

Brooklyn Public Library

Home > Library Policies > **Materials Selection Policy**

Materials Selection Policy

The purpose of this Materials Selection Policy is to articulate the collection goals and objectives of the Brooklyn Public Library.

Policy Statement:

The Library selects, acquires, and provides free and open access to appropriate materials regardless of format. As technology advances and the Brooklyn community changes and develops, the Brooklyn Public Library will be both a physical resource and a "virtual" presence in the lives of each and every Brooklynite. The Library strives to meet the current requirements of the community and to anticipate future needs.

Responsibility for Selection:

Though the overall responsibility for the collection rests with the Library's executive leadership, the responsibility for selecting and retaining materials is delegated to qualified and knowledgeable staff who employ the criteria outlined in this policy. The final responsibility for materials selection and retention resides with the Executive Director.

Objectives of the Library's Collections:

- To promote literacy, and offer support for lifelong learning for Brooklynites of all ages
- To help people know more about themselves and their world and to function effectively as members of society
- To provide access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest and encourage freedom of expression
- To support educational, civic, and cultural activities within the Brooklyn community; to provide links to community resources and government agencies
- To encourage continuous learning and to supplement formal study; to support career and job-related skills
- To maintain a virtual collection of resources that is accessible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week
- To provide materials that entertain and enhance the individual's enjoyment of life

The Community:

The prime community factors that have a direct bearing upon the selection of materials are (a) the people, individually and collectively, and (b) the adequacy and availability of materials through other community institutions.

A. The People of Brooklyn

The Brooklyn Public Library serves dynamic and diverse populations of almost 2.5 million people. Our borough's community has enormous shared needs, both expressed and unexpressed. The variety and scope of materials required for information,

- > Customer Service Policy
- > Public Behavior in the Library Policy
- > Technology Use Policy
 - > Internet Use Q & A
 - > USA Patriot Act
 - > Privacy Statement
- > Unattended Children Policy
- > **Materials Selection Policy**
 - > Submission Guidelines for Authors & Publishers
- > Public Use of Meeting Rooms
- > Fines & Fees Policy

relaxation, stimulation, and education are as broad and strong as the community itself. The Library will continually search for new and better methods and materials in multiple formats and languages to meet these needs.

B. Availability of Other Community Resources

The Library cooperates as fully as possible with other libraries, community agencies, and educational institutions whose purposes and activities are related to library objectives. Expanding techniques of interlibrary loans on a city, state, and federal level are utilized to improve service to Brooklyn Public Library patrons. In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of materials, the Library considers the kinds of materials collected and available through other community institutions.

The Structure of the Library:

There are several factors that have a direct impact on the selection of materials: budgetary and space restrictions as well as the current content of the Library's collection.

The Brooklyn Public Library is a single collection accessible in different locations throughout the borough. Materials are moved to various locations to fulfill community needs and requests. The selection and types of materials will vary according to the function and location of each specific library. The Brooklyn Public Library is a partial depository library for federal government documents. These government documents are primarily housed at the Central Library. The Business Library also maintains a partial U.S. Government Depository collection of business-related materials.

A. The Role of the Central Library

As the "flagship" collection of the system the Central Library provides the greatest possible degree of accessibility, in terms of both hours of operation and services. It is the borough's major public reference and research library and serves as a backup for the system as a whole. The Central Library offers more in-depth subject expertise through its special collections and resources. The Central Library is particularly committed to preserving, developing, and publicizing the Library's unique Brooklyn Collection in physical and digital formats.

B. The Role of the Business Library

The Business Library serves the information needs of the business community, with a particular emphasis on small businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as support for students and individuals.

C. Special Services and Collections

The Child's Place for Children with Special Needs acts as a system-wide service for children with special needs as well as for educators and caregivers. Resources include Braille, large print, and nonprint materials. The Service to the Aging offers programs in the branches as well as programs and materials to the homebound and to senior sites throughout the borough. The

Literacy Centers provide material in multiple formats for new and less skilled readers while many of the Library's branches offer pre-GED and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) collections and classes.

