

# 2023 Philly Book Wish

Increasing access to diverse books for  
Philly's children and families



# Webinar Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Project & Partner Overview
3. Background & Goals for the Philly Book Wish Project
4. Book Wish Application Eligibility & Process
5. Q&A
6. Additional Book Opportunities in Philadelphia



# Philly Book Wish

With support from the William Penn Foundation, First Book and Philly Book Bank have teamed up to provide literacy champions within and beyond the Read by 4th network with diverse, brand-new books to share with kids and families in need.

Our objective is to ensure that the books available to children and youth across Philadelphia reflect the richness and diversity of cultures and experiences in our communities.



# Meet the Partners



## Philly Book Bank

The Philly Book Bank is part of a non-profit organization called Reading Recycled 501(c)3, located in the Delaware Valley area. The Book Bank strives to prevent children from growing up without books in their homes by collecting new and gently used books and distributing them through to teachers and others reaching children across Philadelphia.



## Read by 4th

Read by 4th is a citywide coalition of parents and partners protecting every child's right to read. Convened and managed by the Free Library of Philadelphia, this collective impact campaign works to create conditions at both the systems and grassroots level that will lead to a significant increase in the number of students in Philadelphia entering the 4th grade at reading level.



## First Book

First Book is a national nonprofit social enterprise focused on equal access to quality education for kids in need. First Book provides educators and program leaders with brand-new, high-quality books, educational resources, and other essentials to help children learn. First Book's network has surpassed 550k members and is the largest and fastest growing network of programs serving kids in need in North America.



# The Goal:

Families have greater access to meaningful books for their home libraries.

The Read by 4th Home Libraries Working Group convened organizations throughout Philly to identify pathways for providing greater access to meaningful books at home for families.



# The Issue: Diverse books are important!

"Books should be windows into the realities of others, not just imaginary worlds, and books can be mirrors that reflect the lives of readers. Sliding glass doors refers to how readers can walk into a story and become part of the world created by the author - readers become fully immersed in another experience. Approaching children's stories through the lens of windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors, prioritizes diversity, honors many cultures, and promotes empathy."

- Rudine Sims Bishop



Grant Snider

# Diverse Book Impact Study

First Book Research & Insights recently presented a study demonstrating the impact of having diverse books in classrooms libraries on student outcomes. We learned:

- **Students' reading scores increased after educators added diverse books to classroom libraries.**
  - Increases were 3 points higher (+9) than nationally expected average yearly gains
  - Gains were greatest for the lowest scoring students (+11)
  - Classrooms that added bilingual titles and titles representing the LGBTQ+ community had the greatest improvements in student reading scores and reading engagement
- **Students spent more time reading after educators added diverse books to classroom libraries.**
  - Collective student reading time increased by 4 hours per week on average after educators added new, diverse books to their classrooms
  - 70% of educators reported that their students more often choose books that feature characters that look like them

Learn more &  
read the full  
study here:

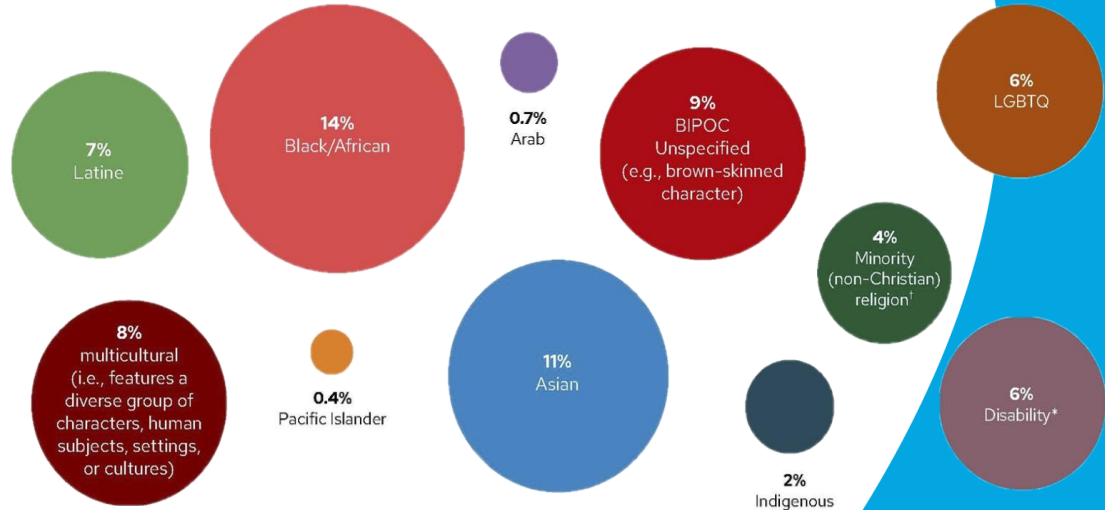


# The Challenge:

## Access to diverse books is limited

- 1 Budgets are limited and new high-quality books are expensive
- 2 Many programs rely on generous donations of gently used books
- 3 Those working directly with children and families don't have the power of choice to select relevant books
- 4 Publishers print fewer diverse titles than titles representing mainstream characters
- 5 Books representing mainstream characters and stories comprise majority of titles available through traditional booksellers

