The Open Sidewalk Project
A living archive of stories in motion
Discover • Reflect • Set Free • Mark the Moment
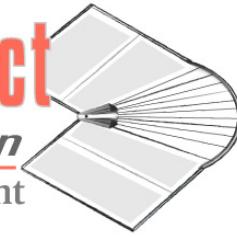
Author Toolkit ✍️📚

Open Sidewalk Project
For Writers Supporting the Movement

You understand better than anyone: stories are meant to be shared beyond certainty.

Support the movement through simple advocacy—a link on your website, a mention in your newsletter, a post on social media. And for authors who want to take it further, you can integrate bookplate inserts into your own books, turning every copy you sell into a potential traveling story.

🖊️ WHAT THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This guide provides everything you need to advocate for The Open Sidewalk Project using your author platform—whether you have 50 followers or 50,000. We've created ready-to-use assets so you can support the movement without adding to your workload.

Plus, if you want to actively participate by including bookplate inserts in your own books, we've included complete templates and implementation strategies.

> **Perfect For:**
>
> - Published authors (traditional and indie)
>
> - Writing bloggers and book reviewers
>
> - Literary influencers and bookstagrammers
>
> - Anyone with an author platform wanting to support literacy

Key Principle: You don't need to release your own books into the wild (though you can!). Your advocacy—your voice—is the contribution. Every mention reaches readers who might never have discovered the movement otherwise.

🌐 WEBSITE INTEGRATION

Badge/Button Graphics

Download pre-made graphics in three sizes, optimized for different placements:

Small (150x50px): Sidebar widgets, footer areas

- **Medium (250x100px):** About page, links page

Large (400x150px): Featured placement, blog posts

Download badges at: opensidewalkproject.org/basecamp/

Sample Website Language

Short Version (1-2 sentences)

I support The Open Sidewalk Project, a literary movement that sets books free into the world. Learn more at opensidewalkproject.org. 📚✨

Medium Version (Paragraph)

I'm proud to support The Open Sidewalk Project—a movement that transforms reading from a solitary act into a shared journey. Through a simple four-step ritual (Discover, Reflect, Set Free, Mark the Moment), books become threads connecting readers across cities and communities. Each book gathers reflections from everyone who touches it, creating a living archive of stories in motion. If you believe books are meant to travel, join the movement at opensidewalkproject.org.

📱 SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

Pre-Written Posts for All Platforms

Twitter/X (280 characters)

I support @OpenSidewalk—a movement that sets books free into the world. 📚✨

Discover. Reflect. Set Free. Mark the Moment.

Books aren't meant to gather dust—they're meant to gather people.

opensidewalkproject.org #StoriesInMotion

Instagram Caption

Books don't end when you close them—they live when you share them forward. 📖✨

I'm supporting The Open Sidewalk Project, a literary movement that sets books free into the world. Think of it like geocaching for stories: you discover a book in the wild (a café, park bench, waiting room), read it, leave a reflection online, and release it somewhere new for the next reader to find.

Every book becomes a thread connecting strangers, families, and communities. Every release is a postcard from imagination in motion.

If you believe stories are meant to travel, join the movement. Link in bio or visit opensidewalkproject.org 🌍📚

#OpenSidewalkProject #StoriesInMotion #BooksInTheWild #ReadingCommunity #BookLovers

Hashtag Guide

Primary (use 2-3 per post):

- #OpenSidewalkProject
- #SidewalkReflections
- #BooksInMotion
- #StoriesWeCarry

Secondary (use 1-2 per post):

- #ISetABookFree
- #ReadReflectRelease
- #BooksThatMovePeople
- #StoriesConnectUs
- #FindingWaldoWithin
- #BooksInTheWild
- #SidewalkStation

Important: Don't use more than 5 total hashtags per post. Always include #OpenSidewalkProject

📧 NEWSLETTER CONTENT

Email Newsletter Blurb (Customizable)

Short Version (1-2 sentences):

I'm supporting The Open Sidewalk Project—a movement that sets books free into the world to be discovered, reflected on, and released again. If you believe stories are meant to travel, learn more at opensidewalkproject.org. 📚

Medium Version (Paragraph):

Supporting Stories in Motion

I wanted to share something I'm excited about: The Open Sidewalk Project, a literary movement founded by author S. Bobby Alexander. The concept is simple and beautiful—books are released into the wild (cafés, parks, waiting rooms) with a QR code inside. Readers discover them, leave reflections online, and release them somewhere new. Each book becomes a thread connecting strangers and communities. It's proof that stories keep moving, keep connecting, keep stitching together new encounters. If this resonates with you, visit opensidewalkproject.org.

