

Silas Bronson Library Program Policy

Purpose

The Silas Bronson Library (“Library”), in keeping with its mission to foster ideas, to promote education, to disseminate general information and to make a positive contribution to the cultural heritage of Waterbury and its environs, develops and presents programs that provide information, learning, and entertainment.

Programming is an integral component of Library services that promotes and complements the Library’s other services and collections. It supports the Library’s role as the focal point for the enrichment of the community. Programs are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents and aim to represent a wide range of varied, diverging viewpoints and will provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of residents.

The Library recognizes the importance of displays and programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of all programs presented by the Library.

Key Definitions

A Library program is a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the Library staff for the benefit of those residents who opt to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other entities. The definition of a program includes lectures, discussions, classes, workshops, presentations, hands-on activities, and performances.

Note: Use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event is not a Library program.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Library Board delegates development, presentation, and oversight of programs to the Library Director and staff.

The Librarian 4 in charge of Adult Information Services and the Librarian 4 in charge of Youth Services are accountable for planning, scheduling, and implementing programs.

Designated Library staff are responsible for the development, coordination, and supervision of Library programs. The final responsibility for the Library program is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by Library employees who are professionally trained to curate and develop programs.

Attendees at Library programs are responsible for complying with the Library's policy regarding Behavior in the Library.

Program Selection

The Library strives to present programs that are educational, informational, cultural, or recreational and avoids 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. The Library provides programs created or curated by librarians or other Library employees as well as working with community groups, organizations, or individuals to offer programs and displays in the Library.

1. Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural, or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the Library.

2. 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.
3. 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 residents.

Program Development, Coordination, and Supervision

Library programs may originate from Library staff, partnering institutions, or members of the public.

In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

Program Access

Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration may be required in advance online or in person, or at the door. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come, first-serve basis, limited to those individuals as the Library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the Library.

Virtual Programs

Some Library programs may be offered using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform for accessing the program from internet-enabled devices. This may include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical Library as well as programs that are offered only virtually.

While hosting the virtual program, Library staff, partnering organizations, and program facilitators will follow industry standard best practices for virtual events.

Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

Live virtual programs require advance registration. Registered participants will receive via email a link to log on to the program and must not share that link with others. Information collected during the registration process will be used only to communicate information about that program or to confirm eligibility to participate in that program.

Attendees of virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's policy regarding Behavior and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

The Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software, but makes no guarantee that everyone will be capable of accessing every Library program successfully. Nor can the Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

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

To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library employees may gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs such as the number of attendees at a program will be gathered for all programs. Outcomes such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic will be gathered at

times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.

Procedures for the Questioning of Library Programs

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individual residents of Waterbury. Please see our Review and Reconsideration Policy and Request for Reconsideration Form for further information on this process.

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.