2022 CCBC Diversity Statistics: ABOUT (Diversity Subject)  
Race/Ethnicity, Disability, LGBTQ, Religion





# The Solution: Partner nationally for local impact.

This collective impact effort leverages:

- Local expertise and knowledge of the Read by 4th Network and Philly Book Bank;
- The William Penn Foundation's commitment to improving the quality of life across Greater Philadelphia through increased educational opportunities for children from low-income families; with
- First Book's book access, national distribution capabilities, and organizational capacities

Together, these partners will engage local Philly literacy champions to supply more than \$325,000 in diverse books for children and families by July 2025.



# Progress-to-Date

87 organizations awarded

28,402 books distributed

64,550 children reached

## What awardees are saying:

“It is impossible to overstate the value that our Book Wish grant created in diversifying the outdated collection in our Title I K-8 library. I am a volunteer with zero purchasing budget and no expectation of receiving any reliable funding through the school district in the near future. There has been no professional curation of our collection since the mid-1990s. I used our \$1,000 Book Wish gift certificate to buy books that represent the lived experience of our current students.”

“I overheard quite a few students remark how the characters in the story looked just like them! The illustrations and content resonated with them. To see the joy in their faces, as they lit up seeing people and experiences that they can relate to was beautiful.”



# How Philly Book Wish Works



Identify Community Need



Apply for Book Wish Grant



Distribute Books and Capture  
Stories



Complete Impact Survey



## Assess Need in Your Community

Think about what an infusion of diverse books could mean for the work you do and the children and families you reach. Why is this important?



## Apply for a Book Wish Grant

Register with First Book and submit a Book Wish Grant Application online by November 19, 2023. Tell us when and how you will use diverse books to enhance program impact, encourage a love of reading, support family engagement, and promote equity.\*



## Distribute Books and Capture Stories

Order books from the First Book Marketplace and get them into the hands of children and families! Observe individual children or families as they interact with these new books. Capture quotes, photos, stories that demonstrate impact.



## Complete Impact Survey

A couple of months after you distribute books from your Book Wish grant, First Book will send you an online impact survey to collect information on how books were used and what difference they made in your community. This feedback will be shared with the funder in a progress report.

\*There is no guarantee that all submitted applications will be awarded

# Eligibility

- Eligible programs
  - Title I-eligible school
  - Early childhood program (including Head Start)
  - Literacy organization
  - After-school program
  - Shelter, clinic, church
  - Any other organization where at least 70 percent of kids served come from low-income families
- For this Book Wish opportunity, books must benefit children and families in Philadelphia.



WHO CAN SIGN UP  
WITH FIRST BOOK?  
**FIRST BOOK**



# Benefits of Registering with First Book

Access to special funding opportunities for FREE books and events

Access to brand-new, deeply discounted diverse books on the First Book Marketplace

Access to the First Book National Book Bank - books are free; pay only shipping and handling

Access to FREE resources for educators and literacy champions

Add your voice to the movement through surveys & focus groups



# Book Wish Award

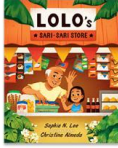



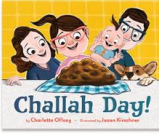


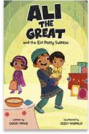
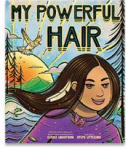

If awarded a Book Wish grant, you will receive a gift credit for diverse, brand-new titles from the Stories for All Collection on the First Book Marketplace for your program and the children you serve.

- Choose from thousands of titles
- Books for children and youth of all ages
- Books are priced 50 – 70% below retail

## Diversity & Inclusion

The Stories for All Project™

Shop by Category

 <p>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>Black Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>Global Stories</p>	 <p>Immigrant &amp; Refugee Experiences</p>	 <p>Jewish Characters &amp; Cultures</p>
 <p>Latine Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>LGBTQ+ Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>Muslim Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>Native American &amp; Indigenous Characters &amp; Cultures</p>	 <p>Neurodivergent &amp; Disabled Characters &amp; Cultures</p>



# Application Details



## Award Amounts

Applicants may apply for the award level that best aligns with planned book use.\*

\$500  
\$1,000  
\$2,000  
\$5,000



## Book Use

Books should be ordered and used ASAP from the award date. If you plan to begin using books more than 60 days from the award date, be sure to let us know why in your application.



## Important Dates

Applications close:  
November 19, 2023 at  
11:59 PM ET

Grants distributed:  
December 12, 2023

Impact surveys and  
request for stories:  
May 2024



## Future Book Wish Opportunities

If you aren't awarded this round, stay tuned! Another round opens in Fall, 2024. Organizations may apply in more than one round, even if previously awarded.

