



Partnership Policy

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Purpose

To provide Whitby Public Library (“the Library”) staff with guidelines to identify, prioritize, and develop partnerships with community organizations and agencies, and to inform the public about the principles and criteria behind these decisions.

Guiding Principles

Community partnerships and collaborative relationships make it possible to design and deliver responsive services that meet our community's needs.

The Library welcomes opportunities to partner. Prospective partners may apply using the Partnership Request Form.

Definitions

“Community partnerships” are formal arrangements between the Library and one or more community partners. All partners work together to achieve identified, shared goals to benefit the community.

“Community partners” are not-for-profit groups, agencies, institutions, businesses, and other organizations within Whitby, the Regional Municipality of Durham, or at a provincial or national level.

Criteria

Current and proposed partnerships will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Partner and partnership goals align with the Library’s vision, mission, objectives, and strategic priorities
- The partnership:
 - Supports the strategic directions of the Library’s major funding partners: the Town of Whitby and the Province of Ontario
 - Creates a mutually beneficial relationship with reciprocal levels of commitment
 - Meets an identified need in the community
 - Creates a connection between the Library and a prioritized group
 - Measures outcomes and is subject to ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement
 - Preserves equity of access to library services
 - Upholds the Library’s commitment to the Canadian Federation of Library Associations’ Statement on Intellectual Freedom
- The Library has sufficient capacity to undertake the project.

Parameters

Before a partnership begins, the Library and partner will create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that includes:

- How decisions are made
- Expected outcomes and success measures
- Clearly identified and defined roles and responsibilities
- Milestones, timelines, and a review schedule
- Key staff contacts in each organization, their roles and accountabilities
- Signature of the CEO or their designate.

Collaborative Initiatives

Collaborations are informal partnerships that do not require a formal MOU and are established at the local service or branch level. Collaborative initiatives must meet the same criteria as partnerships but tend to be more informal and shorter term. They do not have system-wide implications, nor require the resources that partnerships do. Collaborative initiatives will be evaluated annually. A Collaboration Agreement will outline the responsibilities of the collaborating organization and the Library. The appropriate Manager will sign the agreement on behalf of the Library.

Concluding Partnerships

The Library reserves the right to withdraw from partnerships or collaborative initiatives for reasons such as, but not limited to:

- The partner fails to deliver the agreed upon resources and services or the partnership does not deliver the expected outcomes
- The Library or partner lacks capacity, including staff time, space, or resources
- The partner organization no longer meets the criteria as outlined in the policy.