

Living Library at the Calgary Public Library

What is a Living Library?

The Living Library works exactly like your local library – readers can borrow a “book”. The difference is: books in the Living Library are human beings, “living books,” with whom the reader can have a conversation.

This unique program enables people to ask the questions they have always wanted to ask and to share stories about their personal experiences in a safe and welcoming environment. It enables individuals to actively contribute to the building of inclusive communities of understanding.

What is involved in becoming a *Living Book*?

Living Books are the most important resource of the Living Library. The role of the *Living Book* can be demanding and challenging, but also interesting and fun!

The Calgary Public Library is looking for *Living Book Volunteers* for a variety of Living Library programs.

What is required?

As a *Living Book*, you are required to be yourself – no more, no less. Be available, as you are, to answer questions about your life that will help readers to understand you and your experiences better.

Who are the “Readers”?

“Readers” can be anybody who wants to learn more about the diversity of the people in his or her community.

Who makes a good *Living Book*?

A *Living Book* for the Living Library will be chosen on the following qualities:

- Reliable
- Able to answer questions honestly
- Able to respond appropriately to stereotypes and prejudices
- Willing to help people learn about different lifestyles
- Able to be clear about your lifestyle but not preach about it
- Willing to talk with a range of different readers
- A good listener and not too talkative
- Confident to talk with people you don't know

If you answered ‘yes’ to these questions, and you are interested in finding out more or volunteering to become a Living Book, please e-mail livinglibrary@calgarypubliclibrary.com or phone 403-221-2094.

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