*\*Grants may be awarded for less than the requested amount*

# How to Apply

## STEP 1

Register with First Book to confirm eligibility

[www.firstbook.org/npp](http://www.firstbook.org/npp)

For questions about registering contact First Book's Member Services Team:

1-866-READ-NOW  
[help@firstbook.org](mailto:help@firstbook.org)

## STEP 2

Visit the Philly Book Wish landing page  
[www.firstbook.org/solutions/philly-book-wish/](http://www.firstbook.org/solutions/philly-book-wish/)  
Click on the button that reads

APPLY FOR A BOOK WISH GRANT

PLEASE NOTE: Applications must be completed and submitted in one session.



### Submit a "Book Wish" for Culturally Relevant Books

With support from the William Penn Foundation, First Book, Read By 4th, and Philly Book Bank have teamed up to provide literacy champions within and beyond the Read by 4th network with diverse, brand-new books to share with kids and families in need! Our objective is to ensure that the books available to students across Philadelphia reflect the richness and diversity of cultures and experiences of our communities.

Qualified schools and programs in Philadelphia are encouraged to apply by telling us their "Book Wish!" In other words, let us know what an infusion of up to \$5,000 worth of brand-new books would mean to you and your students. What kind of impact would this gift have? What would you be able to accomplish with this funding that you may not be able to otherwise? There are no wrong answers and creativity is encouraged!

To be considered for this exciting opportunity, please submit your application by no later than November 19, 2023. Educators who are awarded funds will receive a gift certificate to order brand-new, diverse books from the Stories for All Project section of the [First Book Marketplace](#). Filling out this application form does not guarantee you'll be selected to receive funding.

#### The following terms apply:

- Applicants must represent a Title I-eligible school or a program where at least 70% of the children/families served are low-income. To receive this gift, awardees must [sign up](#) for First Book for free. Visit First Book's [eligibility FAQs](#) page to learn more about who qualifies.
- Book Wish grants will be awarded in a range of \$500 - \$5,000.
- The application will close on November 19, 2023. Awardees will receive an email with their Book Wish gift certificate code on December 12th, 2023.
- Awardees must attend a welcome webinar if selected and must complete a brief post-survey as a requirement for receiving funding.

**IMPORTANT:** Applications must be completed in one session. Applications will not be saved if you close out of the program prior to submitting.

For further context about these partnering organizations and details for the informational webinars being offered regarding this application process, please visit [this Philly Book Wish hub page](#).

Today's Date \*

/  /    
MM DD YYYY





# Book Wish Awardee Agreements

## 1. Attend Awardee Welcome Webinar

1. Receive information about accessing your Philly Book Wish grant and the timeline for using the funding.
2. Opportunity to ask more questions about navigating the First Book Marketplace.

## 2. Submit impact stories

1. Submission of a written narrative detailing how your organization/program has used your Philly Book Wish is expected of all recipients
2. Images and videos to supplement are also much appreciated!

## 3. Complete brief post-survey

1. Completion of the brief post-survey is expected of all recipients.
2. Survey will be sent at the end of the grant period in May.



# QUESTIONS?



# Where else can I get books in Philly?

Philly is lucky to have incredible literacy leaders connecting organizations and community groups with free children's books.



Scan to learn more!

Partner Name	Organization Contact	What they can offer	Tips
<b>Philly Book Bank</b> <a href="http://www.readingrecycled.org/the-book-bank-1">www.readingrecycled.org/the-book-bank-1</a>	Anne Keenan (she/her) <a href="mailto:anne@readingrecycled.org">anne@readingrecycled.org</a>	New & gently used donated books; they'll usually choose titles from available inventory, but can sometimes help with special requests.	The Philly Book Bank offers a magical space in MLK High School filled with books for Philly families and teachers to come and choose books.
<b>Tree House Books</b> <a href="http://www.treehousebooks.org/">www.treehousebooks.org/</a>	Tangie Wilson (they/them) <a href="mailto:tangie@treehousebooks.org">tangie@treehousebooks.org</a>	New & gently used donated books; they'll choose titles from available inventory at their giving library in North Philly. Or, invite the Traveling Tree House bookmobile to events.	The Traveling Tree House is popular, so book early to save your date!
<b>Books in Homes, USA</b> <a href="http://www.booksinhomesusa.org/">www.booksinhomesusa.org/</a>	Jessica Murphy (she/her) <a href="mailto:jmurphy@booksinhomesusa.org">jmurphy@booksinhomesusa.org</a>	Two grant cycles annually, as well as year-round discounts to purchase books from Scholastic and other vendors.	Can occasionally offer grants as well as discounts; contact them to learn more.
<b>Book Smiles</b> <a href="http://www.booksmiles.org">www.booksmiles.org</a>	Larry Abrams (he/him) <a href="mailto:Larry@booksmiles.org">Larry@booksmiles.org</a>	High quality new or gently-used books for children throughout PA and NJ.	Warehouse is located in Pennsauken, NJ.



Thank you for joining us today and for your work as a Philly literacy champion.

Together we can achieve our shared goals of ensuring that all Philly's children have a chance to read, learn, and succeed in school and life.

We look forward to working with you!

