

La Porte County Public Library Partnership Policy

La Porte County Public Library is a trusted, welcoming, and relevant partner in the success of our community. LPCPL establishes partner relationships to respond to community needs and to champion learning and growth at every stage of life by offering equitable access to opportunities, resources, and services that help everyone be the best versions of themselves.

LPCPL seeks to partner with mission-aligned organizations, governmental entities and businesses to: jointly address community needs through specific measurable partner activities; deliver responsive and relevant programs, services, and resources to the community; and ensure that the work of the partnership is mutually beneficial to each of the partners as well as the community.

LPCPL partnerships are guided by the organization's mission, vision and values. LPCPL seeks to partner with organizations whose own mission, vision or values are in alignment with our own. Only organizations deemed appropriate and compatible with the mission, vision and values of LPCPL will be considered for a potential partnership.

It is important to work with a partner to develop shared partnership goals, objectives, activities and accountability.

The purpose of this policy is twofold:

1. To create a shared understanding of the partnership and work performed by partners
2. To establish the need to evaluate partnerships for effectiveness and results

Guidelines:

Partnerships are guided by LPCPL's Mission, Vision and Values

Partnership roles, responsibilities and actions are informed by LPCPL's Policies

Partnerships require the approval of the Executive Director or their designee

Programming Partnerships align with the LPCPL Program Policy

A partner may request a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for partnership work. An MOU is a detailed format for partnerships that outlines activities and expectations as well as contacts, evaluation timeline and options for renewing or expanding the partnership. It is not a legally binding document, but does require signatures from both parties. We prefer NOT to sign an MOU with a partner, and any partner that requests an MOU will need to provide a template which will need to be reviewed and approved by LPCPL's Executive Director

Partnerships do not include partner access to LPCPL customer identifying data, including email addresses

Partnerships will be evaluated on an annual basis. If an evaluation reveals a partnership is ineffective, or if one or both partners no longer want to participate in the partnership, it should be discontinued. If the work of the partnership is complete, a partnership can be discontinued as well.

Evaluating partnerships is important to ensure that the goals and objectives of the partnership are being met, and the roles and responsibilities of each partner are reasonable and effective.

If an evaluation shows that a partnership has room for improvement and both parties are interested in continuing the relationship, the partners can begin communicating about how to improve outcomes.

Examples of modifications:

- A partnership goal no longer aligns with community aspirations or issues, so the goal is amended to better fit the needs of the community
- A partnership needs improved communication, so the partnership is modified to include specific communication methods, response times or check-ins
- A partnership can broaden its reach in the community, so the partnership is modified to include expanded goals and outcomes to better serve the community
- A partner has new leadership, so the partnership is updated to include new contacts and responsibilities as agreed to by partners

Examples of discontinuations:

- A partner is not actively participating in partnership work
- A partner's mission/vision/values are no longer aligned, or compatible, with LPCPL's mission/vision/values
- A partner is participating in discriminatory practices toward some or all of the community
- A partner has gone out of business, is no longer operating, or has otherwise chosen to discontinue partnership work. Discontinuing a partnership should not be taken lightly, and it is important to handle this situation with care.

Categories of Partnership

Strategic: aligned with LPCPL's mission, vision and values, AND allows for broad collaborative opportunities to support LPCPL's priorities. These partners have the ability to help us move work forward and address meaningful (typically long range) community concerns and aspirations.

Site-Specific Strategic: aligned with LPCPL's mission, vision and values, AND allows for collaborative opportunities to support LPCPL's priorities at one location or in one service area.

These partners have the ability to help us move work forward and address meaningful (typically long range) community concerns and aspirations.

Programming: partner organization offers time, talent or trade consideration for discounted costs to LPCPL in order to provide high quality programming for LPCPL customers. These are not regular paid vendors.

Supportive: partner supports LPCPL OR LPCPL supports the organization (i.e. in-kind relationships or one-way communication or promotion).

Mutually Supportive: partner supports LPCPL AND LPCPL supports partner (i.e. reciprocal relationships or two-way communication or promotion).