Digital Services and Preservation

The Brooklyn Public Library is dedicated to the preservation of digital collections to ensure they are available for current and future use to support the mission of the library. The Library is responsible for the preservation of the Library's digital collections. Specific responsibility for developing and overseeing the planning, creation, and preservation of the Library's digital collections is delegated to qualified and knowledgeable staff.

The Library accepts responsibility for the preservation of master archival digital copies of print or visual material from the Library's collection (and in some cases from the collections of other institutions) such as the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, and the Brooklyn Collection's historic photograph collection. The Library is responsible for creating and maintaining finding tools and information about these unique digital collections.

Methods and Criteria for Selection:

Libraries have the responsibility to be inclusive not exclusive in selection, and efforts are made to represent the widest possible diversity of views. Each type of material will be considered in terms of its own kind of excellence and for whom it is intended. There is no single standard that can be applied in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or their value as human documents; others are selected to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

A. Methods

The Library uses the criteria below in selecting materials for the Brooklyn community based on knowledge of the diverse needs of the entire community and the contents of the; Library's entire collection. No materials are excluded or removed from the Library on the basis of race, nationality, sexual orientation, political, social, or religious beliefs. Materials are judged as entire works, not on isolated passages or sections. Gifts offered to the Library are evaluated using the same criteria. Members of the Library community may suggest books or other materials to be added to the Library's collection.

B. Criteria

All Library selection and acquisitions choices are made in terms of the following standards.

1. Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and the public
2. Suitability of format for library use and content
3. Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience

4. Importance as a document of the times
5. Relation to the Library's existing collection and other material available on subject
6. Authority, reputation, or qualifications of the author, artist, publisher, or producer
7. Organization and ease of use; clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
8. Cost and availability
9. Currency of information
10. Inclusion in standard bibliographies, webliographies, or indexes
11. Enhancement of existing Library collection to reflect:
 - a. Importance of the title when compared with other works on the subject
 - b. Importance of the subject matter or point of view to the collection
 - c. Adequate retrospective and current subject coverage
 - d. Adequate coverage when there is a scarcity of material published on the subject
12. Representation of an important movement, genre, trend, or national culture
13. Artistic presentation and experimentation
14. Contemporary materials representing various points of view, which are of current interest and possible future significance, including materials that reflect current conditions, trends, and controversies

Collection Maintenance and Evaluation:

Library materials are continuously assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency, and performance within the context of the total Library collection, as well as for their continuing relevance to library users. The withdrawal of materials is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff as a necessary method to maintain collection vitality, size, and scope.

Reconsideration of Materials:

If a member of the community should raise a question about the appropriateness of a particular item in the collection, library staff attempts to resolve the inquiry by a review of the criteria outlined within this Materials Selection Policy. If the individual is not satisfied with this first step response, the individual may then elect to submit a REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL form (available at any library reference desk or via the Library's web site).

The Library's Materials Review Committee considers each request in terms of the criteria outlined in this Materials Selection Policy, the principles of the ALA LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, the CHALLENGED MATERIALS interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, printed reviews, and other appropriate sources. The Materials Review Committee provides a timely, considered response to every request for reconsideration. Appeal of the Committee's decision may be made, in writing, to the Executive Director, Brooklyn Public Library. The final responsibility for materials reconsideration resides with the Executive Director of the Library.

**RELATED AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA)
DOCUMENTS AND BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)
POLICIES OR FORMS**

[Freedom to Read \(ALA\)](#)

[Library Bill of Rights \(ALA\)](#)

[Diversity in Collection Development \(ALA\)](#)

[Free Access to Libraries for Minors \(ALA\)](#)

[Freedom to View \(ALA\)](#)

[Labels and Rating Systems \(ALA\)](#)

[Evaluating Library Collections \(ALA\)](#)

[Challenged Materials \(ALA\)](#)

[Request for Resonsideration of Library Material Form \(BPL\)](#)