

The New York Public Library

STEPHEN A. SCHWARZMAN BUILDING • Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, New York, New York 10018-2788

EXHIBITION GUIDELINES

The goal of the Exhibitions Program is to enrich the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the collections of The New York Public Library (NYPL) and to support the Library's primary mission as a preeminent educational resource. This mission will continue with an emphasis on exhibitions that engage larger local, national, and international audiences. Exhibitions in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building will seek to increase the collections' accessibility for the K-12 audience by aligning the themes of exhibitions with key subject areas. To meet these challenges, the Exhibitions Program will work closely with the Teaching & Learning, Public Programs/Lifelong Learning groups as well as staff and curators in Collections Strategy, Digital Experience, Development, and Communications and Marketing.

Under the leadership of the Director of Education, Programs, and Exhibitions (EPE Director), working in concert with the Assistant Director for Exhibitions and the Andrew W. Mellon Director of The New York Public Libraries, exhibitions in the Schwarzman Building will:

- promote increased awareness of NYPL collections
- promote NYPL as a model educational and cultural institution
- strengthen NYPL's educational role through exhibitions closely linked to the NYC/NYS curricula
- increase the interpretive capacities of exhibitions through the development of printed and online materials
- create exhibitions with broad appeal for diverse, intergenerational audiences
- develop and implement guidelines and standards for all NYPL exhibitions as we move toward a centralized approach and complementary exhibitions throughout NYPL

Exhibition Venues and Cycle – Schwarzman Building

Beginning no later than fall 2011, exhibitions in the Schwarzman Building will adhere to an extended schedule as follows:

D. Samuel and Jeane H. Gottesman Exhibition Hall

- October – June

The Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III Gallery

- Mid-September – January (tentative)
- Mid-February – June (tentative)
- July – annual display of the *Declaration of Independence*

Print/Stokes Galleries

- TBD

Exhibition Criteria

Exhibitions in the Schwarzman Building must have educational and historical significance and relevance to the New York State curricula and must include a broad representation of media.

NYPL policy states the following with regard to exhibitions:

“In no instance shall Library exhibitions contravene the policy adopted by the Board of Trustees . . . excluding exhibits of a commercial nature or of objects intended for sale at the time or subsequently.”

Therefore, NYPL policy prohibits the acceptance of

- applications from individual artists or from individual artists represented in an exhibition
- exhibitions of a commercial nature or of objects intended for sale

Exhibition Publications

NYPL does not produce a catalogue for every exhibition.

Supplemental Online Exhibitions

- Select exhibitions may have an online component developed by the curator and the exhibition and educational teams, together with the Digital Strategy Group.
- NYPL does not guarantee the creation of a complementary online presence for each project.

Exhibition Proposal

A form for the submission of an exhibition proposal is located on LAIR and at nypl.org/exhibitions.

Exhibition proposals must include the following:

- working title
- description (two-page maximum)
- goal(s) of the exhibition
- proposed opening date
- highlights from NYPL collections
- a working checklist and digital images (maximum 300 dpi) of 10 - 15 NYPL objects in the exhibition including artist/author, medium, object title, date, and NYPL division
- sample label copy for three of the objects referred to above
- if applicable, a list of loan items from public and/or private sources that may complement and enrich the overall presentation
- if applicable, a brief description of a complementary website
- a resume/curriculum vitae of curator(s)

- if applicable, identify the NYPL curator working in a co-curatorial capacity with regard to this exhibition
- contact information

Proposal Timeline

Proposals must be submitted at least three years prior to the proposed opening date of the exhibition.

Submission of Proposal

Proposals from NYPL staff and guest curators should be e-mailed to the Assistant Director for Exhibitions at Exhibitions@nypl.org.

Review Process/Notification

- The Exhibitions Committee meets quarterly to review exhibition proposals that fall within the criteria noted above.
- Notification of NYPL's decision will be made within four months of receipt by e-mail.

NEW APPROACHES

Exhibition Planning

- The Director of Collections Strategy will be responsible for ensuring that NYPL curators meet deadlines for exhibitions in the Schwarzman Building.
- The EPE Assistant Director for Exhibitions will be responsible for ensuring that guest curators meet deadlines.
- The EPE Director and the Assistant Director for Exhibitions will develop baseline budgets for each exhibition venue.

Exhibition Content

All major exhibitions will:

- support NYPL's primary mission of education and enlightenment for a general audience by translating conceptual ideas into accessible ways of learning
- provide robust programmatic opportunities – teaching and learning, public programs, and lifelong learning
- be inclusive of Library-wide collections
- showcase unseen aspects of NYPL; for example, conservation of materials

- contain panel and label text that will have meaning to a variety of visitors
- present visitors with accessible, interactive activities inclusive of multiple-sensory experiences – audio, visual, and site-specific installations – that are designed to make a significant impression

For example:

- soundscape environments
- computer-interactive learning stations
- 3D and other animation
- film clips
- recording stations
- interface technologies

Funding

- Full funding must be secured to realize the exhibition and, if full funding has not been obtained at least one year prior to the scheduled opening date, NYPL may cancel the exhibition.
- Curatorial panel and label text must be comprehensible to a wide-ranging audience and may be revised, rewritten, and edited by NYPL to meet this goal.

Contractual Revisions

- Agreements relating to gifts to the collections will not guarantee an exhibition, display, or online presence.
- Contracts with curators will indicate that a curator serves in a paid or advisory capacity and that work can and will be rewritten to meet the needs of the institution.

Site Library Exhibitions/Programs

- Exhibitions and Education will work with the network managers to identify Sites with suitable space for mounting satellite exhibitions.

For example, an exhibition at a Site may consist of:

- reproductions of works highlighted in a major exhibition
 - panel(s) offering a summary of a major exhibition
 - interpretive exhibitions drawing on themes from a major exhibition
- Select Public and/or Lifelong Learning Programs may travel to Sites with satellite exhibitions.