



POLICY

Policy Type: Library Services **Policy Number:** 03-21
Policy Title: Community Partnership Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide library staff members, the public, and community partners (both current and potential) with information about the principles which guide the formation of community partnerships at St. Thomas Public Library (STPL) as well as the criteria by which decisions about partnerships are made.

Definitions:

1. **Partnership:** A partnership is a mutually beneficial relationship between STPL and an external organization, agency, institution, not for profit group, business, community group, or individual. Partners work together to achieve identified shared goals which benefit the community. Partnerships must support STPL's mission statement and strategic directions and align with its current policies.
2. **Community Partner:** An external organization, agency, institution, not for profit group, business, community group, or individual with whom STPL has a signed partnership agreement.
3. **Collaborative Relationship:** An informal relationship where information, knowledge, and skills are shared between STPL and an external organization, agency, institution, not for profit group, business, community group, or individual. Collaboration can include space sharing, resource sharing, and shared service delivery. Such information, knowledge, and skills are shared for the benefit of community members accessing the services of the library or of the external organization, agency, institution, not for profit group, business, community group, or individual. No payment, either monetary or in-kind, is requested or given in the case of a collaborative relationship.

Policy Statement: St. Thomas Public Library provides programs and services 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. Community partnerships and collaborative relationships can enhance and complement what STPL already offers; additionally, they can provide

opportunities to design and deliver unique, mutually beneficial, and much needed programs and services to the local community.

Guiding Principles: The following principles will guide St. Thomas Public Library's approach to partnerships and collaborative relationships:

1. STPL will partner when the partner and the work and/or project meets some or all of the following criteria:
 - a. The partner's organizational values, and the nature of the partnership, align with and support STPL's mission statement, strategic directions, service priorities, and existing policies
 - b. The partnership will be mutually beneficial and involves reciprocal levels of commitment and resources
 - c. The partnership and/or its work meets an identified need in the community
 - d. STPL has sufficient resources (e.g. staff time, financial resources) to undertake the work/project
 - e. The work/project has measurable outcomes, is subject to evaluation, and aims for continuous improvement.
2. Community partnerships are subject to the terms and conditions of a signed partnership agreement. Terms and conditions will identify:
 - a. The goal of the partnership
 - b. The intended audience for any program or service
 - c. The effective start date and duration of the partnership
 - d. A general description of the work/project
 - e. The roles and responsibilities of each partner
 - f. Any requirements for criminal records checks
 - g. Financial considerations, including costs, payments, bills, in-kind contributions, etc.
 - h. How communication will take place
 - i. How decisions will be made and conflicts resolved
 - j. A process and timeline for evaluation
 - k. A process for canceling the partnership, changing its terms, or extending it
 - l. Limitations of liability, indemnification, and insurance
 - m. Expectations regarding confidentiality
 - n. How retention of copyright will work
3. No partnership agreement will supersede any other library policy
4. Corporate or business partners may not use the library's name or logo for commercial purposes or in connection with the promotion of any product.

Requests for Partnership: STPL will accept requests for partnership from external organizations, agencies, institutions, not for profit groups, businesses, community groups, or 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 request.

Responsibilities:

- Formal partnership agreements must be endorsed by the STPL CEO or designate. The CEO or designate will determine which staff member(s) will represent the organization in the partnership and will ensure adequate resources are in place to support the partnership.
- Senior leaders in external organizations, agencies, institutions, not for profit groups, businesses, or community groups must similarly endorse and support the partnership agreement.
- STPL's management team is responsible for identifying external organizations, agencies, institutions, not for profit groups, businesses, community groups, or individuals to approach about partnerships.
- Other library staff members may bring suggestions for potential partnerships to any member of the management team. They may also direct potential community partners to this policy and to the Request for Partnership form.

Evaluation: Partnership goals and related evaluation metrics and processes will be outlined in the partnership agreement. STPL management will inventory and review all partnerships annually and also during any strategic planning process.

Termination of Partnership: STPL reserves the right to terminate a partnership without notice for reasons such (but not limited to) the following:

- The partner uses STPL's name or logo outside the parameters of the partnership agreement and without prior consent
- The partner does not uphold their part of the partnership (e.g. does not deliver agreed upon resources, services, or programming)
- The partner and STPL no longer align in terms of mission or strategic directions
- The partner or partnership violates an existing STPL policy or policies
- The partner or partnership no longer supports the best interests of the library

Appendices:

[Partnership Request Form](#)

[Partnership Agreement Form](#)

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