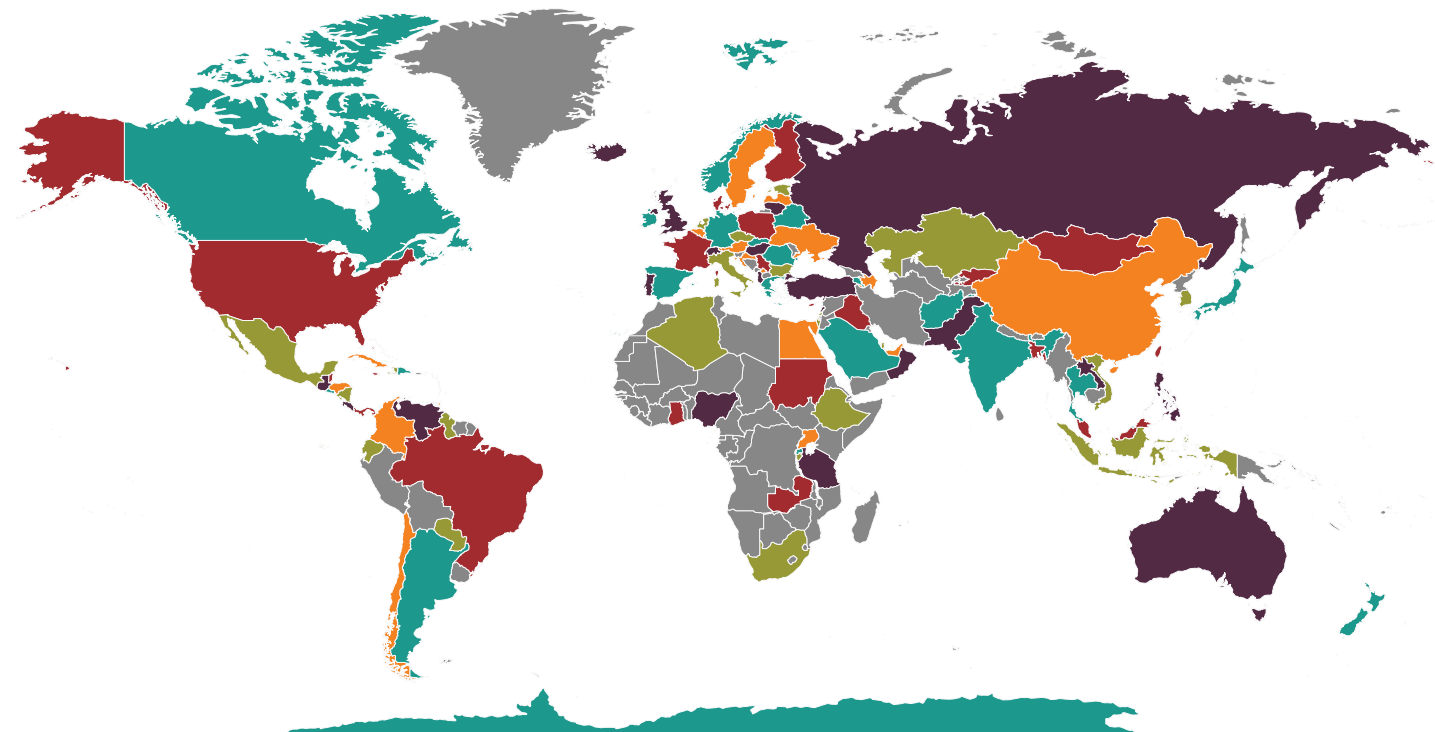




LITTLE FREE LIBRARY.ORG®  
TAKE A BOOK • SHARE A BOOK

2020 Annual Report



**Global Network as of April 2021** • Afghanistan • Albania • Algeria • Antarctica • Argentina • Armenia • Azerbaijan • Aruba • Australia • Austria • Azerbaijan • Bahamas • Bahrain • Bangladesh • Barbados • Belarus • Belgium • Belize • Bermuda • Brazil • Brunei • Bulgaria • Burundi • Cabo Verde • Canada • Chile • China • Colombia • Costa Rica • Croatia • Cuba • Cyprus • Czech Republic • Denmark • Dominica • Dominican Republic • Ecuador • Egypt • El Salvador • Estonia • Ethiopia • Finland • France • Germany • Ghana • Greece • Grenada • Guatemala • Guyana • Haiti • Honduras • Hungary • Iceland • India • Indonesia • Iraq • Ireland • Israel • Italy • Jamaica • Japan • Kazakhstan • Kosovo • Kyrgyzstan • Laos • Latvia • Lebanon • Lithuania • Luxembourg • Malaysia • Malta • Marshall Islands • Mauritius • Mexico • Micronesia • Monaco • Mongolia • Netherlands • New Zealand • Nicaragua • Nigeria • Norway • Oman • Pakistan • Panama • Paraguay • Philippines • Poland • Portugal • Qatar • Romania • Russia • Rwanda • Saudi Arabia • Serbia • Singapore • Slovakia • Slovenia • South Africa • South Korea • Spain • St. Kitts and Nevis • Sudan • Sweden • Switzerland • Taiwan • Tanzania • Thailand • Trinidad and Tobago • Turkey • Tuvalu • Uganda • Ukraine • United Arab Emirates • United Kingdom • United States • Venezuela • Vietnam • Zambia

## Dear Friends of Little Free Library,

Reflection on 2020 is a challenge. As communities around the world confronted the largest health threat in a century, everything changed. Constantly.

