

RUSSELL LIBRARY PROGRAM POLICY

PURPOSE

The Program Policy is an extension of Russell Library's mission, vision, and strategic goals. We empower people to grow, connect, strive and thrive. Everyone feels welcomed and included. We strengthen community, create a safe and welcoming destination, foster a thriving economic ecosystem, and promote a lifelong love of learning.

Russell Library provides programs for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents and aims to represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. Library programs provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of Middletown. The Library recognizes the importance of programs as resources for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and to promote free expression and free access to ideas in our community.

DEFINITION OF A PROGRAM

This policy applies to Library programs. A Library program is a free event planned by Library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who choose to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other entities.

Note: Russell Library makes meeting rooms available as a service for the public. Use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event does not constitute a Library program, nor does it constitute Russell Library's endorsement of the program. Organizations or individuals that desire to present a Library-sponsored program must submit a complete Program Application in advance via Russell Library's [online form](#). Program applications shall be approved or denied at Library Administration's discretion.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Library programs are the responsibility of the Library Director and, under their direction, members of the Library staff in accordance with policies as adopted by the Board of Trustees. Designated Library staff are responsible for the development, coordination, and supervision of Library programs. The final responsibility is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by Library employees who are professionally trained to curate and develop Library programs.

Attendees are responsible for complying with Russell Library's Code of Conduct.

PROGRAM SELECTION

Russell Library strives to present programs that are educational, informational, cultural, or recreational and avoid programs that do not meet these standards. Topics, content, and timing of Library programs are developed with consideration of available resources and keeping community needs and interests in mind. Program selection is based upon the suitability of topic, format, and intended audience. A program will not be excluded

because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter of the program.

- a. Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural, or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designated for the solicitation of business will not be offered.
- b. Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.
- c. Programs that support or oppose a specific religion will not be approved or offered. Programs are planned to be inclusive of all cultures and of all religions and no religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe, or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of Library patrons.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, COORDINATION, AND SUPERVISION

Most Library programs originate from Library staff. They may also originate from partner institutions or members of the public, subject to approval at the Library's discretion upon receipt of a completed Program Application.

PROGRAM ACCESS

Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis. Some may offer advance registration through Russell Library's online event calendar. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the Library two weeks prior to the program so necessary arrangements can be made.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

Some Library programs may be offered in full or in part using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access the program from their own internet-enabled devices.

PROGRAM MATERIALS

Books, CDs, DVDs, or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a Library program as a convenience to attendees.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Library staff may gather information from program attendees to guide future programming decisions or for the purpose of grant reporting.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in [Section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General](#)

[Statutes](#). Russell Library upholds the principles of intellectual freedom which are foundational to the profession of librarianship.

In the event that a Middletown resident cardholder desires to request reconsideration of a Library program, Russell Library's Review and Reconsideration Policy details the procedure for submission of such requests.

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