Email Signature Addition

```
Plain Text Version:


---
[Your Name] | Author
[Your Website]

I support The Open Sidewalk Project: opensidewalkproject.org
```

🎙️ PODCAST/INTERVIEW CONTENT

Brief Mention Script (30 seconds)

"Before we wrap up, I want to mention something I'm excited about —The Open Sidewalk Project. It's a literary movement that sets books free into the world to be discovered, reflected on, and released again. Think geocaching for stories. Each book gathers notes from every reader who touches it, creating this beautiful living archive of imagination in motion. If you're a book lover who believes stories should travel, check it out at opensidewalkproject.org."

📚 BOOKPLATE INSERTS FOR AUTHORS

If you want to take your support beyond advocacy and actively participate in the movement, you can include bookplate inserts in your own books. This turns every copy you sell into a potential traveling story.

Why Authors Love Bookplate Inserts

Imagine this: You sell 100 books. In the traditional model, that's 100 readers. But what if each book could reach 3, 4, or even 10 readers over its lifetime?

That's the power of The Open Sidewalk Project.

Every book you write has the potential to travel far beyond its first reader. When readers pass books forward, your words reach people you never imagined—in cities you've never visited, in moments you couldn't predict.

The Reality:

- Most books are read once, then sit on a shelf forever

- Your reach is limited to direct sales

- You never know the true impact of your words

The Opportunity:

- Books become traveling messengers of your ideas

- One sale = multiple readers over time

- You can actually SEE where your books travel

- Readers connect with each other through your work

- Your impact grows exponentially without additional marketing

What Authors Are Saying:

"I sold 200 copies. But 47 readers registered them with OSP, and those books have reached 150+ total readers. I tripled my reach without selling another book."

"Seeing where my books travel is more rewarding than royalty statements. One copy made it to Alaska, another to a hospital waiting room. These are real people finding my words exactly when they need them."

Bottom line: The Open Sidewalk Project turns every book you sell into a traveling ambassador for your work. And it costs you nothing but a simple insert.

What Is a Bookplate Insert?

A small card, bookmark, or printed page that invites readers to:

1. Register the book at opensidewalkproject.org
2. Track their reading experience
3. Pass the book forward when done
4. See where it travels next

Key Principle: This is an INVITATION, not a requirement. Some readers will participate, some won't—and that's perfectly fine.

🎨 4 READY-TO-USE TEMPLATES

Template #1: Personal Letter from Author

Format: Full page or folded card
Best for: Print-on-demand books, special editions, signed copies

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Reader,

Thank you for choosing [BOOK TITLE]. I hope this story stays with you long after you turn the final page.

Here's an invitation: when you finish reading, I'd love for you to pass this book forward to someone who might need it.

This book can be part of the Open Sidewalk Project—a way to track journeys of traveling books.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO PARTICIPATE:

1. Visit: opensidewalkproject.org/book-registration-form/

2.Register this book (takes 2 minutes) Get a unique

3.tracking code (BCID) Share your thoughts about the

4.book When ready, pass it forward

5. Watch where it goes next

You'll be able to see everyone who reads this after you.

It's completely optional—but if you choose to participate, you'll become part of this book's story.

With gratitude,
[YOUR SIGNATURE]
[Your Name]

Learn more: opensidewalkproject.org

Template #2: Simple Bookmark Insert

Format: 2" x 6" bookmark

Best for: Easy insertion, low cost, mass distribution

📚 WANT TO TRACK THIS BOOK?

