LIBRARY OF THINGS SELECTION POLICY

Adopted by the Cedar Mill Community Library Association Board of Directors on November 28, 2017

Purpose of the Collection:
The Library of Things at the Cedar Mill Community Libraries offers non-traditional items for patrons to check out. The goal of this collection is to support CMCL's mission to present our community with opportunities for lifelong learning and personal enrichment by providing new and popular materials that stimulate the imagination, provide leisure activities and experiences, and offer resources for patrons to explore topics of personal interest.
In addition to supporting the library's mission, the Library of Things also aims to:
- Promote experiential learning
- Support creativity and making
- Provide access to resources patrons might not normally have contact with
- Generate awareness of new and emerging technologies and ideas
- Create better-informed consumers and support local businesses by giving patrons a chance to try out something before making a decision to purchase it
- Create connections within our community by exploring shared interests and collaborating
- Have fun and help facilitate the serendipitous discovery of new and exciting things

Selection for the Library of Things falls under CMCL's general Collection Development rules
http://library.cedarmill.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MaterialsSelectionPolicyCMCL_2016.pdf
These guidelines are not intended to change or alter that policy but to clarify some specifics concerning how it applies to the Library of Things.

Types of materials:
General categories have been developed for the Library of Things collection, but these are intended to act as guides for selection, and not to place limits on what can be represented in the collection. When considering the addition of new categories, selectors will analyze the feasibility of the material type using the criteria listed in the Selector's Checklist (below). Selectors will then present ideas for new categories to managers for approval.
- Discovery Kits (examples: Stargazing, Zombie Survival, Ukulele)
- Technology (examples: Karaoke machine, Camcorder, iPad-Microphone- &- Jam Kit)
- Coding & STEM (examples: Makey Makey kit, Finch robot, Arduino kit)

Donations:
Donations are accepted according to the Cedar Mill Community Libraries' donation policy:
http://library.cedarmill.org/support/material-donation-guidelines/

We recommend that, whenever possible, patrons who wish to donate items specifically for the Library of Things collection speak with collection development staff to ensure the item is appropriate for CMCL's Library of Things. Most items in good condition and working order are accepted, and receipts for tax purposes can be given. Donations are considered outright and unrestricted, and there is no guarantee that a donated item will end up in the collection.

Guidelines and criteria for selection:
Collection development staff uses their training, knowledge and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection. The following considerations should apply when selecting materials for inclusion in the Library of Things collection:

- **Processing and circulation** - the size of the item and how it will be packaged and processed should be taken under consideration for judging how practical checking that item in and out regularly will be and how the item will be stored at the library. Wherever possible standard packaging that has been approved by Technical Services should be used (see Selector's Checklist below).
- **Cost** – Selectors, in consultation with a manager, decide how best to distribute the budget and what the limits are for cost of an item. Managers will designate a portion of the budget for the Library of Things to be used for repair and replacement costs (see Maintenance below).
- **Longevity** - breakable parts, multiple pieces easily lost, and the likelihood of an item getting damaged or dirty should be weighed against the cost to purchase, process, and maintain that item. Collection development staff should evaluate the durability of items added to the collection and formulate a reasonable expectation for how long the item can stand up to heavy use. Items that need frequent maintenance should be avoided (for example, musical instruments with strings that break frequently in the normal course of use, let alone heavy use).
- **Safety** – patron safety is a priority, and potential safety risks that an item poses must be considered. Items should be packaged appropriately with visible warning labels if needed.
- **Community interest** – patron feedback and suggestions are gathered through a number of sources (emails, surveys, purchase request forms, and in conversation). Collection development staff also looks at library circulation and programming statistics to get a general sense of what is popular and in-demand in our community and uses this information to guide selection.
- **Circulation data and demand** – this collection is an ongoing experiment, and there are times when staff adds items without knowing how well they will circulate. Because of this and the cost of these items, we normally start with just one copy. If cost and space allow, we may add one copy to Cedar Mill Library and one copy to the Bethany branch. As demand grows (reflected in holds or checkout numbers), additional copies may be added provided budget and space constraints allow. Items that do not circulate well will be removed from the collection per Selection Policy guidelines.
- **New/trending/popular** – often items or things being talked about widely or trending in popularity on a large scale, make good additions to the collection. Collection development staff should check with vendors and review sites to determine what might be the next big thing. Sometimes this may come down to the selector's own experience, knowledge, and intuition.
- **Entertainment and enjoyment** – a primary reason why this collection succeeds is its ability to surprise, delight, and entertain patrons. We want to expand the way patrons think about what is possible at a public library and afford them pleasure while doing it. Adding something to the collection merely because it is fun is perfectly acceptable.
- **Access** – thought should be given to what items might normally be inaccessible to most patrons. Providing people with tools they can benefit from but would not normally purchase or otherwise obtain for themselves makes acquiring that item for the Library of Things collection especially important. Access can also mean providing items for checkout that might not be practical for a patron to own.
- **Reviews** – consumer reviews of products are essential in predicting what circulation problems might be encountered and should be given appropriate consideration.

Maintenance
When adding to the Library of Things, collection development staff should assess the durability of items under consideration and availability of replacement parts.
Selectors will develop a schedule to pull from circulation and inspect all items *at least* annually to ensure all components of each item are present and in good working order. If components are missing, selectors will decide if: a) the item can function well with the deficiency, in which case the deficiency is noted and the item is returned to circulation; or b) the item should be replaced, repaired, or withdrawn from the collection.
Managers in charge of allocating funds for the Library of Things will designate a portion of each account (10-20% depending on the nature of the materials) to be held in reserve for repair and replacement costs. At the end of the fiscal year, if any funds remain in this reserve, the selector may use those funds to add one or more new items to the collection. If the repair and replacement portion of the budget is spent before the end of the fiscal year, any items with deficiencies affecting usability will either be withdrawn or placed in Unavailable status until new repair and replacement funds are allocated in the next fiscal year.

Selector's Checklist
All items added to the CMCL Library of Things must go through a rigorous selection process. Selectors should research and verify all elements in the following checklist before submitting an order for the item and its component parts.

- **Vendor or Source.** Is the vendor or source a well-established and reputable company? Does it provide replacement parts for purchased items? Is it likely to be around in a year or two if we wish to add duplicate copies of the item? Are there other sources we can turn to for similar items if necessary?
- **Reviews.** Check consumer review sources or other channels that provide consumer information on the item(s) under consideration for purchase.
- **Packaging & Processing Supplies.** Selectors should order only those packaging and processing supplies that have been approved for purchase by Technical Services. Wherever possible, standard containers pre-approved by Technical Services will be used.
- **Safety.** Are there safety issues with the item that require special handling or warning labels to be affixed during processing? For example, are there pieces that would be a choking hazard to small children? Technical Services will need this information to ensure appropriate processing procedures are followed.

Location & Capacity. Selectors should consider the overall capacity of CML and CMLB, as well as where items will be shelved in those locations when items are not checked out. If selectors determine that it's not practical to place items on the public shelves and recommend more secure placement, managers (particularly the Circulation Manager at either location) must evaluate space capacity within their respective areas and approve the proposed placement prior to adding.