



Read in Color[®]

Little Free Library[®]

Cohort Information



Everyone should be able to see themselves in the pages of a book.

Little Free Library's Read in Color initiative 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. By reading diverse books, we can increase understanding, empathy, and inclusion.

Read in Color's Impact



30

Read in Color
Cities Launched



350+

Little Free Libraries
Granted



60,000+

Diverse Books
Shared

8,800+

Read in Color
Cities Pledges

15

Publisher
Partners

56

Indie & BIPOC-
Owned Bookstore
Partners



About Read in Color

Read in Color aims to amplify diverse voices at a grassroots, community level. The program has three key components:

- **Little Free Library installations. We are** establishing new Little Free Library book-sharing boxes filled with culturally relevant books in high-need communities, working in tandem with local partners.
- **Recommended reading lists. Our Diverse** Books Advisory Group provides a list of multicultural books for children, adolescents, and adults representing Black, Indigenous, Latine, Asian American, Muslim, LGBTQ+, and other communities.
- **Read in Color pledge. Everyone can sign a** pledge indicating their commitment to read and share diverse books. Participants have the option to showcase their commitment on our Pledge Wall and have access to special Read in Color resources. Visit LittleFreeLibrary.org/programs/read-in-color/.



Become a Read in Color Community Partner



What is a Community Partner's Role?

Core responsibilities include:

- Identify 5-10 library locations in book deserts and library caretakers (stewards);
- Store and distribute libraries and books;
- Attend monthly cohort meetings and regular 1:1 meetings with program manager. Monthly meetings are 1.5 hours and take place over Zoom;
- Support stewards with library installation and maintenance, stocking books, and leveraging community support and resources;
- Collect and report library usage data, including but not limited to visitor numbers and insights on the number of books exchanged;
- Capture photos of the library and community member testimonials as each library is installed.

Cohort Member Criteria

The ideal Read in Color community partner is:

- An established organization with a mission similar or complementary to Little Free Library.
- Able to receive, store, and distribute hundreds of books and support materials at one time - or arrange for a storage solution.
- Able to fit Read in Color activities into their existing program structure.
- Prioritizing diversity and equity within the organization
- Collaborative - works with other area organizations
- Staffed appropriately to support this work - one or two dedicated staff members who are committed to serving as the point of contact for LFL.
- Volunteers to assist/support this project
- US only at this time.

Read in Color - Cohort Model

- Read in Color utilizes an annual cohort model to guide a group of community organizations through the Read in Color launch process collaboratively
- Interested parties submit applications that are reviewed by our selection committee
- 6 applicants will be selected to participate in our 2026 cohort

Application Details

When you apply, you will be asked:

- About your organization, its mission, funding sources, and your role in the organization
- If/how your organization currently uses book-sharing boxes
- How your community would be impacted by increased access to diverse books and how community need is demonstrated by multiple indicators
- Your short- and long-term goals for sustaining a network of Read in Color libraries in your community.



Project Timeline

January - September 2026

The 2026 Cohort project timeline is as follows:

- **November:** application opens
- **December:** selection committee reviews applications; final application decisions and applicant notifications
- **January:** cohort kickoff meeting
- **February - September:** monthly cohort meetings (attendance required)



“This program has really helped expand the work we had in mind. We're seeing an increase in the number of volunteers that our organization has because of this program. And we also saw a tremendous amount of press locally and nationally, which has been huge for us.”

– Lorin T., 904WARD



Package Components

- Up to 10 new Read in Color library boxes
- Post, step stool post, or legs for each LFL
- Read in Color launch packs and official charter sign for each LFL
- \$7,500 in book support
- \$1,000 reimbursement for launch event and/or associated activities

Get in touch!

Lexie Neeley, Read in Color Program Manager

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“Read in Color has been such a ‘yes’ experience. It's been a way for us to be able to say ‘yes’ to people: ‘Yes, we can get you books.’ ‘Yes, we can get you the starter for what might build into something bigger.’ And it also puts us into regular communication in a really intentional way with people across our city about what kinds of books are needed, where books are needed, why books are needed, and how we might go about getting more books.”

– Lauren A., Possible Futures