



2015 OSAKA, JAPAN SOCIAL SERVICE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) is committed to promoting Chicago as a global city, developing international partnerships and networks, and sharing best practices on a city-to-city basis with its 28 sister cities, including Osaka, Japan, with whom we have shared a sister city relationship for 42 years. CSCI strives to develop and expand community, education and business partnerships between Chicago and its sister cities. Through long-term partnerships, CSCI creates opportunities for citizens and city officials to experience and explore other cultures. Each year, the 28 committees execute a wide range of projects focused on economic development, culture, business, education, social services, the environment, and healthcare.

The Osaka-Chicago Social Services Exchange was an initiative that began in 2008 with a focus on understanding the needs and supports for youth and families, persons with disabilities, and older adults, and a goal of improving systems and service delivery to these vulnerable populations. The exchange convenes interdisciplinary professionals from both cities to build relationships, deepen cultural understanding, and share best practices related to their varied work in human services. Chicago and Osaka have alternated hosting the exchange.

Our sixth exchange will take place from **November 7 to 13, 2015**. Five interdisciplinary social service professionals will be selected from the metropolitan Chicago area to visit sites and dialogue with Japanese professionals about their culture and best practices in social services. The theme of this year's exchange is "**Sustainable and Inclusive Outreach Programs.**" Participants will explore the following questions:

1. *How do we, as social service professionals, identify potential clients who are in need of services but are not currently seeking or receiving any support?*
2. *How do we advocate for the needs of these potential clients as well as sustain services for them on a long-term basis?*

Professionals from Chicago and Osaka will discuss what has and hasn't worked as well as participate in dialogue relating to the cultural issues both sides face in the context of the theme.

The exchange will conclude with a one-day conference where delegates will have an opportunity to discuss and compare best practices between cultures. Chicago delegates will develop Individual Action Plans to result in concrete outcomes. A former exchange participant reported, "This was a once in a lifetime opportunity...I and my social service practice have been changed forever by this experience."

The Osaka Social Services Exchange Subcommittee Mission

The Osaka Committee's Social Service Exchange Subcommittee serves as a conduit for "cultural discourse", a mutual sharing of professional social service knowledge, skills, and cultural experiences to enhance social services in our global community:

- Develops sister-city multidisciplinary social service exchanges where future leaders, practitioners, administrators, supervisors, academics and others from different parts of the world come together.
- Cultivates leadership within subcommittees to sustain and expand the exchanges.
- Shares best practices and policy experiences to improve social services globally.
- Educates and promotes international collaboration overcoming cultural divisions.
- Develops ongoing projects, which promote human potential and functioning.

Eligibility

1. Social Service professional working in the Chicagoland area (*the delegation is interdisciplinary and may include direct service providers, nonprofit administrators, government workers, clinical practitioners, foundation staff/leadership, special educators, transition specialists, and university faculty/staff/students*);
2. Desire to integrate an international perspective in one's social service practice;
3. Commits to serve on the Subcommittee to sustain future exchanges;
4. Will participate in group orientation prior to and debrief after the exchange;
5. Some knowledge of Japanese language/culture is preferred but not required;
6. Due to long workdays, personal stamina is required.

Costs

Chicago delegates will be responsible for securing and paying for their individual round-trip airfare (approximately \$1300- \$1,600) and accommodations (approximately \$70/night based on double occupancy). Partial flight and other scholarships may be available. Evidence of need may be required. Participants should also be prepared to budget approximately \$200 for food and transportation. Costs will fluctuate based on exchange rate.

Timeline

Complete applications will be due via email no later than **FRIDAY, MAY 22nd at 5:00 p.m.** Interviews will take place in late May with final delegate decisions made by early to

mid June. Orientation meetings will take place in September and October in preparation for the November exchange.

Application

Application instructions are provided below. Please email completed applications to Heather Joerger Li, Manager of International Programs at Chicago Sister Cities International, at hli@chicagosistercities.com. For questions, please email Heather or contact her by phone at 312-201-4537.

Application for 2015 Osaka Social Service Exchange Program

Name: _____

Title: _____ Length of Time in Position: _____

Employer: _____

Work Phone: _____ Work Email: _____

Home Address: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____ Personal Email: _____

Preferred Contact: _____ Work _____ Home

If selected, I agree to: 1) participate in the exchange orientation and post debriefing; 2) complete the exchange program with the delegation; 3) attend meetings and participate with the Osaka Social Services Subcommittee's ongoing activities to sustain the exchange, including planning to receive a delegation in Chicago in 2016; and 4) integrate international and intercultural perspectives in my practice, management/supervision, research and teaching/training in ways that are relevant to my work.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit this cover page with a current resume and personal narrative that addresses the items below. Please limit your response to 2 pages or 850 words.

- a. Describe your current role, primary area(s) of expertise relative to social services, and any specific populations with whom you have worked.
- b. Describe your interest and motivation to apply. What specifically do you hope or expect to learn? How does this support your personal and professional growth?
- c. How might you and your organization/agency contribute and support the work of the Social Services Exchange Subcommittee (e.g. planning/hosting activities for future exchanges, providing financial or in-kind contributions, incorporating best practices learned) and/or other Sister Cities' or other Osaka Committee work?
- d. Please describe any knowledge or experience with Japanese culture and/or language.
- e. Please describe additional skills, if any, you could offer to the delegation (e.g. Japanese language/translation; facilitating a cross-cultural workshop; photography, social media, blogging; report writing; fundraising; musical performance, etc.)