



Share the Journey

The Open Sidewalk Project
Complete Guide to Announcing Your Book Releases

Your book has its own journey page!

When you release a book through the Open Sidewalk Project, it gets a unique tracking link:

opensidewalkproject.org/books/xxxxxxxx

This guide shows you simple ways to share that link and spread the word about your release.



WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE

- **Press Release Templates** – 4 customizable templates for local media
- **Social Media Posts** – Ready-to-use posts for every major platform
- **Hashtag Strategy** – Primary, secondary, and community hashtags
- **Photo Tips** – How to capture compelling release photos
- **Customization Guide** – Make templates your own
- **Quick Start Checklist** – Step-by-step implementation



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

STEP 1: Choose Your Release Type

Pick the template that matches how you're releasing:

- **Wild Release** – Leaving books in public spaces
- **Direct Release** – Giving books to specific people
- **Blended** – Works for both approaches
- **Group/Event** – Organizations, book clubs, schools

STEP 2: Customize with Your Details

Replace [brackets] with your information:

- [Your City, State]
- [Date]
- [Location where you released]
- [Number of books]
- [Your organization name]
- [Your journey code]

STEP 3: Add Your Voice

Make it personal while keeping the core message:

- Why did you choose this book?
- Why did you choose this location?
- What do you hope happens?

STEP 4: Share Everywhere

- Send press releases to local media
- Post on your social media channels
- Tag @OpenSidewalk (when available)
- Use #OpenSidewalkProject
- Include your unique journey link



PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATES

Template #1: Wild Release (Generic)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wild Book Release in [Your City]

[Your City, State] – [Date] – Today, another book has been released into the wild as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping stories alive by setting them free.

Instead of sitting on a shelf collecting dust, this book has been placed where anyone might discover it — on a bench, in a café, at a bus stop, or along a sidewalk. Each release is a small act of kindness, a way of reminding us that stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue to move, inspire, and connect when we pass them forward.

As the Open Sidewalk Project says: "I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday."

That's the spirit behind every release: trust that a book will find its reader at the right time. Each copy carries not only the author's words but also the fingerprints, reflections, and echoes of the readers before it.

The Open Sidewalk Project is not for profit, but for connection — people committed to keeping books in motion through random acts of kindness, leaving joy, wisdom, and imagination in their wake.

Track this book's journey:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[your-code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[your-code])

To learn more or to join the movement, visit:
opensidewalkproject.org

#

Template #2: Direct Release (Generic)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Resident Sets Books Free Through the Open Sidewalk Project

[Your City, State] – [Date] – Stories are changing hands in [Your City] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping books alive by passing them forward.

Instead of letting books gather dust on shelves, participants are setting them free — handing them directly to friends, coworkers, and even strangers with a simple request: read it, reflect on it, and pass it forward.

Each book carries a unique ID that allows readers to log where they found it, what it meant to them, and where it's headed next. Over time, a single book becomes a living archive of connection — traveling from hand to hand, city to city, reader to reader.

As the Open Sidewalk Project says: "I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday."

That's the spirit behind every release: trust that a book will find its reader at the right time. Each copy carries not only the author's words but also the fingerprints, reflections, and echoes of the readers before it.

The Open Sidewalk Project is not for profit, but for connection — people committed to keeping books in motion through random acts of kindness, leaving joy, wisdom, and imagination in their wake.

Track this book's journey:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[your-code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[your-code])

To learn more or to join the movement, visit:

opensidewalkproject.org

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Template #3: Blended (Works for Both Wild & Direct)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Books Set Free in [Your City] as Part of Growing National Movement

[Your City, State] – [Date] – Books are on the move in [Your City] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping stories alive by setting them free.

Participants are releasing books into the world — some left in public places for strangers to discover, others handed directly to people who might need them. Each release is a small act of kindness, a way of reminding us that stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue to move, inspire, and connect when we pass them forward.

As the Open Sidewalk Project says: "I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday."

That's the spirit behind every release: trust that a book will find its reader at the right time. Each copy carries not only the author's words but also the fingerprints, reflections, and echoes of the readers before it.

Whether discovered on a park bench or received from a friend's hand, each book travels with a unique ID that allows readers to log their reflections and track its journey. Over time, a single book becomes a living archive of connection — traveling from hand to hand, city to city, reader to reader.