For Little Free Library, our fantastic volunteer stewards rose to the occasion by sharing not just books in their libraries but new essentials such as toilet paper, hand sanitizer, and face masks. Stewards' libraries became beacons of hope that neighbors could still care for each other, even at a distance. **To all stewards and their Little Free Libraries, now across all 7 continents, thank you for all you do.**



2020 was also marked by heightened awareness of our society's structural injustices confronting communities of color. As residents of the greater Minneapolis community, Little Free Library needed to address some of these inequities here in our backyard. As a start, **we launched our Read in Color program to share diverse books** through the local network of Little Free Libraries. Launched last fall in Minneapolis, we are expanding the program nationally in 2021. There are more details inside.

From the introspective process that yielded Read in Color came the insight that it was time to reaffirm our organization's goals. Rest assured, no dramatic changes were made, but we did decide to give greater emphasis to book access. Not to the exclusion of community building or reading inspiration, but to be an equal component and stated as part of our mission:

*To be a catalyst for building community, inspiring readers, and expanding book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Libraries.*

**To all, thank you for being part of our mission and for your ongoing support.**



M. Greig Metzger  
Executive Director



Anita Merina  
National Board Chair



## 2020 Highlights

- We celebrated the 100,000th Little Free Library book-sharing box.
- Our nonprofit organization was honored to receive the World Literacy Award.
- LFL volunteer stewards provided food, face masks, and other essentials in their libraries during the pandemic.
- Your support helped us launch the Read in Color initiative to amplify diverse voices through books.
- There are now Little Free Libraries on all seven continents, thanks to the first one in Antarctica!



*Dr. Russell Schnell, an atmospheric scientist, established a Little Free Library at the South Pole for use inside the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Atmospheric Research Observatory.*

# Mission and Vision

The mission of Little Free Library is to be a catalyst for building community, inspiring readers, and expanding book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Libraries.

Our vision is a Little Free Library in every community and a book for every reader. We believe all people are empowered when the opportunity to discover a personally relevant book to read is not limited by time, space, or privilege.



## How We Achieve Our Mission

### Provide 24/7 book access.

Little Free Libraries are open seven days a week, 24 hours a day and are freely accessible to all, removing barriers to book access.

### Foster new Little Free Library book-sharing boxes.

Little Free Library (LFL) equips, educates, and guides volunteer stewards to establish Little Free Libraries in their communities.

### Grant Little Free Libraries to high-need areas.

Through our programs, LFL grants no-cost Little Free Libraries full of books to underserved urban, suburban, rural, and Native communities.

### Champion diverse books.

Through our Read in Color program, LFL makes books available representing BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other diverse voices to promote understanding, empathy, and inclusion.

### Work with key community partners.

LFL collaborates with schools, public libraries, civic organizations, businesses, and other groups to bring Little Free Libraries to their communities.



# Our Values



## Access

By providing greater, more equitable book access in neighborhoods worldwide, we work to strengthen communities and influence literacy outcomes.



## Collaboration

We embrace working with Little Free Library volunteer stewards, as well as local and national partners, to build community and improve book access.



## Equity

We are dedicated to furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion through the programs we run, the books we share, and the community we serve, as well as in the internal operations of our nonprofit.



## Respect

We value all people and communities, and we respect their wisdom in using Little Free Libraries in a meaningful, individualistic way suited to their culture and locality.



## Transparency

We are committed to integrity and accountability in how we manage our assets, and we are proud to have earned Platinum GuideStar status.





# Read In Color

In response to George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis, not far from our offices, we worked with our community to launch a new program bringing diverse books to Little Free Library book-sharing boxes around the world. **Read in Color** distributes books that provide perspectives on racism and social justice; celebrate BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized voices; and incorporate experiences from all identities for all readers. More than 5,000 books have already been distributed in the Twin Cities in Minnesota, with new cities launching across the U.S. in 2021.



*"When children read inclusive books, seeds are planted in their minds, hearts, and souls—seeds of awareness, self-esteem, and connection. If enough such seeds are sown, they will blossom into a society that is far more just and equitable than we've ever experienced."*

— Tameka Fryer Brown, author of *Brown Baby Lullaby*



# Our Volunteers

Behind every Little Free Library is a dedicated volunteer steward who serves as the caretaker of the library and book-sharing ambassador to the neighborhood. In a recent survey of more than 2,500 stewards, we learned that their most common motivations for starting a Little Free Library were wanting to:

- Share their love of reading
- Improve book access in their area
- Build a stronger sense of community

*"Our Little Free Library has changed our neighborhood (for the better!) and changed my life!"* – LFL Steward



72% of volunteer stewards have met more neighbors because of their Little Free Library



On average, one book is shared in a Little Free Library each day!



