



# TOOL KIT

A beginner's guide

## WELCOME

We hope to build a network and movement across the UK of people raising money to buy brilliantly diverse books for their local schools. If you don't, who will? Here is a starting point, we want to help those of you who may have never done anything like this before. If you have got experience, please be open to share it with the 'Books for Change' network. The projects that have sprung up, all have their own style and strengths.

We look forward to seeing yours flourish.

We started this in the COVID lockdown, our focus was very much an online social media fundraising campaign as we had no choice, people were living life more online. As we move into the physical world, your options of fundraising will grow and we look forward to seeing and hearing about your brilliant ideas.

## WHAT IS YOUR PROJECT NAME?

We ask that in order to keep this movement going, it is a collective name. If we all use the same naming convention, they will say our name far and wide, in the hills and mountains and in every school across the UK. That is our hope.

We ask that you use:  
name of your town/area, region + Books For Change  
We have all started using the hashtag #BooksForChange

## TIME AND COMMITMENT

We want to be clear, open and upfront from the beginning.

Running a campaign takes time and energy, it is a real commitment. Can you commit? If you are reading this toolkit as one person wondering how to run a campaign, we suggest you find a partner - two to four people is the ideal.

Anything over four we feel could add a whole other layer of complications. We started Folkestone Books for Change as a duo and found it worked really well. One person suited more of a back office role and the other suited more of a front facing role. You need to be able to work together really well. Think about what you can offer and seek out another who has the skills you might be lacking.

My weakness is spreadsheets and finance, but I know a whole lot about children's literature and diversity, the other co-founder is a whizz at spreadsheets and controlling finances. It is important to think about this before leaping in.

## FUNDING PORTAL

Which funding portal suits you? Consider looking at this [comparison website](#) and choose the funding platform you'd prefer. From the research we did, as this is a one-off fund raiser you will not need to register as a charity. You are welcome to check this for yourself. When selecting a fundraising platform choose one that facilities this.

# FUNDING PLATFORM

For the fundraising page, you will need some sort of visual image. Do you know anyone who can help you out with this? What about taking a photo of some books you have at home? Be careful using other people's images without permission. Could you design a logo? What about asking a child to have a go, take a photo and off you go?

You need some text, so people landing on your page can check the aims of the project. We have some suggested text here:

**Headline:** We're raising £xxx to buy books with diverse representation telling stories of hard fought rights and donate them to [number] primary schools in [town/area]. Thank you.

**Body:** We want to make sure our children know the history of struggle, resistance and hard-fought rights. We want to empower every child in our town to know that they can make a difference. We feel the starting point for this is through reading. We need our school library to stock a diverse range of fiction and non-fiction, picture and fact books that include diverse characters of colour, strong female protagonists and kids that are not afraid to be different. We know for a fact that the school library needs much more of a range so we are asking for donations, so that we can buy and donate books to [number] local primary schools in [name of your town/region area].

Check our Facebook page @[town name]BooksForChange for fund-raising events, books lists and where to buy them ethically and locally and which schools we have donated to.

If you want to get involved in some other way please make contact via [email address for your project] We believe in the power of our children, change can happen.

Thank you for your donation

**Top tips:** Be clear with potential supporters which schools will benefit. This may influence their donation if they can see a direct benefit to their kids' school. You may get requests for other schools to be included. Please encourage those people to do it for themselves in their area and direct them to our website for startup advice.

Please look at other campaigns wording for inspiration (find them on the booksforchange.co.uk campaigns).

Please take time to thank your donators and post updates on the page for those that are not following you on social media.

# SOCIAL MEDIA: FACEBOOK

## Why start a Facebook page?

- You can have a number of 'admins' who can help post and respond to messages and comments.
- You can see stats on what posts work and how many engagements you have.
- You can be messaged on there, you will probably get messages of support and offers of help.
- It becomes a resource that new followers can scroll through and share with their followers! There is a function to 'invite all' your friends. Between you I'm sure you have reach.

**Top tip** when starting out: have a few posts already up and link to your Crowd Funder pinned to the top before you invite all your friends. It can be off putting to be invited to a minimal or half constructed site.

## CONTENT

### Idea for posts to keep your sites fresh:

Videos introducing yourselves and why you are starting this campaign. Your passion?

Short video's introducing the books or reading them out loud. Or how about linking to You Tube where you can often find picture story books read out?

Going 'Live' with a book reading.

Post a few books a day with web links, so that a thumbnail visual comes up – Up to you, but we didn't link to Amazon for ethical reasons, but used Good Reads, the authors own page or the publishers pages. Then it is up to your audience where they buy their own copy. We love the idea that people will also fill their homes with these delicious books, give them as gifts, as well as donate to your fund for schools.

Take a photo of a book you have and write a post and chat about why you like them or would be a benefit in your area. Show your enthusiasm for the books and ask for people to comment. The suggestions for other books and shops are really useful, especially from your local community.

Articles along the theme as the project. Find more in our 'news' page on our website. ['No reader is too young to start': anti-racist books for all children and teens'](#) Guardian Article

[Exclusions for racism in primary schools in England up more than 40%](#) BBC article

Petitions that are related especially at the moment – such as making black history

part of the curriculum etc.

[Reports on representation in books in schools see the Book Trust.](#)

[Resources on how to teach children about racism and other teaching materials:](#)

Books lists by other charities and organisations which can be found on our website on the 'books' page.

