WCLS Collection Manual – Library of Things

Collection Statement:

The Library of Things collection focuses on items that are fun, feed curiosity, and expand user's access to items and experiences. This collection is intended to reach new users, make the library relevant to the community in fresh ways, and expand the concept of what resources are available at a modern library.

Audience:

WCLS purchases Things that are of interest to adults, teens, and youth.

Content:

There are many possibilities for Things that could be added to the collection. We are focusing on items that people cannot afford, or are a single-use need, or that users would benefit from trying out before making the decision to purchase. And on Things that are fun!

Selection:

Each Thing must have a champion who makes selection decisions, answers questions related to cataloging and processing, and monitors the Thing and questions related to it during its lifespan. Acquisitions, cataloging, and processing are all done within the usual workflow. See guidelines for selection below for more detail. Donations will not be accepted. Purchases are made from the general collection budget, where there is a line item for Library of Things. We do not commit to a specific holds ratio for Library of Things items, but will consider adding additional "copies" of popular items prior to adding a new type of item to this collection.

Processing/Repair/Maintenance:

Library of Things items often require a high level of processing and each item may have unique repair/maintenance needs. The Thing Champion will work with the Processing department to make decisions about how to prepare the item for circulation and will participate in repair/maintenance decisions during the Thing's lifespan.

Distribution:

Things tend to have holds queues, and most Things will float. It is possible that some Things may be located at one or more branches during a trial period. As much as possible, the circulation parameters for Things will be the same as the rest of the collection (circulation policy/procedure, replacement, etc.). Library of Things items only need to be sent in as snags when the experience of using the item is affected. "Things" are selected specifically for their ability to be enjoyed even if parts are missing (for example, a doll sock, or single coloring pencil, or card from a game deck).

Guidelines for selection:

• If multiple parts, consider whether item will still be able to circulate if missing pieces.

• Avoid items where use is time-sensitive (i.e. chocolate fountain for a party on a specific date).

• Preference for items that can circulate with minimal repairs/cleaning or other staff intervention.

• We will not purchase items where safety may be an issue (i.e. chainsaws).

• Avoid undermining local businesses by offering items that compete with their livelihood.

• Consider what will be necessary to safely package the item for distribution, and how distribution will incorporate it into their delivery workflow.

• No seasonal use items (we couldn't buy enough "copies" to meet the demand and then would need to store for the rest of the year).