



Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy

Overview and Purpose

The library provides an extensive collection of print, non-print, and digital content to meet the informational, educational, and leisure-time interests of the community and includes items for all ages, interests, education and reading levels, and many cultural backgrounds. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and establish the process used by the library to add items to its collection and evaluate its content over time.

Collection Scope

The Princeton Public Library provides a balanced, broadly based collection of print, non-print, and digital resources across a wide spectrum of subjects, enabling the community to explore diverse points of view on issues of interest. The library is responsive to the demand for contemporary materials of interest and significance but attempts to balance this demand with the need to preserve materials of permanent value. The library's collection development objectives are:

- To provide resources that inform, educate, empower, entertain, and enrich people as individuals, as families, and as a community.
- To include works of enduring value as well as timely material on current issues.
- To provide a balanced collection that represents a variety of viewpoints and opinions.
- To select materials based on community needs, both those expressed and those inferred from user demographics and other evidence of areas of interest

Responsibility for Materials Selection

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection and access rests with the Executive Director, who operates within the framework of this policy. The Collection Development Coordinator oversees the selection process, provides critical reviews and other appropriate selection tools, and tracks collection expenditures by selector and selection area to ensure the even flow of new resources to the library throughout the year. All staff may participate in the selection of library resources.

Freedom to Read, View and Listen

The Board of Trustees recognizes that given the increasing emphasis on frankness and realism of materials including those that explore social, sexual and ethical issues, some individuals of the library may consider certain materials to be controversial and/or offensive. Selection of materials will not be affected by any such potential disapproval, and the library will not place materials on “closed shelves” or label items to protect the public (other than children) from their content.

In the case of controversial issues or views, the library will not advance one perspective without regard for the other(s). Within the constraints of budget and space, the library will provide, to the extent practical, materials that present varied perspectives. Materials that are written in a sensational or inflammatory manner or that do not meet other selection criteria, especially with regard to accuracy of factual content, will typically not be selected.

Generally, the library is opposed to the addition or withdrawal, at the request of an individual or group, of materials that have been selected or excluded using the criteria outlined in this policy. However, the library welcomes public expressions of opinion about the collection or individual items within.

In support of these principles, the library incorporates as part of this policy the following statements and/or policies of the American Library Association: (1) Library Bill of Rights and all subsequent official interpretations; (2) Freedom to Read; (3) Freedom to View; and (4) Statement on Labeling

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association. Materials available in the library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy. The library also selects a wide variety of library materials that seek to satisfy the diverse interests of our community. The library upholds the right of every individual to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to some. The library’s varied collection is available to all; however, it is not expected that the entire collection will appeal to everyone.

To request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the library, a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form may be completed and submitted to the Collection Department Coordinator. Requests will be considered according to the criteria outlined below.

The Princeton Public Library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Therefore, no challenged material will be removed solely for the complaint of obscenity or any other

category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled to exclude the material.

Suggestions for Purchase

Collection development staff will consider suggestions for purchase from the Princeton Community, including non-resident cardholders, to shape collections that serve the interests and needs of the community. Suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. Cardholders may make suggestions for purchase using the Suggest a Purchase feature that appears on www.princetonlibrary.org or the library's mobile app, or by asking for assistance at any of the service desks. Options for suggesting purchases may also be available via individual digital content platforms.

Selection Criteria and Process

Materials selection is a discerning and deliberative process, involving general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, familiarity with the library's collection, an awareness of bibliographies on the subject and understanding of the community's needs and interests. There is no single standard that can be used to evaluate the numerous and varied types of materials included in the library's collection. However, there are some general criteria that selectors use to evaluate regardless of format, including:

- The authority, reputation or significance of the author and/or publisher of the work
- Content of the work including objectivity, accuracy and timeliness of the information
- Social significance
- Suitability of the subject format and style for the intended audience
- Clarity, readability and manner of presentation
- Overall value to the collection
- Suitability for library use
- Evaluation by critics and reviewers
- Public demand for the title
- Scarcity of resources on a particular subject, the importance of the subject to the overall collection, and availability elsewhere
- Potential local use
- Cost
- Local emphasis or local authorship
- Compliance with current U.S. Copyright Law

Selectors use a variety of tools to make decisions about selection, including but not limited to professional and trade journals, reviews from other reputable sources, subject bibliographies,

publishers' promotional materials, online title databases, and current media reviews and promotions.

In addition, selectors review data about collection use to determine about the need and demand for materials in specific subject areas as well as the number of individual titles, and formats that will be purchased.

Other Considerations

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space and budget allow. The race, religion, nationality or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection.

Materials are selected for general use or for specific age levels with the knowledge that no restriction in their use will be made on the basis of age. Responsibility for monitoring children's reading, listening to, or viewing materials rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials acquired for the adult or young adult collections might inadvertently come into the possession of children.

Criteria guiding the development of the Princeton Public Library collection include:

Multiple Copies

Multiple copies of items are purchased when there is high demand. Bestselling titles are purchased in multiple copies and formats.

New Formats

New formats will be added to the library's collection when industry reports and public library practice, and the evidence of community demand, make it clear that the Princeton community is interested in using material published in such a way. The library will keep abreast of new formats and, when possible, will acquire and make new ways of delivering content readily available to the community.

