

Collection Development and Management

CLP Policy # COL-1

April 2022

Collection Philosophy

The collections at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh support the Library's mission, vision and values.

Mission: To engage our community in literacy and learning.

Vision: Through Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh the people of our region will develop the literacies and connections that support individual achievement and strengthen the power of community.

Values: We build community. We prioritize people. We provide access. We enable learning.

In addition, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) builds its collections under the principles set forth in the American Library Association (ALA) [Library Bill of Rights](#) and endorses the principles set forth in the ALA [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View Statements](#).

We build collections with the following goals:

- To effect positive change in the communities we serve
- To emphasize truthful and trustworthy information, fighting all forms of disinformation, censorship, and barriers to free inquiry
- To contribute to welcoming, inclusive spaces for every customer
- To dismantle exclusionary structures including racism, sexism, and xenophobia
- To advance individual and societal goals for equity, inclusion, and social justice

These foundational documents and goals guide all collection-related discussions and decisions.

Collection Scope

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh serves over 1,000,000 citizens of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Our collections support the educational, recreational, and general reference needs of the community. We base our acquisition decisions, including content, quantity and format on the utility and accessibility of the materials to the everyday needs of our customers and on their availability elsewhere. We also serve as a District Library Center and Statewide Resource Center as designated by the PA Library Code, and our collections support those responsibilities. We avoid duplicating the scholarly research collections of the area's university libraries.

Recognizing that our service area incorporates individuals of all ages who represent a multiplicity of racial and ethnic backgrounds, economic and educational levels and physical and mental abilities, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh strives to build collections that mirror and support this diversity. The collections include materials and resources that reflect a variety of political, economic, religious, social, minority and sexual issues and identities and support intellectual freedom by providing free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored.

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh selects materials for its collection for audiences of all ages in whatever format is most appropriate in accordance with professionally accepted guidelines. The Library does not sanction particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given item equivalent to an endorsement of the author or publisher's viewpoint.

Collection Objectives

- To promote literacy and learning
- 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 local community
- To encourage continuous learning and to supplement formal study
- To support the economic health of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County's workforce by linking workers with job opportunities, training and career advice; to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in our communities
- 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

Responsibility of Selection

The Collection Services Department oversees all aspects of collection development, including budgeting, selection, maintenance, and de-selection. Selections are made by qualified and knowledgeable staff in accordance with the criteria outlined in this policy.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria are used in our good-faith efforts to judge what may fall inside or outside of the scope of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh collection. They are intended to be inclusive rather than exclusive and are deliberately flexible. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Current and anticipated needs and interests of the public

- Attention of professional critics or reviewers
- Attention in the media or from the public
- Accuracy, currency and timeliness of content
- Authority, reputation, or qualifications of the author, artist, publisher, or producer
- Contribution to the diversity and breadth of collection
- Contemporary materials representing various points of view, including materials that reflect current conditions, trends, and controversies
- Importance as a document of the times
- Quality of production
- Suitability of format for library use; durability
- Organization and ease of use; suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Relationship to the Library's existing collection and other material available on the subject/in the genre
- Local or regional interest
- Inclusion in standard bibliographies, webliographies, or indexes
- Recognition from well-regarded non-traditional resources
- Receipt of or nomination for awards or prizes
- Cost and availability; impact on the materials budget
- Space limitations

Additional Criteria based on format:

- Audiobooks
 - Preference is given to unabridged audiobooks
- Electronic Resources
 - Ease of use
 - Compatibility and accessibility
 - Access options (e.g., remote access, unlimited users, etc.)
 - Relationship of the resources to the physical collections
 - Availability and price of content in other formats
 - Hardware, software, networking and storage requirements
 - Licensing requirements
 - Long term availability and perpetual access rights

In selection, consideration is given to the work as a whole. Materials need not meet all of the above criteria, nor are they to be excluded because of:

- The author's race, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, disability, or medical condition.
- Frankness or coarseness of language
- Controversial nature of an item, including cover art
- Endorsement or disapproval of an item by an individual or organization

Independently Published Materials

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is often asked to include items in our libraries that are published independently. While the criteria outlined above apply to independently published materials, CLP recognizes that independently published items do not have the same advantages as those produced by established publishing houses. Additional criteria have been developed in an effort to effectively evaluate these items and can be found in our [Guidelines for Selection of Self-Published Materials](#).

Authors and publishers wishing to bring their work to our attention should follow the [Author and Publisher Submission Guidelines](#).

Non-English Language Materials

The Library collects recreational and informational material in languages other than English for adults, teens, and children to meet the needs of a diverse population. Materials for this collection focus on languages that are actively used and include items that can be selected, purchased and cataloged by current staff.

Government Documents

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh collects and maintains government documents as part of its collections. CLP is a Federal Depository Library and a PA Depository Library. It is also a Patent and Trademark Depository Library. Some government documents are listed in the Catalog and some are available online.

