Lucy Robbins Welles Library Programming Policy

Purpose:

The Lucy Robbins Welles Library ("the Library"), in keeping with its mission of promoting knowledge, ideas and cultural enrichment, 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 center of the community. Programs are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents. The aim is 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. It champions the principle of intellectual freedom. 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 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 members of the public who opt to attend. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators, or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other entities. Note: Use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event is not a Library program.

Scope:

This policy applies to all Library programs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

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

The Head of Community Services, the Head of Children Services, and the Teen Librarian are accountable for planning, scheduling, and the implementation of 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 throughout the library that are professionally trained to curate and develop programs.

Attendees are responsible for complying with the **Library's Behavior Policy** and the **Policy Statement for Meeting Rooms**.

Procedures:

1. **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, historical and educational significance, format, and intended audience.
- Presentation quality and presenter background/qualifications in content area are considered when selecting a program.
- Content of library programs may be connected to other community programs, exhibitions or events.
- 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 staff members of the public library, as well as allowing displays and programs created by members of the public or community groups and exhibited in the public library.

a. 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.

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.

2. **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.

3. **Program Access:** Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. When necessary and for the comfort and efficacy of a specific program, Library staff may require registration in advance, in-person or online, or at the door, set appropriate limitations, and/or impose a maximum capacity for that program. 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 an accommodation to participate in a library program should contact the Library Administration two weeks prior to the program.

4. **Virtual Program Delivery:** Some Library programs may be offered using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own 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 of an interactive program 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.

Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's Behavior Policy, 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.

Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. 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 every patron 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.

5. 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. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

6. Sale of books and other media: The sale of books or other media by authors or performers is permitted as part of a library-approved program, if approved by the director. Presenters are responsible for completing their own sales; library staff are not to be made available to assist in this regard.

7. Program Evaluation: To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, Library staff will 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 or almost 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.

8. Procedures for the Questioning of Library Programs by Patrons:

Individuals may take issue with library materials that do not support their own views or values on a subject or that not are compatible with their beliefs. Staff are available to discuss concerns and to identify alternate materials that may be available. If the concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, then a Newington, Connecticut resident, with a vested interest who wishes that a specific item, program, or display be reconsidered, will be asked to complete and submit a Reconsideration Form.

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individuals residents of Newington. Please see our Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and Statement of Concern About Library Materials, Programs or Displays Reconsideration Form for further information on this process. Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the CT General Statutes.

<div align="right">

Adopted October 2025
Lucy Robbins Welles Library Board of Trustees

</div>