



## STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

### Communications Report

**Date:** January 26, 2026  
**To:** Toronto Public Library Board  
**From:** City Librarian

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. receives Communication (a), an email to the Library Board, Mayor Chow, and Councillor Matlow, expressing thanks for increased library hours on Sundays, from Daniel, a Toronto resident, for information.
2. receives Communication (b), a letter to the Library Board, from Anthony Canali, independent author, for information.

### SIGNATURE

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Moe Hosseini-Ara  
City Librarian



## Outlook

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### Thank you for Sunday library service!

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**From** Daniel [REDACTED]  
**Date** Fri 1/9/2026 7:26 AM  
**To** councillor\_matlow@toronto.ca <councillor\_matlow@toronto.ca>; mayor\_chow@toronto.ca <mayor\_chow@toronto.ca>; Sara Tavakolian <saratavakolian@tpl.ca>; Claire Argyropoulos <cargyropoulos@tpl.ca>; Branch Operations <branchoperations@tpl.ca>  
**Cc** [REDACTED]

**CAUTION:** This email has originated from outside of TPL. Do not click on any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe.

Good morning,

I've been a resident of Toronto since 2014, and have always been impressed by the Toronto Public Library (TPL), its programs, and its vast collection. Now that I'm a parent, the public library has become an important institution in new ways.

My wife and I have a young child and we live in a small apartment. We are fortunate to live near the Wychwood branch, which has a great kids area. Our daughter loves books, reading, and going to the library. And during the winter, we are always looking for places we can go out with a small child. Our daughter has lots of energy and is growing up in an apartment - so public spaces are essential for us.

We were therefore very excited to hear a few months ago that all TPL branches were opening on Sundays! We visit our local library almost every Sunday and spend much our day there. Our daughter loves it! We find great books, do activities, and we especially appreciate the caring, knowledgeable, and devoted staff there. Sunday Family Time has become a staple of our weekend routine, and our daughter is always excited to hear librarians read stories and lead children in song. It's adorable; and it's important.

This means so very much to our family, our community, and our quality of life. I am sure many other families feel similarly.

Thank you for your hard work in making this happen, so families like ours can enjoy everything the TPL has to offer 7 days a week. We are a happier family and healthier community for this.

Sincerely,

Daniel [REDACTED]

Anthony Canali



The Secretary  
Toronto Public Library Board  
789 Yonge Street  
Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8  
Phone: 416-393-7215 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday to Friday)  
Email: Sara Tavakolian at [saratavakolian@tpl.ca](mailto:saratavakolian@tpl.ca)

Dear Members of the Toronto Public Library Board,

I am writing to formally raise a concern regarding Toronto Public Library's policies and practices as they relate to independent (self-published) authors, particularly in the areas of collection development and public programming.

In mid-December 2025, I contacted TPL staff regarding the donation of my nonfiction books and the possibility of contributing copies of my recent nonfiction book, *Sculpting Stardust: Sacred Equations in the Global Village*, in relation to potential programming connected to an upcoming Artificial Intelligence event. My work addresses artificial intelligence, media ecology, symbolic literacy, and cultural systems—topics that align closely with the Library's public educational mandate.

In response, I was advised that self-published titles are “more likely” to be considered only if they have already received significant media attention or third-party validation from established outlets. I was also directed toward BiblioBoard and informed that I had not submitted through specific formal programming pathways.

While I respect the professionalism of staff, this experience raised a broader concern: current structures appear to create systemic barriers for serious independent authors, regardless of intellectual merit, relevance, or public value.

By contrast, when I donated the same titles to Broward County Library in Florida, they were accepted into circulation and integrated into the public catalogue. That experience demonstrated that alternative evaluation models exist within public library systems—models capable of recognizing serious independent work without requiring institutional publishing affiliation or prior media validation. The contrast raises an important policy question as to whether Toronto Public Library's current practices unnecessarily restrict access for independent Canadian voices.

Further concerns arise in relation to the Writers in Residence program. When I inquired about my prior submission, I was informed that no record of it existed. More broadly, the program provides no confirmation, feedback, or meaningful engagement with applicants. As currently structured, it does not function as an accessible developmental pathway, but rather as another opaque filtering mechanism.

Specifically:

- The reliance on external media validation as a gatekeeping mechanism disadvantages independent thinkers who have not passed through institutional publishing channels.
- Routing self-published authors primarily toward siloed platforms (such as BiblioBoard) can marginalize their work rather than integrate it into the Library's core intellectual ecosystem.
- There appears to be no transparent evaluative pathway by which independent authors can be assessed on the basis of intellectual contribution, relevance, or civic value.
- Programs such as Writers in Residence, while framed as opportunities, lack transparency, feedback mechanisms, or meaningful engagement with applicants.