92% of people say their neighborhood feels like a friendlier place because of a Little Free Library

# Impact Library Program

Through our Impact Library Program, LFL grants no-cost Little Free Libraries full of books to underserved urban, suburban, rural, and Native communities to improve book access and strengthen neighborhood bonds.



*"My community is the second-largest historically African American community in the United States. After desegregation, busing, white flight, red lining, and the drug boom and mass incarceration, this once-thriving community is impoverished with few homeowners. All community schools are Title 1 schools.*

*So many people are curious and ask about [my Little Free Library]. It's a pedestrian community so community members stop and talk about it. I've 'caught' many kids and adults, cars and walkers, stopping to get a book. It's made me so happy.*

***Also, it's such a visible way to show neglected communities that they are worth every investment in the world."***

– Tia P., Impact Library grantee,  
Memphis, Tennessee

## Our Impact



**100,000**  
Little Free Libraries



**50**  
U.S. States Served



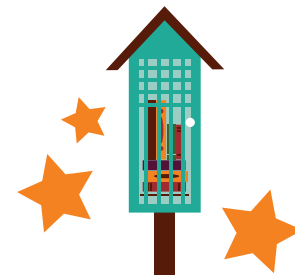
**110**  
Countries Served



**208,000,000**  
Books Shared  
Since 2009



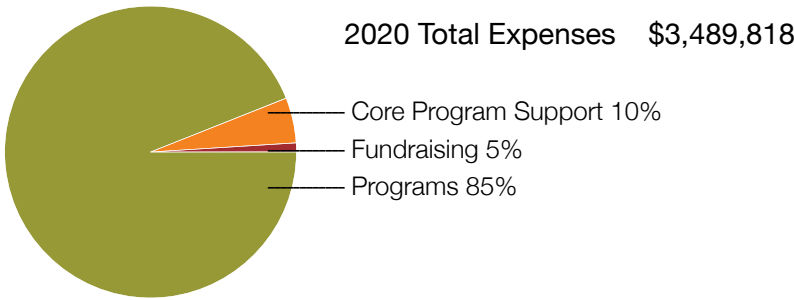
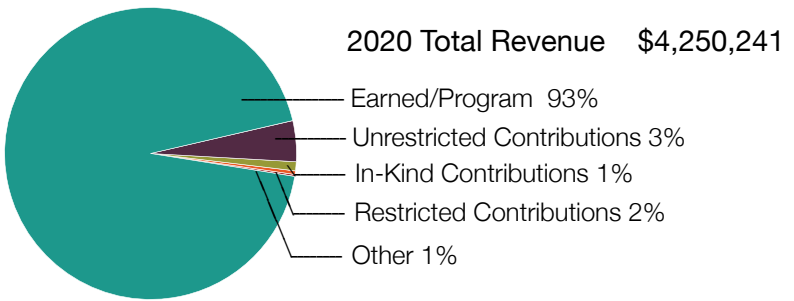
**468**  
Visits Per Library  
Each Year



**1,350**  
Libraries  
Granted



# 2020 Financials



## Board of Directors *(as of May 2021)*

- Anita Merina, Board Chair**  
*National Education Association, Read Across America, Retired*
- Jake Adams, Vice Chair**  
*Chief Development Officer, Southwest Human Development*
- Margaret Bernstein, Secretary**  
*Director of Advocacy & Community Initiatives, WKYC*
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- Marisa Creary**  
*Director of Partnerships, Heart of America Foundation*
- Dr. Kenneth Kunz**  
*Assistant Professor of Literacy & Language Arts, Monmouth University*
- Hannah Moore**  
*Chief Development Officer, The Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services*
- Anum Pervaiz**  
*Real Estate Counsel, Van Metre Companies*
- Noel Sackett**  
*GSC International Accounting Manager, The Sherwin Williams Company*
- Dr. Artika Tyner**  
*Founding Director, University of St. Thomas School of Law Center on Race, Leadership and Social Justice*
- Margaret A. Wood**  
*Fiber Artist*

# Investing in Literacy

During the pandemic, while schools and public libraries were closed, we were flooded with requests for library grants—many more than we could fulfill. More than 1,300 individuals and organizations applied for assistance. Gifts to Little Free Library support our efforts to bring books to high-needs neighborhoods across the country.

## Give Online, by Phone, or by Mail

Visit [LittleFreeLibrary.org/donate](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org/donate), call 715-690-2488, or mail to Little Free Library, 573 County Road A, Suite 106, Hudson, WI, 54016.

## Other ways to give:

- Honor and Memorial Gifts
- Company Matching Donations
- Qualified Charitable Distribution
- Foundation Grants
- Corporate Partnerships





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