The Open Sidewalk Project is not for profit, but for connection — people committed to keeping books in motion through random acts of kindness, leaving joy, wisdom, and imagination in their wake.

Track this book's journey:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[your-code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[your-code])

To learn more or to join the movement, visit:

opensidewalkproject.org

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Template #4: Customizable (Fill in the Blanks)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[HEADLINE - CHOOSE ONE:]

- "Books Released into the Wild in [Your City]"
- "[Number] Books Set Free as Part of the Open Sidewalk Project"
- "Local [Group/Organization] Joins National Book-Sharing Movement"

[Your City, State] – [Date] –

[OPENING - CHOOSE ONE:]

OPENING A (Wild Release):

Today, [number] book(s) have been released into the wild in [your city] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping stories alive by setting them free. The book(s) were left at [locations: park benches, coffee shops, bus stops, etc.] for anyone to discover.

OPENING B (Direct Release):

Today, [number] book(s) have been passed forward in [your city] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping stories alive by setting them free. The book(s) were given directly to [who: coworkers, friends, community members, etc.] with a simple request: read it, reflect on it, and pass it forward.

OPENING C (Group/Event):

[Organization name or group] is setting stories free in [your city] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping books alive by passing them forward. On [date/event], [number] books will be released [how: into public spaces, handed to community members, distributed at an event, etc.].

[CONTINUE WITH STANDARD BODY:]

Each release is a small act of kindness, a way of reminding us that stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue to move, inspire, and connect when we pass them forward.

As the Open Sidewalk Project says: "I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday."

That's the spirit behind every release: trust that a book will find its reader at the right time. Each copy carries not only the author's words but also the fingerprints, reflections, and echoes of the readers before it.

The Open Sidewalk Project is not for profit, but for connection — people committed to keeping books in motion through random acts of kindness, leaving joy, wisdom, and imagination in their wake.

Track this book's journey:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[your-code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[your-code])

To learn more or to join the movement, visit:

opensidewalkproject.org

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SOCIAL MEDIA POST TEMPLATES

Twitter/X Posts (280 characters)

Wild Release - Option 1:

Just set a book free on a park bench in [City]. 📖✨

Part of the Open Sidewalk Project — keeping stories alive by setting them free.

Who will find it?

#OpenSidewalkProject #BookRelease #RandomActOfKindness

opensidewalkproject.org

Wild Release - Option 2:

I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday. 

Set a book free at [location] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project.

Find it. Read it. Pass it forward.

#OpenSidewalkProject #WildRelease

opensidewalkproject.org

Wild Release - Option 3:

Stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue when we pass them forward. 

Just released [Book Title] into the wild in [City].

#OpenSidewalkProject #BookCrossing #SetStoriesFree

opensidewalkproject.org

Direct Release - Option 1:

Gave a book to my coworker today as part of the Open Sidewalk Project 📖 → 👤

Their mission: read it, reflect on it, pass it forward.

Stories travel farther when we set them free.

#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #PassItForward

opensidewalkproject.org

Direct Release - Option 2:

Someone I know needs this book right now. So I gave it to them—with one request: keep it moving. 📖 ✨

Part of the Open Sidewalk Project.

#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #RandomActOfKindness

opensidewalkproject.org

General/Blended - Option 1:

"I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday." 

Set a book free today. Join the movement.

#OpenSidewalkProject #SetStoriesFree

opensidewalkproject.org

General/Blended - Option 2:

The book on your shelf—the one still echoing—somebody needs it.


Set it free. Track its journey. Watch it connect strangers.

#OpenSidewalkProject #BookRelease

opensidewalkproject.org

Instagram Captions

Wild Release - Long Version:

 BOOK RELEASED INTO THE WILD 

Just set this book free at [location] in [city].

I loved it. I finished it. Now it's time for someone else to discover it.

Part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a movement keeping stories alive by setting them free. Each book carries a unique ID so readers can track its journey from hand to hand, city to city.

✨ The rules are simple:

- Find a book
- Read it
- Log your reflection
- Pass it forward

I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday.

Will you be the one to find it? 🙏

Learn more: opensidewalkproject.org (link in bio)

#OpenSidewalkProject #WildRelease #BookCrossing
#BookRelease #RandomActOfKindness #BookLovers
#SetStoriesFree #BookCommunity #ReadersOfInstagram

Wild Release - Short Version:

Found on a shelf. Set free on a bench. 

Stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue when we pass them forward.

Just released [Book Title] into the wild as part of the Open Sidewalk Project

#OpenSidewalkProject #WildRelease #BookRelease
#SetStoriesFree

Direct Release - Long Version:



Today I gave this book to [person/description] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project.

Why? Because [why they need it / what the book is about / connection to them].

My only request: read it, reflect on it, and pass it forward to someone else who needs it.

This is how stories stay alive — not by sitting on our shelves, but by moving through the world, reader to reader, creating connections we'll never see.

Each book carries a unique ID that lets us track its journey. Where will this one go next?

✨ The mission:

- Receive a book
- Read it
- Log your reflection
- Pass it forward

I don't know who needs to read this someday — but somebody will.

Want to join? opensidewalkproject.org (link in bio)

#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #PassItForward
#BookLovers #RandomActOfKindness #BookCommunity
#ReadersOfInstagram #SetStoriesFree

Direct Release - Short Version:

Gave this book to someone who needs it today. 📖 → ✨

Part of the Open Sidewalk Project — setting stories free by passing them forward.

Their mission: read it, reflect on it, keep it moving.

#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #PassItForward

Group/Event Release:

 [NUMBER] BOOKS SET FREE TODAY 

[Organization/Group name] just released [number] books into [our community / the wild / our city] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project!

You might find one:

- On a park bench
- In a coffee shop
- At a bus stop
- [Add your locations]

If you do, you're part of the journey now:

- Read it
- Log your reflection at opensidewalkproject.org
- Pass it forward

Each book carries a unique ID so we can track where it travels. Will it stay local or go cross-country? Only time will tell.

Stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue when we pass them forward.

Join the movement: opensidewalkproject.org (link in bio)

#OpenSidewalkProject #BookRelease #WildRelease
#CommunityEvent #RandomActOfKindness #BookLovers
#SetStoriesFree #[YourCity]

Facebook Posts

Wild Release - Long Version:

 BOOK RELEASED INTO THE WILD 

I just set a book free in [City] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a growing movement dedicated to keeping stories alive by setting them free.

Instead of letting it collect dust on my shelf, I left it at [location] for anyone to discover.

Each release is a small act of kindness, a reminder that stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue to move, inspire, and connect when we pass them forward.

As the Open Sidewalk Project says: "I don't know who needs to read this today — but somebody will need to read it someday."

If you find a book in the wild with an Open Sidewalk Project label:

- You're part of its journey now
- Read it
- Log your reflection at opensidewalkproject.org
- Pass it forward

Want to join the movement? Learn more at opensidewalkproject.org

#OpenSidewalkProject #BookRelease #RandomActOfKindness
#[YourCity]

Wild Release - Short Version:

Just released a book into the wild! 📖✨

Left it at [location] for someone to discover. Part of the Open Sidewalk Project — keeping stories alive by setting them free.

If you find it, read it and pass it forward.

Learn more: opensidewalkproject.org

#OpenSidewalkProject #WildRelease #BookLovers

Direct Release:

📖 PASSED A BOOK FORWARD TODAY 📖

I gave this book to [person/relationship] as part of the Open Sidewalk Project — a movement keeping stories alive by passing them forward.

Instead of letting books sit on shelves, we're setting them free — handing them to people who might need them with a simple request: read it, reflect on it, and pass it forward.

Each book carries a unique ID that allows readers to log where they found it, what it meant to them, and where it's headed next. Over time, a single book becomes a living archive of connection — traveling from hand to hand, city to city, reader to reader.

The spirit behind every release: trust that a book will find its reader at the right time.

Want to join the movement? Learn more at opensidewalkproject.org

#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #PassItForward
#BookLovers #RandomActOfKindness

General/Invite Others:

THE BOOK ON YOUR SHELF — THE ONE STILL ECHOING —
SOMEBODY NEEDS IT. 

I just joined the Open Sidewalk Project, and I'm setting books free.

Here's how it works:

- Choose a book you've finished
- Register it (get a unique tracking ID)
- Write a reflection about what it meant to you
- Set it free (leave it somewhere or give it to someone)
- Track its journey as others find it and pass it forward

Stories don't end when we close the last page. They continue when we pass them forward.

