



Program Policy

The Program Policy outlines the principles and criteria for programs at Guelph Public Library and provides guidelines for staff developing and/or delivering programs. A program is defined as a coordinated activity or event with a specific purpose, such as highlighting collections, services or sharing knowledge and expertise.

Guelph Public Library considers the offering of programs to be an integral part of its mission and strategic priorities and strives to offer programs that complement library services and collections offered to the community. Library programs provide an alternate way for people to learn and obtain information. Programs in public libraries encourage participation in civic life and serve to address the cultural and leisure interests of our community.

The Library may present programs that some individuals find controversial. Holding a program does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Guelph Public Library, but rather is an affirmation of the principle of intellectual freedom as embodied in the [Ontario Library Association Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual](#).

Purpose

Programs expand the Library's ability to create a thriving community. Library programs offer staff opportunities to connect with the community and enrich the lives of our customers through the exploration of diverse topics. The Guelph Public Library provides programs that support the Library's mission, values, goals and strategic priorities.

Library programs are designed to:

- Support lifelong learning opportunities through the provision of information and technology.
- Promote the use of library services and collections.

- Nurture community cohesion and reduce social isolation by bringing members of the community together in a barrier free space.
- Celebrate our history, heritage and promote cultural awareness and diversity.
- Attract new and unique audiences to the Library.
- Support intellectual freedom and universal access to information.
- Strengthen the community's passion for literacy and learning.
- Celebrate wellness and promote healthy living choices.
- Reflect the needs of our changing community.

Priority to Offer Free Programs

The majority of programs offered by the Library are free to attend. Charging for programs creates a participation barrier that excludes some community members. In addition, we need to be mindful of the administrative costs associated with collecting a registration entry fee.

Scope

This policy applies to all Library organized, co-sponsored and partnership events offered to the public by the Guelph Public Library. This policy does not apply to:

- Events that are developed for special purposes such as fundraising, donor recognition, media conferences or community festivals.
- Programs offered by other organizations on library premises where space is rented and governed by the Library's Room Rental Policy.

1 Program Development

- 1.1 Library program development and planning is carried out on a scheduled basis.
- 1.2 The Library may set age or other guidelines for participation in a program, such as a children's program, when the program is designed and best suited for a particular audience.
- 1.3 Liability insurance is required for all programs taking place on Library premises. Organizations and individuals invited to host a program at the library must show proof of insurance in advance with the Guelph Public Library Board named on the certificate.

1.4 All programming will adhere to the Guelph Public Library's fire regulations. Employees of the Guelph Public Library will be responsible for ensuring program participants do not exceed the maximum capacity.

1.5 Programs reflect community needs and interests.

2 Program Delivery

2.1 Programs will be offered by employees with program-related expertise or topic specific training, or by invited speakers and experts from the community including:

- a. Authors
- b. Performers
- c. Staff or members of community partner agencies
- d. Volunteer presenters with recognized program-related credentials

2.2 Library staff will be available to welcome customers to the branch and to promote upcoming programs. Programs are evaluated and designed with measurable outcomes. The Library reserves the right to cancel or alter any program as deemed necessary and will make every effort to notify the public in advance.

3 Virtual Programs

Virtual Programs will be offered by the Guelph Public Library and may be hosted on WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Facebook Live, YouTube Live or Instagram Live, or any other virtual meeting platform designated by library staff. Library patrons shall not participate in any virtual program in any manner that violates the Guelph Public Library's Standard of Acceptable Behaviour policy or local laws. As all virtual programming is made available via the Internet, it is the responsibility of the user to acquaint himself/herself with what constitutes legal/illegal behavior on the Internet. The library reserves the right to end any virtual program at their discretion, or to eject any attendee from a virtual program if they fail to adhere to the library's Standard of Acceptable Behaviour policy. The library reserves the exclusive right to record any or all virtual programs. Library staff will inform all program participants when recording takes place.

4 Suggestions for Programs

The Guelph Public Library encourages customers and staff to suggest topics for future programs. These suggestions will be considered in light of the program criteria, strategic priorities and library resources. Not all suggestions will be utilized, nor will all applicants be contacted. The [Program Suggestion form](#) is available on the Library's website.