My concern is not centered on personal rejection. It is whether current structures unintentionally conflict with the library's stated commitments to intellectual freedom, equity of access, and diversity of voices.

Toronto Public Library occupies a unique position as a cultural steward within this city. When its systems primarily recognize institutional affiliation over intellectual contribution, emerging and independent voices risk exclusion from the public commons.

I respectfully ask the Board to consider:

- Whether current policies toward independent authors align with TPL's public mandate
- Whether more transparent and equitable assessment mechanisms could be established
- Whether serious self-published nonfiction can be evaluated on intellectual and civic merit rather than publishing pathway alone

I would welcome the opportunity to provide further documentation of my work, credentials, and public engagement if it would assist the Board's review.

Thank you for your attention and for your stewardship of Toronto's public intellectual life.

Anthony Canali



The Secretary  
Toronto Public Library Board  
789 Yonge Street  
Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8  
Phone: 416-393-7215 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday to Friday)  
Email: Sara Tavakolian at [saratavakolian@tpl.ca](mailto:saratavakolian@tpl.ca)

Dear Members of the Toronto Public Library Board,

I am writing to formally raise concerns regarding the Toronto Public Library's policies and practices as they relate to independent (self-published) authors, particularly in the areas of collection development and public programming.

I recently contacted TPL staff (Mid December 2025) regarding the donation of my nonfiction and fiction books and the additional possibility of donating a few copies of my recent nonfiction book "**Sculpting Stardust: Sacred Equations in The Global Village**" this was in programming related to an upcoming Artificial Intelligence event with the library. My work focuses on AI, media ecology, symbolic literacy, and cultural systems—subjects closely aligned with the library's public educational mandate.

In response, I was advised that self-published titles are "more likely" to be considered only if they have already received significant media attention or third-party validation from established outlets. I was also directed toward library "Official Practices" and informed that I had not previously submitted to specific library programming pipelines. Namely, the writers in residence program. I was shocked to receive a message from Sara Tavakolian Acting Library Board Officer that I should have submitted the work to the program and I email her back that I did.

She informed me that there was no record of any of my works.

While I appreciate the work of staff, this exchange raised a broader concern: current practices appear to create systemic barriers for serious independent authors, regardless of intellectual merit, relevance, or public value of written work submitted to Toronto Libraries or Canadian libraries in general.

In comparison, I was in Pompano Beach Florida, walked into the Broward County library, donated my books and they are in the US system. [Broward County Library - Florida](#).

How do you explain this major deficit regarding a Canadian Author or any author.

Specifically, I am addressing:

- The reliance on external media validation as a gatekeeping mechanism disadvantages independent thinkers whose work has not passed through institutional publishing channels.
- Routing self-published authors primarily toward siloed platforms Canadian platforms effectively marginalizes their work rather than integrating it into the library's core cultural and intellectual life.
- There appears to be no transparent evaluative pathway by which an independent author's ideas, public relevance, or scholarly contribution can be assessed on their own merit.
- Additionally, programs such as the Writers in Residence initiative, while presented by the library as opportunities, provide no feedback on SUBMITTED work or meaningful response to submissions and appear to function as another opaque filtering mechanism rather than a developmental or accessible pathway for emerging independent voices.

- When submitting work and discussing the submissions with library members a ‘Don’t worry it will get to the appropriate channel’ is not an acceptable attitude to library patrons by hired staff seeking assistance for written submissions to those hired for the writers in residence program.
- If this is the case then money to the library system for the program should be and used better somewhere else.

My concern is not as much about personal rejection. It is about whether current policy structures unintentionally contradict the library’s stated commitments to intellectual freedom, equity of access, and diversity of voices. My personal experiences to date unfortunately indicate that it is not. The library system is squarely against independent writers with obtuse vocabulary and standards for: “Doing Business with The Library” on its web site.

Toronto Public Library occupies a unique position as a cultural steward in this city. When its systems primarily recognize institutional affiliation over intellectual contribution, an important segment of contemporary thought risks exclusion from the public commons. This is the current case as seen by me.

I respectfully request that the Board consider:

- Whether existing policies toward independent authors are consistent with TPL’s public mandate
- Whether more transparent and equitable assessment mechanisms could be established with regards to submissions made to library affiliations ir regards to “The Writers in Residence Program”
- Whether serious self-published nonfiction should be evaluated on intellectual and civic merit rather than publishing pathway alone

I would welcome the opportunity to provide further documentation of my work, credentials, and public engagement if this would assist the Board’s review.

Thank you for your attention and for your stewardship of Toronto’s public intellectual life.

Sincerely,

Anthony L. Canali

*Anthony Canali*

Toronto, Ontario

Author, *Sculpting Stardust: Sacred Equations in the Global Village*