



## Global Philadelphia: Meet the World Here

Global Philadelphia Association (GPA) was founded in 2010 with the goal of promoting international awareness to improve Philadelphia's potential as a global powerhouse. With more than 250 members, including universities, businesses, cultural organizations, and community groups, we aim to foster greater international cooperation among organizations within the Greater Philadelphia region.

In 2015, GPA worked with our partners across the region to successfully bid for Philadelphia to become the first ever [World Heritage City in the United States](#). The city achieved this special designation because we have a UNESCO World Heritage Site of "outstanding universal value," which is [Independence Hall](#), and because of our region's rich array of historic buildings and cultural sites, including [67 National Historic Landmarks](#).

To celebrate Philadelphia becoming a World Heritage City, Mayor Jim Kenney declared the last Thursday of each May to be Philadelphia World Heritage Day. This annual event is an important part of bringing awareness of Philadelphia's World Heritage City to all city residents.

Each year, the celebration is carried out in a different location and in a different way. In 2019, World Heritage Day was held at Independence Hall in honor of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this national icon's UNESCO designation. In partnership with the National Park Service, we celebrated the city's potential as a democratic and economic giant on the global stage.

The day's event included remarks by Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney, Councilman Mark Squilla, Global Philadelphia Association Executive Director Zabeth Teelucksingh and Board Chair Robert J. McNeill, and National Park Service Director Cynthia McLeod, who each emphasized the importance of Independence Hall's anniversary celebration and what it has meant for Philadelphia's status. Additionally, we honored the other locations that also received World Heritage Site designations in 1979, including the Palace of Versailles, France, and the Ancient City of Thebes, Egypt.

Philadelphia earned the World Heritage City designation when we joined the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC). The OWHC provides an open forum for communication and sharing of best practices regarding the urban management of World Heritage properties. GPA recently led a delegation to Krakow, Poland to attend the 2019 World Congress of the OWHC. Representatives from Philadelphia included GPA's Board Chair and Managing Partner at Deloitte, Robert J. McNeill, GPA's Executive Director Zabeth Teelucksingh and World Heritage Program Manager Melissa Stevens, as well as City Representative Sheila Hess, Deputy City Representative Margret Hughes, Launch Director of USA250, Danielle DiLeo Kim, and Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park, Cynthia MacLeod.

The theme of the 2019 World Congress was centered on heritage and local tourism and members from our city presented on communicating heritage in collaboration with communities.

Philadelphia plans to increase its engagement with the OWHC in the hopes of bringing our city into larger international discussions. GPA also looks forward to participating in conversations around opportunities to enhance international tourism throughout our region during the China Tourism Forum 2019-USA, co-hosted by the School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management at Temple University and the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.