

Fab Lab Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

The Fab Lab is a community-focused makerspace providing access to tools and technology for learning, creativity, and innovation. It supports the development of skills, community projects, and personal or educational initiatives.

This policy sets out the rules and responsibilities for all users and staff, covering access, safety, equipment use, ethical and legal considerations, and specific guidance for 3D printing, which is further detailed in the Library's 3D Printing Policy.

This policy applies to all users, including members of the public, schools, colleges, and community groups.

2. Access and Eligibility

- Users must have a valid library membership.
- Access is generally available to individuals aged 9 years and above, subject to age-specific supervision:
 - Under 12: Parent or guardian must be present.
 - Under 16: Parental permission required.
- Users must complete a Fab Lab induction before using equipment independently.
- Staff may prioritise access for educational or community projects.

3. Supervision and Training Requirements

- Induction covers equipment use, safety, and responsible practice.
- Certain equipment (e.g. CNC machines, or high-powered tools) may require additional training or supervised use.
- Staff or trained volunteers are present during all sessions.
- Users must follow all staff instructions and safety signage.
- The library may suspend access for non-compliance with staff directions or safety rules.

4. Equipment and Material Use

- Fab Lab equipment must be used only for its intended purpose.
- Users may bring materials, excluding 3D printer filament, with prior approval, ensuring they are safe and compatible with the equipment.
- Prohibited materials include flammable, toxic, or otherwise unsafe substances.
- Equipment faults or damage must be reported immediately.
- The Library reserves the right to refuse use of equipment for any unsafe or unlawful purpose.

5. Health and Safety Procedures

- Users must comply with all Library health and safety regulations and follow Fab Lab risk assessments.
- Appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) must be worn as required.
- Food, drink, and clutter are prohibited near machinery.
- Accidents, injuries, or near-misses must be reported immediately.

6. Booking, Payment, and Usage Guidelines

- Fab Lab sessions must be pre-booked via the library website.
- Certain equipment may require a usage fee to cover materials or staff support.
- Users are responsible for checking designs for errors and for completing projects within booked sessions.
- The Library is not responsible for unfinished projects or abandoned items.

7. Data Protection and Privacy

User data is handled in accordance with Guernsey's Data Protection Law.

- Digital files stored on Fab Lab equipment may be deleted periodically.
- Users must backup their own work.
- Anonymised usage data may be collected for service improvement and statistical purposes.

8. Ethical and Legal Restrictions on Fabrication

All activities must comply with Guernsey law. UK law may be used as a reference for best practice, but local law takes priority.

Users must not use Fab Lab equipment to produce:

- Weapons or weapon-like objects
- Offensive, discriminatory, pornographic, or obscene materials

- Items intended to harm, threaten, or intimidate others
- Items that infringe copyright, design rights, trademarks, or patents
- Items intended for illegal, commercial, or unsafe purposes.

9. 3D Printing Use

3D printing is an important part of the Fab Lab. Users must also follow the Library's 3D Printing Policy, which sets out specific rules for this equipment.

Key points include:

- **Eligibility:** Anyone 9 years and over with a library card. Users under 12 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian; users under 16 require parental permission.
- **Submission and Approval:** All designs must be submitted to staff. Prints are first-come, first-served, prioritising educational and community projects.
- **Legal and Ethical Restrictions:** Users cannot print weapons, unsafe items, offensive or inappropriate objects, or anything breaching copyright or licensing.
- **Costs and Materials:** Filament is provided by the Library; costs are calculated per gram. Users may not bring their own materials.
- **Responsibilities:** Users must check designs for errors; the Library is not responsible for print failures or post-print use.
- **Staff Authority:** Library staff have final discretion on 3D print approval; misuse may result in suspension.
- Users are advised to read the full 3D Printing Policy for comprehensive guidance.

10. Liability, Damages, and User Responsibilities

- Users are responsible for damage to equipment or property caused by misuse.
- The Library accepts no liability for injury, loss, or damage arising from use, except when caused by Library negligence.
- Users agree to take responsibility for any claims, costs, or problems that result from their use of the Fab Lab and will not hold the Library responsible
- Projects are undertaken at the user's own risk, including 3D printed objects.

11. Enforcement and Consequences of Misuse

- Breaches may result in suspension or termination of access, recovery of repair costs, or referral to law enforcement where necessary.
- Decisions regarding suspension or reinstatement are made by the Chief Librarian or SMT.

12. Review and Update Schedule

- This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by changes in law, technology, or operational needs.
- User feedback will be considered in all policy updates.

13. Legal and Moral Use Statement

- The Fab Lab exists to foster creativity, learning, and innovation in a safe, lawful, and respectful environment.
- Users must not create weapons, unsafe items, offensive or discriminatory materials, or objects that breach copyright or licensing agreements.
- Misuse may result in loss of access, financial liability, or referral to law enforcement.

14. Alignment with Best Practice

- This policy has been informed by best practice guidance from:
- The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)
- The Libraries Connected Makerspace Framework
- Operational policies of UK public libraries including Manchester Libraries, Somerset Libraries, and Glasgow Life Fab Lab
- Health and safety standards under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations.

For questions or help, please contact the Fab Lab team at fablab@library.gg