Special Collections

CLP-Main and some neighborhood libraries hold special collections that may be of community interest. These often reflect community history or cover topics of regional interest. Items in these collections that are not considered rare or valuable are evaluated based on institutional and community value.

Formats

Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format for Library use. New formats are considered for the collection when industry reports, national survey results and local requests indicate that a significant portion of the community has the necessary technology to make use of the new format. In addition to the standard selection criteria, the following criteria will be considered before adding a new format:

- Impact on equipment, staff, storage, and space
- Demand for format in community
- Compliance with industry standards and specifications
- Availability of funding to start and maintain a new format

As new formats emerge, steps will be taken to phase out duplicated, obsolete mediums. This might include discontinuation of ordering new or replacement copies, redistribution, and/or removal of existing collections from one or more locations within the system. The time frame and need for implementation of each of these steps will vary based on customer demand (as demonstrated by circulation statistics and customer requests), affordability, and availability of product from vendors.

Collection Maintenance

Withdrawing Materials

De-selection is an integral part of effective collection development. An active and continuous weeding program is essential in maintaining a viable and useful collection. Materials are withdrawn from the Library's collection through systematic deselection or because of loss or physical damage. The following categories of materials should be considered for weeding: worn or mutilated items; duplicate copies of seldom used titles; materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information; superseded editions of specific titles; and materials no longer of interest or in demand. Before discarding material of local interest, CLP locations and departments should contact the Collection Services Department. In certain instances, a withdrawn title or periodical set may be offered to one of the region's academic libraries as a complement to their existing specialized collections.

Detailed weeding guidelines and criteria may be found on the CLP Intranet at [[Weeding Guidelines](#)].

Replacements

Materials missing or withdrawn from the Library's collection are not automatically replaced. In addition to determining whether the item still meets the selection criteria outlined above, the decision to replace items is based on the following criteria:

- Availability of other copies or editions in the Library Catalog
- Adequacy of coverage in the subject area
- Cost and availability

Preservation and Storage

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh takes seriously its responsibility to preserve and appropriately store collection materials that are rare or in fragile condition. Priority is given to materials that are of local importance. Preservation techniques are determined based on current best practice in the profession, condition and available funding and skills. Items are digitized whenever possible.

Public Involvement

CLP collections are developed to meet the needs and interests of the community we serve. Community input is an important part of the collection development process. To that end, there are several ways in which the public can be involved in the use and development of library collections.

Recommendations

CLP welcomes suggestions and comments regarding items that may further meet the needs of the community or otherwise enhance the collection. Recommendations can be made through the [Suggest a Purchase](#) form in the Library Catalog, the “Recommend to Library” feature in OverDrive/Libby, or directly to the Library via email, chat, or phone or to a staff person at any CLP location. Authors or publishers wishing to bring an item to our attention should follow the [Author and Publisher Submission Guidelines](#).

Selection decisions are made in accordance with the criteria outlined in this policy. Due to the volume we receive, we are unable to provide notification about the outcome of a request.

Gifts and Donations

In accordance with the Donated Library Materials policy, CLP may accept gifts that meet our collection development criteria in formats currently collected. Donated materials become the property of CLP, and CLP reserves the right to utilize donated materials wherever the need is greatest. Donated books may be added to the collection, used in CLP book sales, or sent to a third-party book distributor in support of CLP services. Donated materials in poor condition may be discarded.

Due to the volume of donations, donated items not added to the collection will not be returned to the donor. Unsolicited materials sent to CLP will be treated as donations. Final decisions regarding the disposition of donated materials are made by Collection Services staff.

For more information, including detailed criteria for acceptance, see Donated Library Materials policy.

Reconsiderations

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) will consider the request of a customer or staff member not to add an item, to remove an item from CLP’s collections, or to relocate an item elsewhere in CLP’s collections. CLP builds its collections under the principles set forth in the American Library Association Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.cfm>).

Customers wishing to submit a request for reconsideration can do so using the [Materials Reconsideration Form](#). After a complaint has been lodged, a review committee of at least

three librarians will read or review the questioned material and research reviews and evaluations within professional literature. The consensus analysis of the item and a recommendation for action will be referred to the Director, Public Service and an answer will be sent to the complainant.

For more information see our [Requests for Reconsideration Statement](#).

Parental Responsibilities

CLP respects the rights and responsibilities of parents or guardians in determining and monitoring the use of library resources by the children under their care, who are under the age of 18. While available to provide guidance on selections, library staff members are not responsible for monitoring a child's use of and selection from library collections.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Contact the Library Services Administrator, Collection Services

Related Policies: COL-4 Special Collections, Rare Books and Archives
 COL-14 Government Documents

Guiding Documents from the American Library Association

- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [Freedom to View Statement](#)
- Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights:
 - [Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors](#)
 - [Challenged Resources](#)
 - [Diverse Collections](#)
 - [Evaluating Library Collections](#)
 - [Labeling Systems](#)
 - [Politics in American Libraries](#)
 - [Rating Systems](#)