

PROGRAMMING POLICY

Adopted by C.A. Friday Memorial Library Board of Trustees: December 4, 2023

Purpose

The Friday Memorial Library seeks to be a dynamic and friendly hub for the community. We are a gathering place for people in the New Richmond area to learn, explore and connect. We offer books, movies and music, as well as exciting programs for all ages.

We envision a community that is engaged and active, seeking to work together to realize our shared goals and dreams.

Programs at the Friday Memorial Library support our strategic priorities, collections, services, resources, and facilities, along with city-wide goals. We believe that programs should serve the popular, recreational, educational, and social needs of the general public.

Definitions

Library Programs: A library program is a planned event which introduces the group to library services or activities, or which directly provides information to participants. Programs may cover the use of the library, library services, or library tours. Programs may also provide cultural, recreational, or educational information, often designed to meet a specific social need. Library programs may be in-person or virtual and may occur either on- or off- site.

Library-initiated programs: These are programs that are selected, organized, or facilitated by library staff. Performers or presenters hired by the Library are considered library-initiated programs.

Library sponsored or co-sponsored programs: These programs are a result of collaboration with partners or may be programs for which the Library acts as host due to a relationship with the presenter or material.

Programs at the Library not initiated or sponsored by the Library: Any programs that happen on Library grounds or using Library space, but are not initiated, created, or sponsored by the Library.

Programming Philosophy

The Library's philosophy of equitable access to information and ideas extends to Library Programs. We recognize and appreciate the diverse members of our community and strive to represent that diversity in our programming. The Library does not place a value on any patron's needs or preferences over another's. As such, we acknowledge that every program may not be a good fit for every patron. Performers, presenters, or topics shall not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, or views, or because of possible controversy.

In an effort to provide equitable, inclusive and diverse programs, library staff will:

- Create and maintain an environment of inclusion and respect in all program planning, promotion, and spaces.
- Work with diverse communities to determine appropriate ways to design, deliver, and evaluate programming.
- Make a reasonable attempt to reduce or eliminate barriers in accessing programs.

Not all programs and events that occur in the library are covered by this policy. Library meeting and study rooms can be used by the public without being a program initiated or sponsored by the Library. These are governed by the Meeting Room Policy (forthcoming).

All Library programs are free and open to the public. We never require anyone to hold a library card or be a member of a specific community in order to attend. There may be instances where the Library is authorized to charge a fee for consumable materials. In some cases, if a patron regularly consumes more than the allotted amount of materials, the Library has the right to charge a material cost for the recovery of supplies.

Some programs may be limited by a variety of factors such as the age of participants, size of space available, staff capacity, or time of day. When limitations occur, the Library may need to require registration for planning purposes. The Library will handle all registration and ensure the privacy of any personally identifying information. When a program warrants the signing of a waiver of liability, the Library may need to share some personally identifying information with a third party.

Criteria for Selection of library-initiated Programs

Library staff expertise, collections, services, and facilities are utilized in developing and delivering cultural, educational, and recreational programming. In no particular order, the following criteria are used in making decisions about library-initiated program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Library's mission, vision, and strategic priorities
- Community needs and interests
- Availability elsewhere in the community
- Treatment of content for intended audience
- Presentation quality
- Presenter's background or qualifications in content area
- Budget
- Accuracy and timeliness of program content
- Staff capacity and discretion
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Availability of program space
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions, or events
- Historical or educational significance

Content

The Library does not knowingly discriminate through its programming. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by participants or presenters. Program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy.

Sales of products at Library programs must be approved by the Library Director and/or their designee and benefit the Library. Programs may not be used for commercial, religious or partisan purposes, or the solicitation of business. While commercial sales are not allowed on Library property, exempt from this are: musicians, authors, filmmakers, performers, and presenters who are part of a library-initiated, sponsored, or co-sponsored program.

Addendums and Additional Information

Publicity

For library-initiated programs, the Library will be responsible for all publicity as defined in our Communications Policy. The Library cannot guarantee they will create publicity for sponsored or co-sponsored programs, although they may be willing to provide some publicity on a case-by-case basis. This will be determined by the programming staff.

Please refer to our Communications Policy for our Media Release statement and information regarding permission for photography and filming.

Cancellation of programs

Programs may be cancelled due to an illness of a staff person, presenter or performer. Additionally, we may cancel programs if weather conditions impact travel, staffing, or space usage, or in the case of low registration or participation.

According to the American Library Association's Interpretation of the Bill of Rights, Programs should not be cancelled because of the ideas or topics of the program, or the views expressed by the participants or speakers. If you have concern regarding any library program, please see the section of this Policy regarding Procedures for Handling a Statement of Concern Regarding Library-Initiated Programs or Displays.

Liability

Attendance at all Library programs is voluntary and neither the Library nor City of New Richmond can be held responsible for any injuries, loss, or harm that may occur during a program. Program attendees are responsible for communicating and managing any allergies, sensitivities, or conditions that may increase chances of injuries or harm while engaging in Library programs.