You just read [BOOK TITLE]
by [AUTHOR NAME]

When you're done, you can:

- ✓ Register it (free & easy)

- ✓ Share your reflection

- ✓ Pass it forward

- ✓ See where it travels

opensidewalkproject.org/book-registration-form/

[QR REGISTER CODE]

Part of the Open Sidewalk Project

Making books travel farther

Template #3: Business Card Size

Format: 3.5" x 2" card

Best for: Minimal cost, fits in any book

FRONT:

📖 FINISHED READING?
PASS IT FORWARD

Register this book at:
opensidewalkproject.org

— [Author Name]

BACK:

THE OPEN SIDEWALK PROJECT

1. Register this book (2 min)

2. Get tracking code

3. Share your thoughts

4. Pass book forward

5. See where it goes

[QR REGISTER CODE]

opensidewalkproject.org/book-

registration-form/

Template #4: Printed Inside Cover

Format: Text printed on inside front or back cover

Best for: Publishers, print-on-demand, permanent inclusion

THIS BOOK CAN TRAVEL

You're holding a book that could visit dozens of readers, cross state lines, and live in places we can't imagine yet.

When you finish reading, you're invited to:

- → Register it at opensidewalkproject.org
- → Get a unique tracking code
- → Share what it meant to you
- → Pass it forward to the next reader
- → Track where it goes

Visit: opensidewalkproject.org/book-registration-form/
or scan: [QR CODE]

It's optional. But if you participate, you'll become part of this book's journey—and you'll be able to see everyone who reads it after you.

— [Author Name]

📐 HOW IT WORKS: AUTHOR STEPS

STEP 1: Choose Your Format

- Loose bookmark/card (inserted)

- Printed page (bound in book)

- Sticker/bookplate (adhesive)

- Inside cover text (for print runs)

STEP 2: Customize Your Template

- Add your book title

- Add your name and signature

- Personalize the message

- Include QR code (optional but recommended)

STEP 3: Print & Distribute

- Print professionally or at home

- Insert in every book you sell/gift

- No need to track individual books

- No unique codes to manage

STEP 4: Tell Your Story

- Mention OSP at book signings

- Post about it on social media

- Add to your website

- Feature in newsletters

💡 WHY THIS WORKS BETTER

For Authors:

- ✅ No pre-registration headaches
- ✅ No inventory tracking
- ✅ No unique codes to print
- ✅ One insert design for all books
- ✅ Print on demand or in bulk
- ✅ Focus on writing, not logistics

For Readers:

- ✅ Clear, simple invitation
- ✅ Optional participation
- ✅ They control their own data
- ✅ Easy 2-minute registration
- ✅ Immediate access to tracking

For Books:

- ✅ Only motivated readers register
- ✅ Higher quality tracking data
- ✅ Books get passed forward naturally
- ✅ Authentic reader engagement

💵 PRINTING OPTIONS & COSTS

DIY Home Printing

- **Bookmarks:** Cardstock, cut to size ($10-20 per 100)
- **Business cards:** Avery perforated sheets ($15 per 100)
- **Best for:** Small batches, testing, local events

Professional Printing

- **Vistaprint:** Bookmarks $25-50 per 250
- **Moo:** Business cards $20-40 per 100
- **Local print shops:** Often cheapest for large runs
- **Best for:** 100+ books, professional finish

Print-on-Demand Books

- **Inside cover text:** No extra cost
- **Added page:** Usually free to include

- **Best for:** IngramSpark, KDP, Lulu users

Sticker Bookplates

- **Avery labels:** $15 per 100

- **Custom stickers:** $30-60 per 250

- **Best for:** Retrofitting existing inventory

Recommended: 80lb-110lb cardstock, matte or glossy finish

📊 REAL-WORLD SCENARIOS

Scenario 1: Self-Published Author (Print-on-Demand)

Situation: Using IngramSpark, 500 copy run

Solution:

- Add bookplate text to inside back cover
- Costs nothing extra
- Every book includes invitation
- No manual insertion needed

Result: Permanent invitation in every book, zero extra work

Scenario 2: Local Author (Hand-Selling)

Situation: Selling at farmers markets, book fairs, signings

Solution:

- Print 200 bookmarks at Vistaprint ($40)
- Insert one in each book at time of sale
- Explain OSP personally to buyers
- Mention tracking features

Result: Personal touch + immediate explanation

Scenario 3: Existing Inventory (1,000 books)

Situation: Already printed, books in storage

Solution:

- Order adhesive bookplate stickers ($100)
- Apply to inside front cover as books sell
- Takes 10 seconds per book
- Retrofits existing stock

Result: Converts existing inventory without reprinting

Scenario 4: First-Time Author (50 copies)

Situation: Small print run, testing the market

Solution:

- Print bookmarks at home on cardstock

- Hand-write personal note on each

- Insert before mailing/giving away

- Tell readers about OSP when you give them the book

Result: Personal, low-cost, easy to test

📣 HOW TO MARKET YOUR OSP PARTICIPATION

On Your Website

"Every book I sell includes an invitation to join the Open Sidewalk Project. When you finish reading, you can register it, share your thoughts, and pass it forward to the next reader. It's a simple way to help books travel farther and reach more people."