Fiction

The fiction collection is a major component of the library's collection. Fiction is purchased on the basis of positive reviews, anticipated demand, or cardholder request. The library strives to include works about groups and by authors traditionally underrepresented in publishing. The collection includes novels of the past and present, notable for literary merit, cultural value, diversity of viewpoints and popularity. Multiple copies in multiple formats are purchased to meet demand.

Nonfiction

The library purchases nonfiction on a wide variety of subjects and periods. Nonfiction is purchased on the basis of reviews, anticipated demand, the subject expertise of the author, and/or cardholder request. The Adult Nonfiction collection covers all areas organized into subject-based "Neighborhoods."

Reference Collection

The library maintains a collection of general reference materials that are non-circulating. Selection criteria of particular importance for reference sources are accuracy, currency, arrangement, ease-of-use, uniqueness of information, authority, documentation, and indexing or access.

The library also selects and makes available a small collection of genealogical reference materials to aid in tracing family relationships, especially for those families that played a role in settling and developing Princeton.

Electronic Databases

The library subscribes to databases that supplement and expand the reference, periodical and circulating collections. Subscriptions are selected and evaluated yearly based on the same content policies of the rest of the collections, paying special attention to usage, accessibility, ease of use and cost.

Local History

The Local History collection provides information for the casual researcher or student who wishes to become familiar with Princeton and its history.

The library collects and makes available to the public for research a small collection of resources pertaining to Princeton, Mercer County and New Jersey history. The collection serves as an entry point for those interested in learning more about the history and development of Princeton.

Rare and Expensive Books

The Princeton Public Library does not maintain a rare book collection. The library does not add rare or unusual books requiring special handling to the collection. If it comes to staff attention that a book that is already owned has become rare or expensive, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether to retain the item or transfer it to an appropriate archive.

If a specific item under consideration is costly, the selector will consider other materials on the subject in the collection, how this item compares, and the importance of the title to the development of the collection.

Local, State and Federal Documents

The Princeton Public Library collects some local documents pertaining to Princeton and makes them available to the community; however, the library does not maintain a local, state or federal

document depository. An increasing number of government documents are available via the internet or may be consulted in person at Princeton University's Library (PUL). Princeton Public Library cardholders may request a visitor pass to PUL via the Access Office in Firestone Library to consult items that are included within that library's federal document depository program.

Periodical Collection

The library's periodical collection supplements the book collection by providing up-to-date information, covering current topics not yet available in books and presenting less in-depth treatment of a subject than is usually found in books. The periodical collection represents diverse fields of interest to the community. It includes popular magazines, selected foreign language titles, business and trade journals, and local Princeton publications. In addition to magazines, the collection includes national, regional and local newspapers.

Journals that are highly technical or scholarly are generally not included in the print collection. However, many are available through the library's electronic database subscriptions.

Literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages Collection

The library maintains a collection of materials to support basic English literacy learning and instruction. This collection consists of written and multimedia materials, with reading levels from beginner to advanced. Topics that are appropriate for adult students and their tutors, including reading, math, and life skills, are prioritized.

Large Print Collection

The library maintains a large print book collection to meet the leisure reading needs for anyone who has difficulty reading conventionally-sized type. This collection is chiefly composed of classic and contemporary fiction, emphasizing bestsellers and mysteries. Some high-interest nonfiction is included, such as biographies and health-related materials.

World Language Collection

Materials in several languages are offered. Additional languages are added to the library's collections based on community interest and need. The collections include fiction and nonfiction, with an overall focus on popular reading materials and classics. Formats of the materials are varied and include books, magazines, newspapers, audiobooks, movies, and music.

The Italian and Spanish collections are funded separately from the other collections and have specific collection development guidelines that are outlined below.

Italian Materials

In recognition of the significant impact of Italian immigrants on the history of Princeton and the success that the Princeton Pettoranello Foundation has had in raising the visibility of Italians in the community, the library maintains a special collection of materials which focus on the history and culture of Italy, the Italian immigrant experience, and the influence of Italian immigrants on Princeton.

Spanish Materials

A special collection of Spanish-language materials is maintained by the library to address the informational and leisure reading needs of Princeton's Spanish-speaking residents.

The selection criteria are consistent with that used for the selection of all library materials. Professional review sources are supplemented by hands-on evaluation of materials; reliance on known, reputable U.S. vendors of Spanish-language materials, and lists or holdings information from other libraries. Topic, format and presentation are critical and may outweigh other considerations such as production quality.

Materials originally issued in Spanish, bilingual materials, and Spanish translations of material from around the world are acquired.

Media Collection

The library offers a variety of media including movies, music, audiobooks, and software. The collection does not include materials produced specifically for classroom use. The selection criteria for adult, children's, and young adult media are the same as those applied to print material. Special consideration is given to the purchase of items that have received awards or other special recognition by notable and authoritative organizations, institutes, or associations.

Film

The library purchases feature, educational and documentary films. Purchased films are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of particular scenes or segments. In some instances, materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, scholarship, historic record or importance in meeting the informational needs of the community. Items may also be purchased in response to substantial demand for a specific title.

