Program Development Policy

Purpose of the Policy

This Program Development Policy upholds the mission and goals of the Edgartown Public Library by setting guidelines for the planning and operation of Library programs and events. It is also used to inform the public about standards and principles that are applied to the program selection and management process.

Library Mission Statement

We remain responsive and relevant to the needs of both our local and global community by maintaining our tradition of excellence in service, fostering lifelong learning, and enriching the lives of the community we serve. We are committed to maintaining equitable access to information and ideas in a continually-evolving public library that is welcoming to all.

Approved by the Edgartown Public Library Board of Trustees September 12, 2019

Library Vision Statement

The library will be recognized as a civic anchor of the town, a partner with other agencies, organizations, and services, and a dynamic contributor to the town's cultural and educational well-being.

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Responsibility for Program Development

Responsibility for program development rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Program planning and facilitating is delegated to staff members based on their job responsibilities and areas of expertise. The programming coordinator and other programming staff are guided by this policy and utilize professional skills, collections, equipment, facilities, and feedback from the community in planning and delivering library programs.

Selection Guidelines and Objectives

The Edgartown Public Library defines a program as an activity or event in a group setting, developed to meet the educational, social, recreational, cultural, or informational needs of an anticipated audience in the community. Programs can be a single event, a short series, or continuously recurring.

Programs may include, but will not be limited to: lectures and book talks, forums, visual and performance art, interactive classes or workshops, continuing education, fairs, discussion groups, technology programs, story times, class visits, library tours, community outreach, exhibits, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or recreational purposes.

Criteria

When making decisions regarding program content, presenters, and related resources library staff will consider the following:

- Relevance to the Library's mission, strategic plan, and service goals
- Community needs and interests, including feedback and suggestions from Edgartown constituents
- Potential to promote, supplement, and encourage the use of library collections & resources
- Presentation quality as determined by presenter's background, record of presentation, and qualifications in content area
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance
- Space required, and the availability of that space
- Budget
- Staffing
- Balance of current programs being offered at the Library
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions, or events
- Safety and security of patrons and staff
- National and local observances, commemorative months, and initiatives (i.e., National Library Week, Women's History Month, Veterans' Day, etc.)

Library programs may take place at the Library's physical location, offsite locations, and online, and may be delivered by library staff or library partners. Programs may be live-streamed or recorded for later playback.

Decisions concerning an event's audience, registration, capacity, late arrivals, and allowable walk-ins will be made by the Library staff supervising the event.

Funding

The Library is dependent on the Friends of the Edgartown Free Public Library as a major source of funding for library programs. Library staff who present programs do so as a part of their job. In addition, the Library draws upon community resources in developing programs and attempts to partner with other community organizations, educational and cultural institutions or individuals to present and/or co-sponsor programs. The Library also utilizes various grants and municipal appropriations to support program offerings.

Library programs are open to the public and offered free of charge. At the discretion of the Library Director, a fee may be applied to programs and goods that benefit the Library including book sales, raffles, and other types of fundraising.

Presenters

Anyone interested in presenting a program may submit a proposal that will be reviewed by Library staff using this policy as a guideline. The Library reserves the right to decline a program for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, staffing, budgetary constraints, space, or scheduling.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program, or the views expressed by presenters or participants. Program topics, presenters, and resources are not excluded because of possible controversy.

Library programs are non-commercial in nature. Programs are not used for the solicitation of business. Presenters and performers, whether individual or organizational, shall not use a Library program to petition, advertise, or recruit members or customers. While the Library welcomes professional experts to present at its events, Library programs cannot be used to directly further commercial, religious, political, or partisan purposes. Presenters are permitted to have business-related brochures, flyers, or other information available for attendees to pick up if interested. Presenters cannot distribute such materials as part of the event.

Individuals may reserve a space within the Library for meetings or events not co-hosted with the Library, and are responsible for their own marketing. These meetings/events will not be listed in the Library's event calendar and are not promoted by the Library. For more information regarding how to reserve Library space for these kinds of programs, please refer to our Meeting Room Policy.

Programs sponsored by charitable organizations whose purpose and mission is to support the Edgartown Public Library may include the sale of merchandise as a means to fundraise for the benefit of the Library. Performers or presenters may receive permission to sell their creative works as part of a library program. Sale of these works and/or other products at Library programs is not permitted unless authorized by the Library Director or their designee. Presenters and performers who are willing may donate a copy of their work to the Library for possible

inclusion in the collection. Their work will be subject to the Library's Collection Development Policy.

Event Management

Decisions concerning an event's audience, registration, capacity, late arrivals, and allowable walk-ins will be made by the Library staff supervising the event.

At all events Library staff adhere to the Library's Photography and Video Policy. The Library frequently engages in photographing and recording programs and events for its own publicity and promotional purposes.

Open Access

All library-initiated programs are open to the public, but some meetings and programs may be designed with specific audiences in mind, such as programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and needs. Adults who wish to attend a program specifically designed for children must be accompanied by a child. Tween and teen programs are limited to tweens and teens only, except when they require an adult assistant or companion. Programs targeted toward specific audiences are to be publicized as such.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety, cost, or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited. Admittance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either through advance registration, or at the door. The Library reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone becoming disruptive to audience members or the program facilitator, and to anyone in violation of the Library's General Code of Conduct Policy.

Accessibility

The Edgartown Public Library is ADA-compliant and accessible to all patrons.

Cancellations

Programs may be canceled for several reasons, including severe weather, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Canceled programs are not automatically rescheduled. When possible, advanced notification of program cancellations will be made on the Library's online calendar of events and by other appropriate communication channels.

Process for Reconsideration

The Edgartown Public Library adheres to and supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View, which state that the choice of library materials for personal use is purely an individual matter. An individual or group cannot restrict the freedom of other persons to read, access, or use library materials or library spaces.

Concerns about materials or programs currently offered at the Library may be expressed by filling out a Reconsideration of Library Materials form. Forms may be submitted in writing to the attention of the Library Director either in person, or c/o Edgartown Public Library, 26 West Tisbury Road, Edgartown, MA 02539; forms may also be submitted via email to director@edgartownlibrary.org. Patrons submitting a Request for Reconsideration will be given copies of the Edgartown Public Library's Collection Development Policy or this program development policy; the ALA Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Freedom to Read Statement, and the ALA Freedom to View Statement. Anonymous submissions will not be considered, nor will submissions from individuals or stakeholders not residing or located in Edgartown, MA. During the reconsideration process, the material or program will remain available in the Library.

A request for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Library Director or their designee, who will respond in writing to the patron initiating the request. The patron may choose to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

Adopted June 8, 2023 by the Edgartown Library Board of Trustees