



Programming & Outreach Policy

Policy Number: 18-16

Policy Approval Date: March 8, 2022

Policy Review Date: March 2026

Definitions

Annex: The Annex | 1 Minerva St. E.

Library: Huntsville Public Library | 7 Minerva St. E.

Program: a coordinated activity or event with a specific purpose, such as highlighting collections, services or sharing knowledge and expertise that happen at the Library.

Outreach: any coordinated program, service or activity happening offsite. These may be regular library programs brought into a school or other public space for the purpose of engaging with non-users, and reaching at risk audiences.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff with the necessary guidelines to assist them in the development of Library programs/outreach and to inform the public about the principles and criteria for program/outreach selection.

Introduction

Programming and outreach is an integral part of Huntsville Public Library's service to the Public. It supports our mission to provide accessible services and programs/outreach to inspire and enrich the community, promote life-long learning and promote literacy. Programs/outreach are designed to:

- Stimulate imagination and inquiry by providing information, inviting public discussion, encouraging curiosity and creativity, and/or promoting literacies (information, technical, cultural, and reading).
- Promote the Library's collections, services & spaces.
- Engage Library & users in collaborative efforts.
- Foster innovation.

Policy

In keeping with the overall Huntsville Public Library goals and mission statement, programming and outreach are an integral part of the Library service offered to the community. The Library initiates programs/outreach and art exhibits to stimulate the use

of the Library and its material and to provide for the general enjoyment and enlightenment of the community. Programs and outreach are developed to respond to emerging community interests as well as to sustain demonstrated interests and needs. Programs and outreach are evaluated on a regular basis to determine community response and program/outreach effectiveness. Programs and outreach provide another format for the dissemination of information and an opportunity for discussion of ideas.

Statements made or positions taken during programs, events and meetings do not necessarily reflect the opinions or values of the Huntsville Public Library.

The Library may partner with third party organizations for programming content. Content-based partnerships do not mean that the Library endorses particular points of view promoted at programs or events. Partners will be selected and acknowledged as per the Partnership Policy.

The Library may present programs or outreach events that some individuals find controversial. Holding a program or event does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Huntsville Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the CFLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries. Library programs/outreach should promote the communication of ideas and information and extend Readers Advisory (recommended reads) and information service to library users; they bring library collections to life. Preference will be given to programs or events that promote the social, health, education, and leisure needs of residents.

Huntsville Public Library is committed to providing quality programs and outreach that are accessible to everyone who wish to obtain and use Library services.

Programming Age Groups

Some programs/outreach are targeted for specific age groups. Here are some general guidelines:

- Adult: 19+
- Youth/Young Adult: 13-18
- Children: 0-12

Selection Criteria

Programs and Outreach must:

- Support the Library Mission and Vision Statements.
- Be responsive to current interests and needs of the community
- Create or promote community partnerships.
- Encourage literacy and the enjoyment of reading
- Highlight collections and services available at the Library or within the community.
- Offer training and assistance with new technologies.

- Celebrate local history.
- Promote cultural awareness.
- Attract new or unique audiences

Fees

It is a priority for the Library to offer low or no-cost programs, and the majority of programs are free to attend. Any fees associated with programs are charged to offset the cost of specialized supplies. Should registrants be concerned about their ability to pay program fees, they are encouraged to speak with the programming staff to explore options. The Library places a high priority on serving residents regardless of their financial situation. If a participant attends a program with an associated cost with a support person, there will be no charge for the support person to attend.

Suggestions for Programs & Outreach

Community members are encouraged to suggest topics for future programs or outreach. These suggestions will be considered in light of the program/outreach criteria, strategic priorities and library resources. The Library reserves the right to determine which programs/outreach will be utilized. The program/outreach suggestion form is available through the virtual library.

Evaluation

Programs/outreach will be evaluated upon completion to assess the level of participant satisfaction, attendance, and cost effectiveness upon completion. To help gauge participant satisfaction and to collect new ideas, program participants will be provided with evaluation forms to be collected by staff as they leave. Evaluation summaries will be kept on file as a resource for planning future programs.

Liability

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

The Library does not assume responsibility for the supervision of minors attending programs/outreach. Parents, caregivers, and legal guardians must comply with the Unattended Children Policy.

The Library does not assume responsibility for children while on Library property. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to inform program facilitators if the child has any pertinent medical, physical or allergy problems.

Related Documents

Partnership Policy

Art in the Library Policy

Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries- CFLA

Unattended Children Policy

Children and Youth Services Policy

Strategic Plan

Program Suggestion Form

Fee Schedule

Policy History

Amendment approved by the Library Board March 8, 2022.

Supersedes the policy approved Library Board February 12, 2018 | 18-16

Supersedes the policy approved Library Board November 13, 2017 | 17-86.

Supersedes the policy approved by the Board August 28, 2014 | 14-53.