In Email Newsletters

Subject: Join me in the Open Sidewalk Project

I've started including invitations in all my books for readers to register and pass them forward after reading. It's a simple way to extend the life of physical books and help stories reach more people. If you've read one of my books, consider joining in!

Learn more: opensidewalkproject.org

On Social Media

"I'm participating in the Open Sidewalk Project! Every book I sell includes an invitation for readers to register and pass it forward. I can't wait to see where they travel! 📚✨ #OpenSidewalkProject #TravelingBooks"

"Just added OSP invitations to all my books. If you've read one of mine, consider registering it and passing it forward when you're done. Let's see how far these stories can travel!"

At Book Signings

Display sign:

THESE BOOKS ARE MADE TO TRAVEL

Every book includes an invitation
to track & pass forward

opensidewalkproject.org

In Your Author Bio

"[Author Name] is a writer who participates in the Open Sidewalk Project, inviting readers to pass books forward and track their journeys."

❓ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do I need to register with OSP first?

A: No! Readers register the books themselves. You just include the invitation. You can mention OSP on social media if you'd like, but there's no author registration required.

Q: What if readers don't register?

A: That's okay! Think of it this way: if even 20% register, you've extended your reach significantly. The books still travel—you just won't see those journeys tracked.

Q: Can I see which books get registered?

A: You can search opensidewalkproject.org for your book title to see if any copies have been registered and shared publicly, but there's no special author tracking dashboard. The focus is on reader participation.

Q: Can I use this with Amazon KDP?

A: Yes! Add the text to your interior pages when you upload. Amazon won't remove it.

Q: What about ebooks?

A: OSP only tracks physical books. But you can mention it in ebook back matter and encourage readers to register if they print pages or share.

Q: Does this work for traditionally published books?

A: Yes, but you'll need publisher permission to add content. Easier for self-published authors.

Q: How do QR codes work?

A: Generate a free QR code that links to opensidewalkproject.org/register. Readers scan it with their phone camera. Use QR code generators like qr-code-generator.com.

Q: What if someone writes a mean reflection?

A: Readers control what they share. OSP encourages constructive feedback. You're not required to read every reflection.

Q: Can I track specific copies?

A: Only if readers register them. Each registration creates a unique BCID that tracks that specific book's journey.

Q: What's the cost to participate?

A: Zero. OSP is completely free. You only pay for printing inserts.

Q: How long does reader registration take?

A: About 2 minutes. Enter book info, get BCID, optionally add reflection.

✅ QUICK START CHECKLIST

Phase 1: Prepare (30 minutes)

- ☐ Read through this guide
- ☐ Choose a template that fits your distribution method
- ☐ Customize with your book title and name
- ☐ Generate QR code linking to opensidewalkproject.org/register
- ☐ Create print-ready file

Phase 2: Print (varies)

- ☐ Decide quantity (start with 50-100)
- ☐ Choose printing method (home or professional)
- ☐ Print test batch first
- ☐ Check quality and readability

Phase 3: Distribute

- ☐ Insert in every book you sell/gift
- ☐ Explain at book signings
- ☐ Mention in social media posts
- ☐ Add to website/newsletter

Phase 4: Share (ongoing)

- ☐ Mention OSP at events and online

- ☐ Search opensidewalkproject.org for your book title occasionally

- ☐ Share about OSP participation on social media

- ☐ Update your author bio to mention OSP

📈 THE BOTTOM LINE

Traditional Model:
1 book = 1 reader = book sits on shelf

Open Sidewalk Model:
1 book = first reader registers = passes forward = 2nd reader registers = passes forward = 3-5+ readers over lifetime

Your Impact:

- Sell 100 books

- 25% of readers register (25 books tracked)

- Each tracked book reaches 3 readers on average

- That's 75 readers instead of 25

- **You tripled your reach**

And that's only counting registered books. Imagine how many more are traveling untracked!

