



Collection Development

Operational

Purpose

This Policy provides customers and staff with guidelines and objectives respecting the selection, de-selection, and access to the collection of the Brantford Public Library.

Principles

- To support values underpinning a democratic society, including free, open and equitable access to a diversity of information and ideas, civic engagement and intellectual freedom
- To provide and maintain information that meets the specific needs of the public
- To support lifelong learning and supplement formal study
- Reflect the recreational and entertainment needs and interests of the community
- Reflect various cultural, educational, ethnic, socio-economic, linguistic, religious and philosophical backgrounds
- Inspire the love of reading and the exploration of ideas, culture and knowledge.

The Policy aligns with the Brantford Public Library's Values:

- We serve our customers with professionalism, respect and knowledge.
- We welcome everyone and strive to reduce barriers to access.
- We encourage curiosity and creativity.
- We work in partnership.
- We support lifelong learning and literacy.

Policy

The Brantford Public Library is committed to developing broad, robust, relevant and responsive collections to meet the diverse needs and interests of Library customers.

General Criteria for Selection

Materials selected must have a relevant and high standard of quality, content, expression and format. Materials are selected according to the needs and demands of the community. Staff responsible for selections are trained in collection development and regularly participate in professional development activities.

Materials shall be considered according to the following criteria:

- Demand and relevance to the educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs and interests of a wide range of customers
- Relevance to community needs
- Importance as a historical document or as a current event
- Relation to the existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Popularity and local demand
- Comprehensive treatment of a subject and clarity
- Suitability of subject and style for intended customers
- Timeliness, integrity and accuracy of the information
- Reputation, skill and authority of the author and publisher
- Purchase price and other budgetary considerations
- Representation of multiple sides of controversial issues, where possible
- Suitability and quality of physical format, layout and construction
- Representation of challenging points of view to provide insight into human and social conditions
- Inclusion of works created by Indigenous peoples in Canada, concerning Indigenous knowledge, information about cultures, histories, Indigenous-settler relations and related issues
- Space and budgetary limitations.

Considering the materials budget, the Library will attempt to respond to exceptionally high demand by purchasing multiple copies and multiple formats. An item does not have to meet all the above criteria to be acceptable. Works that contain hate propaganda, as outlined in the Criminal Code, or incite hatred will not be considered. Certain criteria may be prioritized at the discretion of the Manager, Library Resources.

Donations

The Brantford Public Library does not currently accept donations of books, DVDs, magazines, or other materials, except in circumstances noted below.

At the discretion of management, special items may be assessed and accepted as donations, for example, items that are of local historical importance.

To support local authors, recording artists and filmmakers, we consider accepting gift copies of their work as long as they are submitted in a format we currently support and meet the Library's selection criteria. More information can be found in the Library's Local Author Application Form.

Suggest for Purchase

Customer requests for the purchase of library materials are encouraged and given consideration provided they meet the Library's selection criteria. Customers making suggestions are asked to complete the Suggest for Purchase form. In addition to individual suggestions, the Library cultivates a community-informed collection through engagement and evaluation activities such as reviewing demographic data, consulting with partners, and conducting outreach.

Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loan is used to supplement service to Brantford Public Library customers. In partnership with the Ontario Library Service, Brantford Public Library provides an interlibrary loan service by which library materials are made available from one library to another on a local, provincial, and national level. By this means, the Library attempts to make available materials it does not own or which fall outside the scope of this collection policy. In return, materials from this Library's collection are loaned to other libraries for use by their customers.

Local History & Archives Collection

The Library's Local History mandate is to ensure the collection, preservation and availability of materials that illustrate the history (and ongoing history) of the Brantford area. Material added to the Local History & Archives collection shall be held until it is eligible for de-accessioning.

Intellectual Freedom

The Brantford Public Library recognizes its obligations under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees Canadians freedom of expression, including press freedom and other media. Refer to the Intellectual Freedom Policy for more detail.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

As noted in the Intellectual Freedom Policy, the Library will review the selection of any materials upon receipt of a request.

Artificial Intelligence in Collections

The Library recognizes that many authors, illustrators, and publishers utilize artificial intelligence (AI) tools at different stages of the creative process (including but not limited to storyboarding, cover design, editing, and ideation). The use of those tools does not render their title as "AI generated content".

When considering new material for the collection, the Library will give due diligence to determining whether the listed author/creator of a title is human or AI. Whenever possible, cataloguing records will provide clear information so that customers are aware of materials that are fully AI-generated or that incorporate AI elements (for example, AI-assisted narration).

Materials will not be accepted or rejected when being evaluated for addition to the collection solely based on being AI generated; AI generated content may be added to the collection should it meet selection criteria.

The Library also recognizes that some licensed or subscription-based digital resources may contain AI-generated content that is not identified as such, and that the Library may have limited ability to control or label that material.

Collection Maintenance & Deselection

De-selection is the continuous and systematic withdrawal of materials to maintain the integrity and accuracy of the Library's collection. It is crucial to maintaining a healthy and relevant collection. An item does not have to meet all of the following criteria to be de-selected.

The Library continually identifies items from its collections for discard based upon the following criteria:

- Item contains outdated or false information
- Item is no longer of interest or in demand
- An overabundance of an item or subject as interest wanes
- Worn or damaged copies.

Once an item has been identified for possible de-selection based on the criteria above, the process of determining if an item still deserves a place in the Library's collection begins. Retention is based on the following criteria:

- Is it of local, regional, or national significance, including works of local or Canadian authors, artists, recording artists or filmmakers and works about local history?
- Is it a famous author, artist, recording artist, or filmmaker or universally accepted as a classic?
- Is it unique to the collection because there is little or no information available on that topic elsewhere, and is the information still relevant and valuable?
- Is the item part of a multi-series, which the library intends to maintain fully in tact?

To minimize environmental impact and to increase efficiencies, withdrawn items will be redirected to another internal library service or to an external partnership.

History

Supersedes: Not applicable

Background documents, related policies: Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Criminal Code; Film Classification Act; Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act; Brantford Public Library Intellectual Freedom Policy; Brantford Public Library Membership and Circulation Policy

Approval Date: November 1995

Revision History: February 2012; May 2019; January 2022; October 2025

Projected Review Period: 2029

Author: Manager - Library Resources

Approval Level: Brantford Public Library Board