Library Programming Policy

Statement of Purpose

Cheltenham Township Library System (CTLS) provides access to programming for adults, teens and children in support of its role as a community gathering place and as an advocate of literacy and lifelong learning. Programming is an integral vehicle for realizing our vision and mission.

CTLS provides programming that:

- Expands the library's role as a community resource
- Introduces patrons and non-users to library resources
- Provides entertainment and enrichment
- Provides opportunities for lifelong learning
- Expands the visibility of the library

CTLS provides free access to library services to all and provides programming that aligns with the library's mission and goals as outlined in the strategic plan. Library staff strategically select and schedule presenters, topics, and formats based on these guiding factors, and in accordance with the guidelines stated by the American Library Association in its Library Bill of Rights which upholds the principles of intellectual freedom

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants. Library staff selects topics, speakers and resource materials for library-initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library-initiated programs because of possible controversy.

Responsibility for Program Planning/Management

Authority for program planning and management is delegated by the Board of Library Directors to the Library Director and the Director's designated staff. Program suggestions and proposals from presenters and members of the community are welcome, However, Library staff retains the right to determine which programs and events are scheduled.

Program Planning Criteria

Library staff may use, but are not limited to, the following criteria and considerations in program planning. A program need not meet all the criteria to be acceptable, nor will any single criterion be decisive. Neither

the order of the general criteria nor the order of items in a list of specific criteria indicates relative importance.

- Relation to library mission, strategic plan, and service goals
- Community needs and interest
- Presentation quality and treatment of content for intended audience
- Presenter background/qualifications/reputation
- Budget and staffing considerations
- Historical or educational significance
- Relevance and timeliness of local, world, and current events
- Health or safety considerations
- Representation of diverse cultural backgrounds, opinions, and viewpoints
- Connection to other community programs, exhibits or events
- Popular appeal
- Suitability for intended audiences
- Availability of physical and virtual library space & resources (which includes staff and technology)

Co-Sponsored/Partner Programs & Professional/Volunteer Presenters

CTLS may host, partner or co-sponsor with other agencies, organizations, and businesses provided the programs are compatible with the library mission and goals outlined in our strategic plan. The library may generate joint programming and invite partners to co-sponsor or collaborate. Co-sponsored programs must include involvement by library staff in the planning.

Professional performers and presenters who offer specialized or unique expertise may be hired for library programs.

Volunteer presenters with recognized credentials relating to the programming topic and with public performance experience may be used if approved in advance by the Head Librarian and Library Director. Offers to provide free programming at the library are subject to review by the Head Librarian and Library Director. Presenters/facilitators of ongoing programs will be considered volunteers and will be subject to the appropriate background checks. CTLS is under no obligation to accept such offers.

Library staff will work with co-sponsors, performers and presenters to develop an advertising plan. All related advertising for programs must be pre-approved by Library staff.

Additional Considerations

- Programs must be non-commercial and non-partisan and must not be designed to promote a product or a particular point of view.
- Merchandise may only be sold at programs if at least 10% of the proceeds benefit the library, and if arrangements to do so have been approved in advance by the Head Librarian.
- All programming is subject to the requirements of local, state and federal regulations.

- Programs are scheduled to occur during normal hours of operation. All requests to open or close the library outside of those hours must receive approval in advance from library administration.
- Programs are open to the general public, but some programs may be designed with specific audiences in mind.
- In no case will attendance at a program be limited because the content of the program may be controversial.
- In some cases, the nature and success of a program may require that attendance is limited based on age, especially programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and developmental needs.
- Audience size is determined by the facility's capacity and by the presenter. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis, either with advanced registration or at the door.
- Programs may be held onsite at the Library, off-site, or virtually via video conferencing software, such as Zoom, or a combination of all of these modes.
- The Library staff has the discretion to cancel programs based on library needs, to be rescheduled or not. Staff will provide as much notice as possible. This includes weather-related cancellations.
- All library programs, with rare exception, are free to the participants.
- All program attendees and presenters are subject to the *Library Behavior Policy*. Library staff will remove any participants in virtual or in-person programs who continually disrupt the program or violate any library policies or procedures.
- The library reserves the right to use video or photographs taken of program participants for internal use, publication, and use in promotional outlets, and for evaluation purposes. Please see the *Library Filming, Photography and Video-recording Policy* for further details.

This Programming Policy Does Not Apply To

- Events developed for special library-related purposes such as donor recognition, fundraising, or media conferences.
- Programs offered by other organizations on library premises where space is reserved under the terms and conditions of the *CTLS Meeting Room Policy*.

Request for Reconsideration

CTLS welcomes expressions of opinion from patrons concerning programming. Patrons should address questions about a program with a library staff member. Patrons who wish to continue their request for review of library programs may submit the Request for Reconsideration form. Requests for review of programs will be considered in the same manner as the *Collection Development Policy*.

Title	Library Programming Policy
Date Approved	9/23/2009
Revisions	2024
Review Date	2026