The Library may request that a waiver of liability be signed by participants for some programs. Criteria for which programs require a waiver to be signed include:

- Consumption of food prepared by a third-party and not controlled by the Library or Library staff.

- Physical activity that may result in injury, such as a physical safety class or a kayaking excursion.
- The presence of animals that are not otherwise insured by a handler or business.

All Library programs, whether held on- or off-site, must have a library staff person present at all times. No presenter or performer will be left alone with library patrons.

Community Partners

Friday Memorial Library collaborates with a variety of community partners. When determining sponsorship and co-sponsorship for programs, every effort shall be made to be equitable and inclusive. We do not prioritize any business or organization over another. However, we reserve the right to give preference to local government agencies.

Procedures for Handling a Statement of Concern Regarding Library-Initiated Programs or Displays

Because the ALA combines concern for programming with concern for displays, we have chosen to include displays in our Statement of Concern form.

1. To receive consideration by the Library, all concerns regarding library-initiated programs or displays (including complaints by Trustees or staff members) must be made by fully completing the attached form.
2. Within 15 days of receiving the written form, the applicable staff person shall confer with the Library Director, and then make a determination regarding the statement of concern. The complainant will then receive a written response explaining the decision and the reasoning that was used to reach the decision. The response will also inform the complainant that they may appeal the decision within 30 days.
3. The library-initiated program or display about which a concern has been made will not be cancelled, nor be restricted in any way before either an initial decision is made, or final action is taken on the appeal by the Library Board. Exceptions may be made if the Library Director finds substantive justification for the program to be delayed or cancelled until further investigation can be completed.
4. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, they must submit a written appeal that outlines their position to the Library. The Library will bring that appeal, along with the original decision, to the Board at their next regular meeting.
5. The Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding the program or display. The Board will employ all of the Criteria for Selection of Library Initiated Programs listed above, along with the American Library Association's Bill of Rights.
6. The complainant, if not present at the Board meeting, will be notified of the Library Board's decision in the matter.

7. What brought this program or display to your attention?

8. Are there positive aspects to this program or display?

9. What would you say is the theme or purpose of this program or display? Did it meet that purpose in your opinion?

11. How do you believe that patrons would be affected by this program or display?

12. What is your evidence for that belief? Please provide the text of relevant research and its source.

13. What action are you requesting we take regarding this item?

Signature Date

Library Bill of Rights

The Board of Trustees of Friday Memorial Library adopts and incorporates the following two statements, approved by the Council of the American Library Association, as part of the policy on Library Programs:

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves." Library displays increase awareness of programs, resources, and services.

Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts,¹ participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs.

Library-initiated programs and displays utilize library worker expertise for community interests, collections, services, facilities, and providing access to information and information resources. They introduce users and potential users to library resources and the library's role as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Libraries should not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure they have equitable access to library resources. Library-initiated programs and displays should comply with all applicable laws, including the standards and requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local disability accessibility guidelines.² If a program is held in a location not controlled by the library, the library should assure that the space is accessible to all users. If users overflow designated event areas during library events, libraries should secure accessible public spaces (e.g., ramps, pathways, and emergency exit routes) to ensure access and safety for everyone. Reasonable accommodations should also be made to have interpretation or real-time captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing at library-initiated programs when needed or requested by library users.

"Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer."³ Libraries should actively seek to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in our communities. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce community members to the library's resources and provide access to information. Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those who speak and read languages other than English, including advertising for such events.

Concerns, questions, or complaints about library-initiated programs and displays are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources. These policies should apply equally to all people, including, but not limited to, library users, staff, and members

of the governing body. The policies should set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Programs should not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, nor should library workers censor or remove displays because someone may disagree with the content. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, any more than the purchase of resources for the library collection or curation of a display constitutes an endorsement of the resources content or its creator's views. Libraries should vigorously defend the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries create programs for an intended age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest; however, restrictions on participation based solely on the gender, chronological age, or educational level of users violate this right and should be enforced only when not doing so would adversely impact the safety of the participants or interfere with the intended purpose of the program. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children's access to library programs, but no person or organization can interfere in others' access and participation. A parent or guardian may discuss their child's access to and participation in library programs with their child, but may not impose those decisions on others, including other people's children.

Libraries should not deny access to library-initiated programs if patrons owe the library for overdue fines or other fees. If libraries charge program participants for supplies used, they should make every effort to reduce economic barriers to participation.

Any collection and retention of program participants' personal information should be on an opt-in basis only. While attendees may need to demonstrate their eligibility to attend the program by showing a library card or student ID, they should not be required to share their personal information in order to attend a library program.

¹ "[Visual and Performing Arts in Libraries: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted February 13, 2018, by ALA Council.

² "[Services to People with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted January 28, 2009, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 2018.

³ "[Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*](#)," adopted June 27, 2017, by the ALA Council.

Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000; June 26, 2018 *under previous name* "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource"; and June 24, 2019.