Minneapolis, Minnesota to discuss, "Building Generations for Peace." Conference sessions will provide attendees with opportunities to learn about strengthening their sister city programs through informative sessions led by experts and industry leaders. For more information on the 2015 Sister Cities International Annual Conference, please visit: [www.SisterCitiesConference.org](http://www.SisterCitiesConference.org).

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**About Sister Cities International**

Founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for over 545 individual sister cities, counties, and states across the United States with relationships in over 2,100 communities in 145 countries. This sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote peace and understanding through programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, economic and sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance.

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