Program Policy

Introduction

The purpose of programming at the library is to:

- Stimulate imagination and inquiry by providing information, inviting public discussion, encouraging curiosity and creativity and/or promoting literacy and reading;
- Promote the Library's services and resources;
- Engage the Library in collaborative efforts; and
- Foster innovation.

Programs are defined as any group activity offered to the public or a defined group that the Library coordinates, plans and/or presents on their own or in partnership with another organization or via a third party contract.

Selection and Planning of Programs

The Library will select and plan programs by first defining a purpose and community need, then providing for the program in one of three ways, within the following guidelines:

1. Assigning and training staff to plan and deliver the program:
   - The Library will offer programs it defines as "core" for free and those that are "non-core" for a defined admission fee resulting in modest net revenue.

2. Entering into a contract with a third-party provider to plan and deliver the program:
   - The fee, honorarium, or expense reimbursement paid to the contractor will be negotiated on an individual basis.
   - The admission fee charged will be set a level that will likely result in modest net revenue for the Library.
   - The Library may cancel the program if demand does not warrant the expense, but will pay a negotiated cancellation fee to the programmer in this case.

3. Forming a partnership with a third-party individual or organization to cooperatively plan and deliver the program, with or without a fee:
   - No fee will be charged to the third party for rental of space or equipment.
   - A fee may be paid to the third party where requested if any admission fees are likely to result in modest net revenue for the Library.
   - The Library may cancel the program at any time with no cancellation fee applicable.

Expressions of Interest

An individual or organization interested in providing a program by methods (2) and (3) may at any time submit an Expression of Interest to the Library. The Library will consider the Expression based on the following criteria:

1. The suitability of the program proposed to the purposes of Library programming as set out in the Purpose section above;
2. The perceived demand or needs of the community;
3. The current priorities and strategic direction of the Library;
4. The specialized nature of the program which is outside the scope of library staff;
5. The availability of suitable space and of staff time to manage the project;
6. The reputation, qualifications, and related experience of the applicant;
7. A preference for individuals and organizations located in Newmarket and in York Region, and a preference for non-profit status;
8. A primary purpose beyond promotion of the presenter's business;
9. An attempt to provide a balanced and wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints with no implied endorsement of said views by the Library.

The Library retains the sole right to determine whether a proposal will be pursued. If it is not pursued immediately, the Expression of Interest will be kept on file for a period of one year from the date of submission, and if a program of the nature proposed is considered by the Library within that period, the applicant will be considered for that purpose. In the event that there are multiple third parties offering programs of a similar nature, the Library will choose which applicant or provider to pursue based on criteria (5) to (8) above.

An unsuccessful Expression of Interest shall have no appeal to the Library Board unless there is evidence that this Policy was breached.

Attendance at programs
Programs must be open and accessible to all members of the public, with the following restrictions:
- A program may be arranged specifically for a group or school class;
- When necessary, numbers may be restricted and registration required on a first-come, first-served basis;
- Programs may have intended audience age groups and the Library reserves the right to limit attendance accordingly;
- In some cases specific days may be set aside for registration for regular programs, in which case advance registrations will not be permitted;
- Fees for registered programs must be paid at the time of registration or within 3 days, and no post-dated cheques will be accepted;
- An additional fee as well as a later registration date may apply to non-residents who are not library members.

Refunds
Registration and admission fees are non-refundable, including where the program does not meet the expectations of the user, except under the following circumstances:
- If the library user cancels registration before the program begins, all fees less an administrative fee will be refunded. If payment was by cheque, the refund will be held for one month. If the program fee is less than $5.00 no refund will be given.

- A refund may be provided after the program has begun only if another user can fill the space. If a refund is given it will be pro-rated based upon the number of sessions attended minus an administrative fee.
- If the Library cancels the program, all fees will be refunded in full.

The Library will respond to any and all feedback and complaints regarding programs.

Liability

The Library does not assume responsibility for damages, personal injury, illness or theft arising from participation in any program, 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. Parents and caregivers are required to attend programs for children less than 3 years of age. For most programs for children 3 to 10, parents do not attend the program but must remain in the Library building during the program, preferably in or near the Children's Services Department. 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.