

Guidelines for Selection of Self-Published Materials

Revised April 2022

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is often asked to include items in our libraries that are published independently. While the full criteria outlined in our Collection Development and Management Policy ([link](#)) apply to independently published materials, CLP recognizes that independently published items do not have the same advantages as those produced by established publishing houses. The additional criteria below have been developed in an effort to effectively evaluate these items.

Self-published materials selected for the collection will be cataloged, may be housed in any location and will be interfiled with other materials. No labels identifying materials as self-published will be applied.

Self-published items will be identified in the item record in our catalog, searchable by staff. Please note that this information will not be visible in the public catalog.

The Pennsylvania Department will continue to collect materials of local interest or with a local setting and should be notified when such materials are identified. Other selectors may also consider materials of local interest or with a local setting as desired.

Self-published materials may be acquired through donation, the Author and Publisher Submission process ([link](#)), or through the regular selection process (i.e. purchased from a vendor).

If professional reviews (fee-based or otherwise), are available for the title, selections may be based on the existing collection development policy, keeping in mind that fee-based reviews should be carefully considered.

Approved review sources include, but are not limited to:

[BlueInk Reviews](#)
[Independent Publisher](#)
[IndieReader](#)
Kirkus
[Midwest Book Review](#)
PW Select

If no reviews are available, materials must meet at least two of the criteria listed below to be considered for selection.

- A staff member has read and recommended the title.
- The title is already in our catalog and there are holds.

- Comparable libraries outside our consortium own it. (Check WorldCat)
- The title's sales rank in Amazon and/or Barnes and Noble is above 1000 and Ingram's i-page has many copies in stock.
- The title has 25 or more reader reviews on Amazon/B&N/Powell's/Goodreads with an over-all star rating of three or higher and there is no significant evidence of counterfeit or fake reviews.
- One or more previous works by the author were published through a traditional publishing house
- One or more previous self-published works by the author are in the Library catalog and have circulated.

Exceptions may be made for materials that receive notable media coverage or attention.

Exceptions may also be made for materials by local authors who will be featured in CLP-sponsored programs providing that the program planner has vetted the author and title(s) in question. Local authors may continue to 'rent' meeting room space and have signings or programs without library sponsorship. Such rentals do not imply that materials will be considered for the collection.