Programming supports the mission of the Rowan County Public Library ("the Library") to inspire, educate, and empower our community by offering opportunities for exploration, lifelong education, community engagement, and access to technology. Therefore, programming is an integral component of library services.

Responsibility for Library programming rests with the Executive Director, under the authority of the Library Board of Trustees. The Executive Director may delegate programming as they deem appropriate to further the Library's stated mission.

PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

The Library and the Board adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement adopted by the American Library Association as of May 2022. These documents may be obtained from the ALA website at https://ala.org or requested from staff.

The Library affirms that it is a forum for information and ideas, and the that the following basic principles shall guide its services:

- Books, programs, and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community whom the Library serves. Materials and/or programming should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

- Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs the Library offers. The Library actively seeks to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in the community.

The following criteria shall be used as guidelines in the selection process. The following list is not ordered by importance. A program need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Alignment with any current Library strategic plan(s) and/or mission

- Availability of funding

- Availability of programming space

- Connection to other community activities and/or agencies

- Presenter background and/or qualification in content area

- Promotion of library collections and resources

- Promotional opportunities and/or publicity resource constraints

- Timeliness and relevance of topic to community needs and interests

- Treatment of content for the intended audience

Programs may be held upon library premises, in library facilities, and/or at off-site locations.

Registration for programs may be required for planning purposes and/or when space is limited.

The Library may draw upon other community resources to develop co-sponsored programs. Partners may include community agencies, organizations, businesses, educational and/or cultural institutions, and/or individual persons.

The Library may publicize programs under its sponsorship. Regarding cooperative publicity for co-sponsored programs, the Library's Marketing and Public Relations Department must approve any final design(s) prior to inclusion of the Library name, logo, and/or other branding in any marketing and/or promotional materials.

Library sponsorship of a program does not equal endorsement of the content of the program or of the views expressed by presenters and/or participants by the Library or by its officers, agents, or employees.

GUIDELINES

A person's right to attend a Library-initiated program should not be denied or abridged because of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexuality, or any other characteristic protected by law, nor because of their background or views. The Library's commitment to intellectual freedom extends to Library programming.

Accommodations for persons with special requirements are available upon request. A Library-initiated program shall make every reasonable attempt to accommodate all who wish to attend. Registration may be required to limit the means of access or scale of attendance when safety or the success of the program is a concern. When limits on program attendance are instituted, attendance shall be permitted on a first-come, first-served basis or through advance registration. When means of access are limited, staff shall make every reasonable attempt to provide alternative means of access to promote inclusion and scale of attendance.

RESTRICTIONS TO PROGRAMMING SERVICES

Library programming shall prohibit commercial advertising, direct solicitation (including that of a religious and/or political nature), fundraising. The following exceptions may be permitted:

- Authors may sell copies of their work(s) at readings, signings, and/or visits; and

- performing artists may sell recordings of their work(s) at performances; and

- the Friends of the Rowan County Library may sell items at programs with prior Library approval; and

- other exceptions which receive prior approval by the Executive Director.

Potential liability issues may also restrict programming services. Questions or requests for clarification should be directed to appropriate supervisory staff.

The Library assumes no responsibility for damage(s), personal injury, illness, or theft arising from participation in any program or occurring on any premises, in any facility, or at any location where a program is held. Information on incident reports may be requested from staff.

The Library likewise assumes no responsibility for the supervision of minors attending programs. Parents, legal guardians, and/or caregivers should remain with such program attendees or, depending on registration limitations for the specific program, remain on the premises or within the facility where the program is occurring. For further guidance, consult the Library's child safety policy.

Responsibility for the exposure of minors to Library programs rests solely with parents, legal guardians, and/or caregivers. Library programming shall not be inhibited by the possibility that minors may be exposed to program content.

Program attendees and/or participants should expect that photographs and/or video will be taken at Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events and subsequently used in Library social media, marketing and/or promotional materials, and/or website content. The Library shall not identify members of the public in social media posts, blog posts, website copy, or photograph highlights ("tagging") without prior verbal and/or written consent. If the subject is under 18 years of age, the Library shall make every reasonable effort to obtain the consent of the appropriate parent(s), legal guardian(s), and/or caregiver(s). The Library assumes no responsibility for the identification of persons by third parties or automated systems.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from any person concerning programming. Questions and/or concerns should first be addressed with the employee responsible for the program(s). Persons wishing to continue their request for review of Library programming past this point must submit a completed Statement of Concern Regarding Library Programming. A formal response shall subsequently be issued by the staff member responsible for the program(s). To appeal this decision, the petition must be delivered to the Executive Director, whose decision shall be final. Any program(s) under review shall remain on the Library schedule and/or calendar throughout the process.

Statement of Concern Regarding Library Programming

Title of Program,
Display, or Exhibit:

_____

Location:

_____

Request Initiated By:
(Please print name.)

_____

Address:

_____

_____

Telephone:

_____

Email Address:

_____

Do you represent yourself or an organization? (Please specify the group or organization.)

_____

What specifically causes you concern with regard to this program, display, or exhibit?

_____

_____

Did you attend this program or view this display or exhibit in its entirety?   Yes   No

What do you believe to be the main theme of this program, display, or exhibit? Was it fulfilled?

_____

What do you think might result from attending this program or viewing this display or exhibit?

_____

Is there anything good about this program, display, or exhibit?

_____

Is there a program, display, or exhibit you would recommend in place of this one?

_____

What specific action would you recommend to Library leadership?

_____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please be sure that this request is fully completed and signed.