Join me? opensidewalkproject.org

#OpenSidewalkProject #SetStoriesFree #BookLovers
#RandomActOfKindness

LinkedIn (Professional Angle)

Setting Stories Free in the Workplace

Today I participated in the Open Sidewalk Project — a movement that keeps books alive by passing them forward.

I gave a book to a colleague with a simple request: read it, reflect on it, and pass it forward to someone else who might need it.

Why does this matter in a professional context?

Because knowledge shouldn't sit on shelves. Stories create connection. Books spark conversations. And small acts of generosity build culture.

Each book carries a unique ID that tracks its journey from reader to reader. What starts as one person's finished book becomes a living archive of reflection and connection.

If you're looking for a low-cost, high-impact way to build community in your workplace, consider setting a book free.

Learn more: opensidewalkproject.org

#OpenSidewalkProject #WorkplaceCulture

#RandomActsOfKindness #ProfessionalDevelopment

#BookRecommendations

HASHTAG STRATEGY

Primary Hashtag (Always Use):

#OpenSidewalkProject

Secondary Hashtags (Choose 3-5):

- **#WildRelease** – for wild releases
- **#DirectRelease** – for direct releases
- **#SetStoriesFree** – general use
- **#BookRelease** – general use
- **#BookCrossing** – connects to broader movement
- **#PassItForward** – emphasizes the chain
- **#RandomActOfKindness** – feel-good angle

Community Hashtags (Choose 2-3):

- #BookLovers
- #ReadersOfInstagram
- #BookCommunity
- #Bookstagram

- #BookNerd
- #ReadingCommunity
- #BooksOfInstagram

Location Hashtags (Always Use):

- #[YourCity] – e.g., #Chicago, #Portland, #Austin
- #[YourState] – e.g., #Illinois, #Oregon, #Texas

Platform-Specific Limits:

- **Twitter/X:** 2-3 hashtags max (looks cleaner)
- **Instagram:** 10-30 hashtags (go for it!)
- **Facebook:** 2-5 hashtags (people scroll past more)
- **LinkedIn:** 3-5 hashtags (professional tone)



What to Capture:

- Book in release location with OSP invite label visible (I'm Free)
- Include context: park name, street sign, recognizable landmarks
- Natural lighting works best
- Show the 'moment of release' (your hand placing it down)
- Make it inviting, not staged

✓ DO:

- Show the book in its release location (bench, café table, etc.)
- Include context (street sign, park name, recognizable landmarks)
- Use natural lighting

Show the Open Sidewalk Project label clearly (Never complete BCID)

- Take multiple angles — close-up and wide shot
- Include your hand in the photo (makes it personal)
- Capture the "before it's released" moment

X DON'T:

- Use stock photos or generic book images
- Post blurry or dark photos
- Hide the label or book title
- Make it look staged or fake
- Show complete BCID number



TIMING YOUR POSTS

Best Times to Post:

- **Instagram:** 11am-1pm, 7pm-9pm (weekdays)
- **Facebook:** 1pm-3pm (weekdays)
- **Twitter/X:** 8am-10am, 6pm-9pm (weekdays)
- **LinkedIn:** 7am-9am, 12pm-2pm (weekdays)

Post Frequency:

- One post per release (don't spam)
- Follow-up if someone finds it (share their reflection)
- Monthly roundup of all releases (if you do multiple)



CUSTOMIZATION TIPS

Make It Personal

1. ADD BOOK DETAILS

Instead of: "Just set a book free"

Try: "Just set 'The Alchemist' free — a book that helped me through a career change"

2. EXPLAIN YOUR LOCATION CHOICE

Instead of: "Left it at a coffee shop"

Try: "Left it at the coffee shop where I first read it three years ago"

3. ADD YOUR WHY

Instead of: "Part of the Open Sidewalk Project"

Try: "Part of the Open Sidewalk Project — because this book changed my life and I want it to change someone else's"

4. SPEAK TO THE FINDER

Instead of: "Hope someone finds it"

Try: "To whoever finds this: I hope you're having the kind of day where a surprise book feels like the universe winking at you"

5. SHARE THE MOMENT

Instead of: "Released a book today"

Try: "The hardest and best thing I did today: let go of a book I loved so someone else could love it too"