Titles are considered for addition to our collection on their merit and are neither purchased nor excluded because of their MPAA rating. Any rating information included on the packaging is left as is.

Some, but not all, titles are acquired with public performance rights. Where they apply, these rights are indicated on the physical item as well as on the item record.

The library also offers streaming feature films and documentaries via subscription databases.

Audiobooks

The adult audiobook collection features popular fiction and nonfiction as well as literary classics, language instruction, business, poetry, plays, lectures, speeches and materials that promote and facilitate lifelong learning. The Children's collection includes but is not limited to well-made adaptations of children's literature, folk and fairy tales, poetry, ethnic literature and nonfiction with an emphasis on outof-school programming. The library purchases both abridged and unabridged audiobooks in CD, and other electronic formats.

Music

The library offers streaming music content via subscription databases.

Gifts

Gifts of books and other library materials in good condition may be accepted by the library with the understanding that they will not necessarily be added to the library's collection. The same selection criteria used for the purchase of materials are applied to gifts. The library assumes ownership of all donated materials. The library reserves the rights to sell or dispose of gift materials not added to the collection and to refuse conditional donations.

Receipts for materials given to the library are limited to acknowledgement of the quantity and format of materials donated. Assignment of value for income tax or other purposes is the responsibility of the donor. The library will not appraise gifts or endorse appraisals obtained by donors. . Items accepted for the Local History collection require a signed Deed of Gift, which authorizes that the donor has the right to donate the material.

Monetary gifts may be designated as memorials or given in honor of individuals or special occasions. Subject or title preferences of donors will be honored insofar as possible, but the library reserves the right of final selection.

No guarantee is made that gift materials selected for inclusion in the library collection or materials acquired with gift funds will be kept permanently or will continue to be replaced indefinitely, if worn, damaged or lost.

Materials and Resources

The library purchases materials for adults, children and young adults.

Adult Collection

Based on the selection criteria outlined in the Collection Development Policy, the library collects and maintains a wide variety of materials to meet the needs of Princeton's adult community. These materials vary by format, use, and intended audience. The adult collection includes, but is not limited to, the following categories:

Movies • Television series • Adult basic literacy and ESL materials • Music • Magazines and newspapers • Princeton history • Reference resources • Downloadable digital content • Devices • Fiction (includes mysteries, science fiction, romance, short stories and graphic novels) • Nonfiction • Large print books • Book club collections • World languages • Audiobook • E-books

Children's Collection

The children's collection provides a broad range of materials to stimulate interest and satisfy curiosity across the spectrum of age, interest and ability. A variety of viewpoints and treatments is sought. The library's collection supplements but is not intended to support any specific educational curriculum. A special collection within the children's collection, focusing on children's literature, provides bibliographies and other materials for parents and interested adults.

Material is selected from respected review sources on the basis of excellence among various factors, including text, illustrations, information content, format, and interest to and suitability for children.

While physical format is not a barrier to inclusion in the collection, some formats are avoided for practical reasons. These include pop-up and mechanical books, spiral bound volumes and books, or periodicals designed to be written in, cut apart, or otherwise altered by the reader.

Books in series are evaluated in terms of their own merit as individual titles and may be acquired without the inclusion of other titles in the same series. Popular paperback series are included as demand and quality warrant.

The Children's collection includes, but is not limited to, the following categories:

Graphic novels, including manga • Magazines • Music • Audiobooks • Movies • Devices • Downloadable digital content • Picture books • Beginning readers • Fiction • Nonfiction • Reference resources • World language materials • Parent collection • Story kits

Young Adult Collection

The young adult collection consists primarily of books which widen the boundaries of an adolescent's thinking, enrich their life and help fulfill emotional and recreational needs. Titles selected for this collection may duplicate titles in the children's or adult collections. The collection includes materials on public school reading lists. The young adult collection consists of both print and digital formats, and also includes audiobooks, graphic novels, including manga, and magazines.

The selection criteria for the young adult collection is consistent with those for children's and adult materials. Quality books written for young adults with controversial themes and treatments are not excluded.

Collection Maintenance

To maintain an up-to-date and useful collection, ongoing evaluation and judicious weeding of the collection by professional staff is necessary. Materials are withdrawn if they have little or no use or have been superseded by a more recent edition or better work on the same subject.

Selectors will make replacement decisions about material withdrawn because of loss or physical damage.

Replacement will be based upon:

- The number of copies of the title already owned and continued demand.
- Continued value of the title and significance as identified in standard bibliographies.
- Local relevance of the title, author, illustrator or producer.
- Uniqueness to the collection.
- Alternative coverage of the subject or genre in the collection.
- Availability of newer or better materials on the subject.

Information used to make decisions about removing a title from the collection includes:

- Review of statistical information such as circulation reports, collection turnover rates and electronic resource use statistics.
- Visual inspection of materials to determine poor condition.
- Library holdings compared to standard bibliographies and recommended purchase lists.

Annual Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Director, library management team, and collection development coordinator. Recommendations for revision will be sent to the library Board of Trustees for its approval.