



POLICY

Policy Type: Library Services **Policy Number:** 03-13
Policy Title: Programming

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide the public, community partners, and external program facilitators with information about the objectives and guiding principles of programming at St. Thomas Public Library (STPL). It is also meant to provide STPL staff with a written framework to guide program development, delivery, and evaluation.

Guiding Principles: Programs and events offered by the St. Thomas Public Library will:

- Be consistent with the library's mission and strategic directions.
- Be responsive to the current needs and interests of the community.
 - Information about needs and interests will be gathered via community asset mapping, identification of gaps in service, dialogue with other service providers, and direct contact with community members via surveys, informal conversation, focus groups, etc.
- Reflect the diversity found in our community and be inclusive of all members of our community.
- Be developed with outcomes in mind.
 - Outcomes may include but are not limited to: promotion of STPL's resources, encouraging the public to visit the library, supporting customers in the effective use of materials and services, facilitating connections between community members, and supporting literacy and life-long learning.

Scope: This policy applies to programs facilitated by STPL staff and volunteers, programs facilitated by programmers engaged by STPL (with or without a fee being paid), as well as partnership programs. Programs may be delivered either in person or on a virtual platform.

This policy does not apply to programs and events offered by external facilitators who have rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of STPL's Facility Policy. External facilitators are bound by the terms of STPL's Facility Policy.

Policy Statement: St. Thomas Public Library (STPL) provides programming to the public to support its strategic goals; namely, being deeply aware of the community, supporting fearless exploration, making meaningful connections, developing flexible spaces, and redefining library.

Programs are intended to:

- Raise the library's profile, reinforcing its essential role in the community
- Encourage use of the library's resources
- Support customers in the use of the library's resources
- Support all types of literacy and lifelong learning

STPL is committed to providing equitable access to services for all members of the St. Thomas community.

Library programming shall not exclude topics, books, speakers, media and/or other resources because they might be controversial.

The library does not conduct programming that is purely commercial or religious in nature. However, the sale of publications may be permitted in conjunction with an author's visit as part of an in-house program. In such cases, all responsibility for the sale of such material rests with the author and/or their designate.

The library will not offer programs focused solely on the sale of a publication, regardless of the book's merit or origin. Notwithstanding the above, from time to time, the library may offer sales of items or books which are a reflection of our community, such as local history, or Friends of St. Thomas Public Library publications.

STPL does not charge for program participation in most circumstances. STPL reserves the right to charge a fee for program participation to cover direct costs if the program could not otherwise be offered.

Program facilitators (whether library staff, external presenters engaged by library staff, or external facilitators who have rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of the Facility Policy) and attendees are bound by all applicable library policies, including the Rules of Conduct and Trespass. These policies are binding for both in-person and virtual programs.

Program Development: Staff led in-house and outreach programs, whether offered in-person or virtually, are developed with reference to STPL's mission and strategic directions. Program planning includes defining required resources, identifying program activities and outputs, and determining desired outcomes.

Programs delivered by partners or by external presenters engaged by the library must also meet these requirements. Staff members coordinating such programs are responsible for ensuring that this happens.

Programs developed by external facilitators who have rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of the Facility Policy are bound by the terms and conditions of that policy.

Program Delivery: Programs, whether offered in-person or virtually, will be delivered by qualified library staff members, partners, or external presenters engaged by the library, as appropriate.

Programs delivered via a virtual platform will also:

- Abide by any copyright restrictions specific to sharing materials in a virtual and/or recorded format
- Ensure that appropriate security protocols are followed (e.g. private links and password protection for virtual meetings)
- Not be recorded without the prior knowledge and consent of all participants.

Programs delivered by external facilitators who have rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of the Facility Policy are bound by the terms and conditions of that policy.

Attendance at programs, whether in-person or virtual, may be limited based on space capacity or when the nature of the program requires it. In this case, participation will be based on a first come, first served basis via registration or ticket distribution.

STPL may set age guidelines for participation in children's programming when these programs are developed for different developmental stages, or when the program developer determines that the content is best suited for a particular age group.

Program facilitators (whether library staff, external presenters engaged by library staff, or external facilitators who have rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of the Facility Policy) and attendees are bound by all applicable library policies, including the Rules of Conduct and Trespass. These policies are binding for both in-person and virtual programs.

Program Evaluation: STPL in-house and outreach programs, whether in-person or virtual, will be regularly evaluated to ensure that they are both in line with STPL's mission and also moving strategic directions forward. Evaluation shall include collecting information (via survey and informal conversation) from program participants, as well staff evaluation of programs to determine whether targeted outcomes are being achieved. Evaluation of programs delivered virtually will also include measuring online engagement using the analytical tools available for the virtual platforms used.

Proposals for Programs: STPL will accept proposals for programs from external presenters and from individuals and will evaluate them in accordance with the criteria outlined in this policy. STPL does not guarantee acceptance of, or a response to, any proposal.

Definitions:

1. **Program** - Any group activity offered to the community at large or to a defined audience that STPL staff members coordinate, plan and/or present on their own or in partnership with another organization or a third party. Programs may be offered in-person or on a virtual platform.
2. **In-house Program** - An in-house program is a program or event that is offered on the library grounds or hosted by the library in a virtual environment. In-house programs are coordinated/hosted by library staff, and promoted by the library. Some examples include story-times, book clubs, and technology support.

3. **Outreach Programs** - An outreach program is a program that is coordinated/hosted by library staff, and may be held at a location in the community other than the library and/or in a virtual environment. Outreach programs often target specific groups of people and may happen in partnership with other community organizations. Some examples include class visits to the library, visits to schools, and community fairs.
4. **Partnership:** A partnership is a mutually beneficial relationship between STPL and a community organization or individual. Partnerships must support STPL's strategic directions. Collaboration can include space sharing, resource sharing, and shared service delivery.
5. **Partnership Programs:** A partnership program is a program which is developed and delivered with a partner as defined above. STPL agrees to provide the space required for such programs without charge, provide a presence at such programs where necessary and appropriate, and to promote such programs. The partner must also promote the program to the extent of their ability to do so.
6. **External Programs:** An external program is one provided by an external facilitator who has rented library spaces under the terms and conditions of STPL's Facility Policy.

Expenses: The programming budget is established annually by the CEO, in consultation with the Manager, Programming and Community Development. External program presenters will be paid their standard fee, or a fee as negotiated, within reasonable limits. Additional expenses may be included in the presenter's fee or negotiated separately, and will be paid in accordance with the City's Finance Policy. Extraordinary expenses must be approved by the CEO in advance of a program's confirmation. A token of appreciation may be given to a program presenter if a fee is not charged.

Responsibilities: In consultation with the CEO, the Manager, Programming and Community Development shall be responsible for overseeing the development of a varied set of in-house and outreach programs which meet the standards described earlier in this policy.

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