EXAMPLES OF CUSTOMIZED ANNOUNCEMENTS

Example 1: Personal Wild Release

"Today I set 'Educated' by Tara Westover free at the library where my daughter does her homework every Tuesday. This book taught me about courage, education, and transformation. Maybe it will find a parent like me, or a student like my daughter, or someone who needs to know that learning can happen at any age. Part of the Open Sidewalk Project. #OpenSidewalkProject #WildRelease #Seattle"

Example 2: Direct Release at Work

"I gave 'Atomic Habits' to my coworker Sarah today as part of the Open Sidewalk Project. She mentioned wanting to build better routines, and this book changed how I think about small actions. My only ask: read it, reflect on it, pass it forward to someone else who's trying to change. This is how knowledge moves.
#OpenSidewalkProject #DirectRelease #WorkplaceCulture"

Example 3: Group Event

"Our book club just released 12 copies of 'The Midnight Library' across Portland as part of the Open Sidewalk Project. Same book, different locations, different journeys. We each wrote our own reflection about what the book meant to us. Now we're tracking to see whose travels farthest. Stories don't end when we close the last page. #OpenSidewalkProject #Portland #BookClub"

EMAIL & TEXT TEMPLATES

Email Template

Subject: I set a book free today!

Hi [Name],

I just did something kind of magical — I released a book into the wild as part of the Open Sidewalk Project.

The idea is simple: instead of letting books sit on shelves, we set them free to find new readers. Each book has a unique ID to track its journey.

Follow where this one goes:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[your-code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[your-code])

And if you have a book ready to travel, join the movement:

opensidewalkproject.org

[Your name]

Text Message Template

Just set a book free as part of the Open Sidewalk Project! 

Follow where it goes:

[opensidewalkproject.org/books/\[code\]](https://opensidewalkproject.org/books/[code])

Pretty cool, right? Anyone can find it and pass it forward.



WHO TO CONTACT FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Local Newspapers:

- Email press releases to: news@[localpapersite].com
- Subject line: "Local Book Release Event - Open Sidewalk Project"
- Include a photo attachment
- Follow up 2-3 days later

Community Blogs/Newsletters:

- Look for "submit a story" pages
- Contact editors directly via social media
- Offer to write a guest post about your experience

Local TV/Radio:

- Send to community affairs or lifestyle reporters
- Offer to demo a book release on air
- Pitch as a "feel-good local story"

Library Newsletters:

- Contact your local library's communications director
- They often feature community literacy initiatives
- Offer to do a workshop or presentation

Neighborhood Facebook Groups:

- Post your releases in local groups
- Tag specific neighborhoods where you released
- Encourage others to join

QUICK START CHECKLIST

- ☐ Release your book
- ☐ Take a photo of the book in its location
- ☐ Choose one social media post template
- ☐ Add your unique journey link
- ☐ Add your location and hashtags
- ☐ Post on social media
- ☐ Email or text the journey link to friends/family
- ☐ (Optional) Send press release to local newspaper

? FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do I need permission to send a press release to local media?

A: No! Press releases are designed to be sent to media outlets. Just make sure you're factual and not making claims you can't back up.

Q: What if nobody covers my press release?

A: That's okay! Most press releases don't get picked up. The value is in trying and getting the word out on social media.

Q: Can I tag the Open Sidewalk Project on social media?

A: Yes! Tag us when you can. We love resharing participant stories.

Q: Should I post before or after I release the book?

A: After! You want to show the book in its release location. Plus, the "I just did this" energy is more compelling than "I'm going to do this."

Q: What if I don't want my face/name public?

A: You can post without showing your face and use a username instead of your real name. Focus on the book and location.

Q: Can I edit these templates?

A: Absolutely! These are starting points. Make them your own while keeping the core message about the Open Sidewalk Project.

Q: What if my release is small (just one book)?

A: One book is perfect! Don't let size stop you. "I set a book free today" is just as powerful as "We set 100 books free."



DO NOT: POST or MAKE VISABLE in RELEASE PHOTOS



The 3 digit prefix on your BCID number - This is a control number to prevent SPAM and non valid journal posts - item can cause concern or trigger security responses.



NEED MORE HELP?

**Have questions about using this guide or need help
customizing your announcement?**

Email: team@opensidewalkproject.org

We're here to help you spread the word about your releases!

*"I don't know who needs to read this today —
but somebody will need to read it someday."*

Set stories free. Mark the moment. Trust the journey.

opensidewalkproject.org

This guide is part of the Basecamp resources at opensidewalkproject.org/basecamp

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