🚀 START SMALL, GROW NATURALLY

Week 1: Print 20 inserts, test with local sales

Week 2: Check if any readers registered

Week 3: Adjust your messaging based on feedback

Month 2: Order larger print run

Month 3: Start sharing travel stories

You don't need to commit to thousands of books right away. Start with your next 10 books and see what happens.

The results will surprise you.

📖 ABOUT THESE TEMPLATES

The templates in this guide are based on the same invitation formats that OSP provides to individual readers for releasing their own books.

You can use these examples as-is, or customize them for your books.

OSP does not provide custom printed materials for authors—you're free to:

- Use these templates exactly as shown

- Adapt them to match your book's style

- Create your own design using the core elements

- Print them however works best for you

Core elements every insert should include:

1. Invitation to register the book

2. opensidewalkproject.org/register URL

3. QR code (optional but recommended)

4. Brief explanation of what OSP is

5. Instructions to pass the book forward

As long as readers know how to register and participate, you've done it right.

📚 AUTHOR RELEASE PROGRAM INFO

In 2025, The Open Sidewalk Project will launch a formal **Author Release Program** for indie and traditional authors who want to integrate book releases into their launch strategies.

Waitlist Sign-Up

Join the waitlist to be notified when the program launches: **opensidewalkproject.org/contact/**

What the Program Will Include

Indie Author Track:

• Coordinated release of 50-100 copies of your book across multiple cities

• Custom Book Code IDs and branded bookplates

• Sidewalk Librarian coordination in target markets

• Social media toolkit specific to your book launch

• Access to track your book's journeys

Traditional Author Track:

- Partnership with publishers to integrate OSP into marketing plans
- Advance reader copy (ARC) releases through Sidewalk Stations
- Author event tie-ins (book signings paired with wild releases)
- Media kit integration and press outreach support

Early Access Benefits

Authors who join the waitlist and advocate for the project now will receive:

- **Priority access:** First spots in the program when it launches
- **Discounted rates:** 30% off program fees for early supporters
- **Pilot participant opportunities:** Help shape the program through beta testing
- **Exclusive network:** Connect with other authors in the movement
- **Featured advocacy:** Your support spotlighted on OSP social channels

Pilot Participant Opportunities

We're looking for 5-10 authors to participate in a pilot program in early 2026.

Pilot participants will:

- Release 25-50 copies of their book through the OSP network

- Provide feedback on the program structure and materials

- Receive free program participation (no fees)

- Be featured as founding authors in program marketing

- Help us refine the author experience before wide launch

Ideal pilot participants: Authors with books launching Q1-Q2 2026, active social media presence, willingness to document and share the experience.

Apply for pilot: opensidewalkproject.org/contact/

💡 QUICK ADVOCACY CHECKLIST

Here's the fastest path to supporting the movement (choose your level of involvement):

Level 1: Minimal Effort (5 minutes)

- ☐ Add badge to your website footer
- ☐ Post once on your most active social platform
- ☐ Add link to your email signature

Level 2: Moderate Effort (20 minutes)

- ☐ Add paragraph to your website About page
- ☐ Post on 2-3 social platforms
- ☐ Include blurb in your next newsletter
- ☐ Join the author waitlist

Level 3: Full Advocacy (1 hour)

- ☐ Create dedicated page/post on your website

- ☐ Post on all social platforms with custom graphics

- ☐ Write newsletter section explaining the movement

- ☐ Mention in next podcast/interview appearance

- ☐ Join waitlist and apply for pilot program

- ☐ Add bookplate inserts to your books

- ☐ Release one of your own books into the wild

🌍 JOIN THE MOVEMENT

You write stories. You know their power. Now help them travel farther than any shelf could hold.

Thank you for lending your voice to this movement.

Every mention you make, every link you share, every post you publish, every bookplate you include—it all matters. You're helping stories find readers they might never have reached otherwise.

Open Sidewalk Project

Making books travel farther

opensidewalkproject.org

Questions? Visit opensidewalkproject.org/faq/
Author assets: opensidewalkproject.org/basecamp/
Waitlist: opensidewalkproject.org/contact/

This guide is part of the Open Sidewalk Project, a reader-driven initiative to extend the life and reach of physical books. No registration, fees, or corporate partnerships required. Just books, readers, and forward motion.

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