

Policy Title:

19. Programs, Events, Outreach

Policy Type	Approval Date	Motion No.	Review Date
Operational	September 2023	13 - 2023	2026

Definitions

Programs, events and outreach are defined as any group activity offered to the community that the Library plans and hosts on its own, in partnership with another organization or via a third party contract.

In-house programs are programs or events that are offered on the Library grounds or in an online environment. These programs are offered using Library resources (or with the assistance of sponsorships), planned, and hosted by Library employees and marketed by the Library.

Outreach programs/events are programs that are offered using Library resources, coordinated by Library employees but may or may not be marketed by the Library. These programs often target specific audiences, may happen in partnership with other community organizations, and may be held at another location other than the Library facility.

For the general purposes of this policy the word ‘program’ will encompass programs, events and outreach unless specific reference to one definition is required.

General Policy

Programs are integral components of the Brockville Public Library’s commitment to our strategic statement “*engage | evolve | experience*”.

Community engagement raises the Library’s profile in the community and has a positive impact on Library use and the community at large. It is a strong mechanism for outreach and promotion which allows the Library to forge partnerships with a wide variety of groups and individuals.

Program initiatives support the Library’s mission and align with the Library’s strategic directions/ service priorities.

Programs are designed and offered to:

- stimulate the imagination.
- foster innovation.
- respond to the needs and interests of the community.
- fill service gaps in the community while also complementing and supplementing programs offered elsewhere in the community.
- foster a love of reading and lifelong learning.
- assist emergent readers.
- highlight the Library's collections and resources.
- serve as a forum for networking and connecting, idea sharing, information gathering and education.
- foster and promote community development.
- celebrate and promote equity, diversity and inclusion.
- promote an awareness of contemporary issues and information.
- attract new and diverse audiences to the Library.
- a focus on priority populations
- offer training and assistance with new technologies and the use of the Library system.
- provide a safe, welcoming environment for meetings with others.
- be financially feasible and operate within budget guidelines.

Brockville Public Library is committed to providing quality Library programs that are accessible to all persons who wish to participate at the Library.

The Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom and supports the rights of individuals to respectfully exchange differing points of view on any subject. To accomplish this, the Library may present controversial programs in order to ensure public access to all sides of an issue. Library presentation or hosting of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by presenters or participants.

All policies of the Brockville Public Library apply to programs.

Programs will comply with applicable federal or provincial laws and municipal by-laws/regulations.

The Library will post in a public location the Photo and/or Video Consent notice prior to taking photographs and videos which may be used in Library promotion. See Appendix A.

Program Delivery

Presenters

Programs will be presented by trained Library staff or may feature experts from the community including:

- authors and illustrators
- performers
- professionals and experts

- individuals representing community partners/agencies.

The Library may allow presenters to display products or books for sale to the audience. Pre-approval is required from the CEO.

An external program presenter may be paid a defined honorarium to be approved by the CEO prior to program delivery. Guest presenters may also be given a token of appreciation.

Fees

As a public library, every effort is made to provide free access to information and ideas through collections, programs, and services. In general, programs will be offered without charge to attendees unless cost recovery is required to deliver the program or the program is offered as a Library fundraiser. Donations to Library programming are always welcome.

If applicable, fees for registered programs must be paid at the time of registration. Registration and admission fees are non-refundable including when the program does not meet the expectations of the participant. Refunds will be made under the following circumstances:

- If the paid participant cancels registration five (5) business days before the program
- If the Library or presenter cancels the program

Attendance

The Library may limit program attendance based on safe use of space or when the successful delivery of a program requires a defined number of people. Participation will be based on a first come, first served basis, either through advanced registration or at the door. The following exceptions will apply:

- The Library reserves the right to limit the number of event tickets per person.
- The Library may be unable to accommodate larger groups at registered or drop-in programs. Examples of larger groups include classes, daycares, camps, and community residences. Special arrangements for groups should be pre-arranged through the guidelines outlined in Facility Policy 12 -5: Tours and Events

The Library may set age guidelines for participation in children's programs when those programs are tailored to meet the different developmental stages of children, or when the Library staff or program facilitator recommends that the content is best suited to a particular audience.

Cancellation

The Library reserves the right to cancel programs when necessary and will make every effort to notify the public.

Locations

Programs may be delivered within the Library facility, in other suitable locations within the community and/or virtually.

Home Delivery

The Library offers home delivery and pick-up service of resources to individuals with valid Library cards who are unable to visit the Library facility. This program is coordinated by designated employees and volunteers who have been selected and screened through the Library's Volunteer Program. See Volunteer Policy – 14.

Program Planning

The following factors will be considered when planning and executing a program:

- responsibility
- intended audience.
- day and time
- location
- budget
- promotion
- alignment with BPL mission

The Library may participate in cooperative programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals with the understanding that these programs must meet the interests and information needs in the community. Programs requesting Library staff or resources will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, based on the factors above including the following considerations:

- enhancement of the Library's role in the community
- availability of staff and/or resources
- supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion

Program Evaluation

To determine community needs and interests, the Library regularly evaluates community responses and suggestions for its programs. It also periodically reviews community profiles and uses various mechanisms to gather community input to assist in setting programming priorities and plans.

All programs are designed and evaluated with measurable outcomes in mind.

The Library will have a process available for user feedback and expressions of opinions/concerns about programs. Program evaluation forms are available at the Library, on the Library's website and in Appendix B of this policy.

Suggestions for Programming

The public are encouraged to suggest topics for future programs and events. These suggestions will be considered in light of the program design list above and Library resources. Not all suggestions will be used.

Program and Event Proposal Forms are available at the Library, on the Library's website and in Appendix C of this policy.

Liability

The Library does not assume responsibility for damages, personal injury, illness or theft arising from participation in a program or at any other location where a program is held.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to inform program facilitators if a child has any pertinent medical, physical or allergy issues.

The Library does not assume responsibility for the supervision of minors attending programs. Parents and caregivers are required to attend programs for children less than four (4) years of age. For most programs for children four (4) to ten (10) years of age, parents may choose to not attend the program but must remain in the Library building during the program, preferably in or near the programming room. The Library does not assume responsibility for children while on Library property. See Facility Policy 12 – 8: Children in the Library.

Responsibility & Budget

The Library assigns the responsibility of community outreach and programming to designated employees. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all Library programming initiatives support the Library's current strategic plan, are delivered by professionally competent individuals and have quantitative and qualitative measurable outcomes. The programming budget is established annually by the CEO.

*Sources: Kingston Frontenac Public Library
Huntsville Public Library
Halifax Public Library*