Progress on the fund raiser. Take a screen grab and add fun filters. It feels good too! We will share it too.

Create a gif for fundraising achievements and post them on stories and post.

Current events that are relevant. E.g Pride month events, books festivals etc.

Share any press that you are in and we will share it too.

Share photos of you delivering the books when the time comes.

## SOCIAL MEDIA: INSTAGRAM

Instagram posts and stories: Fun and visual!

However you will need to build followers and have strong visual ideas.

Photos of books or thumbnails/screen grabs. You can link to articles or mentions in stories etc.

Please use #BooksForChange to link us all up.

We do hope that you will also follow the other Books for Change campaigns and amplify them by sharing their posts.

## SOCIAL MEDIA: TWITTER

Rather than start a whole new handle for your project, consider using your own personal one if you already tweet, as people already know you.

To start getting followers to a new twitter account could be too lengthy for this project?

Books for Change has a twitter account @\_BooksForChange and will share your Instagram and Facebook posts. Please be aware that we cannot share 'stories', just posts. Authors are particularly receptive and will usually re tweet, so please do include them in the book review etc.

Please use #BooksForChange to link us all up.

# SOCIAL MEDIA: ACCESSIBILITY

We want to make sure that our campaigns are accessible as possible to everyone. There are some simple things that will help those people who use assistive technology to view all your posts.

Please always put an image description in brackets at the end of your Instagram posts and Facebook it helps those with visual impairments access your post.

Similar with tweets you can add 'alt text' this can be read by those with assistive technology.

When using hash tags please start each word with capitals otherwise it will come out as nonsense when listened to.

Please use accessible language or plain English or large chunks of text, if you are not sure you can use an online tool to check that you haven't used over complicated language. <http://www.hemingwayapp.com/> Try to use size 12 font and sub headings to make it easier to read.

If you are making a video, think about publishing it in You Tube or other platforms, so that those who need captioning, can request that.

## EMAIL

It can be good to have an email account that you and the other organisers can share.

You can send press releases and emails to the schools from this account. It may be handy when you are buying the books to have an account, so you can keep track of orders receipts etc that you all have access to. We suggest [NameBooksforChange@...com](mailto:NameBooksforChange@...com)

## APPROACHING SCHOOLS

At some point in your project you will need to contact the schools, it is up to you and the relationship you have with them when you want to do this.

You can find their email addresses on their websites. Maybe you want to work with them to build this or just tell them after you have raised the money? They won't say no to free books! Maybe you know PTFA members or the Chair – would they be interested in supporting this?

The amount of involvement you want to have with the schools is up to you. You may want to consider the time of year and pressures for them. Does the class have a Whatsapp group you can send a message to?

**Top tip** You may want to start a list of their names, addresses, emails, key people, as you will need it later when you distribute the books. Here is our suggested text when contacting the school after you have started the project

Hello

We are two parents who have children at [School name]. In recent weeks we have been motivated by the Black Lives Matter/Books For Change movement to raise funds for diverse books for all [number] primary schools in the [ town] area.

We want to make sure our children know the history of struggle, resistance and hard-fought rights. We want to empower every child in our town to know that they can make a difference. We feel the starting point for this is through reading.

We would like to see [town's] school libraries stocking a diverse range of fiction and nonfiction, picture and fact books that include diverse characters of colour, strong female protagonists, boys that are not afraid to be different and voices from the LGBTQI community. We also want to include books that speak to children with disability, learning and neurological difference, to help overcome bullying and increase self acceptance. We have curated an age appropriate book list, that we hope will inspire teachers to start projects and stories that will absorb and inspire the children.

We have been blown over by the donations, offers of help, books suggestions and words of encouragement from local businesses, parents, grandparents, local teachers and librarians. There are many other Books for change projects around the country.

At the moment the fund stands at £[xxxx] which is just over £[xxx] per school. We have many books on our lists and are in the process of selecting and sourcing them as cheaply as possible, so we can send as many to you as possible!

We think it is likely we will be donating the books to you at [ term]. We will be back in touch to arrange a convenient time and safe way to drop them off.

We appreciate that the staff at the school are very busy and so all we ask is that if you think this is something your parents would be interested in supporting, maybe you could share our fundraising link below on your newsletters and social media channels.

[ insert your fundraising link here]  
Facebook @[town]BooksForChange  
#BooksForChange  
Insta:

We look forward to donating the books to you, as soon as possible! Below is suggested text for your parents.

Best wishes during these difficult times  
[your names]

Suggested text for newsletters, FB etc

Two local parents are raising money to buy and donate books to [town] Primary Schools including our school library.

The books will have a diverse range of characters of colour, strong female protagonists, boys that are not afraid to be different and voices from the LGBTQI community. They will also be including books that speak to children with disability, learning and neurological differences, to help overcome bullying and increase self acceptance. They have already raised £xxx that will mean £xxx worth of books for us already.

If you would like to find out more about the project they have a FB page '[Town] Books For Change'. They appreciate that you may be facing financial insecurity, but if you are interested in donating to the fund, please follow this link to their fundraising page.

[fundraising link]

# STOP PRESS!

Press release: If you want to raise awareness of your campaign consider contacting your local press. Local press usually have a news desk where various journalists will work from. Consider local BBC radio and other stations in your area, but you must be prepared to be interviewed and have the time to do this. Online magazines about your area? Event listings? Post to your local whatsapp groups or local area FB groups.

Here are some guides to writing a press release:

Wikipedia [write a press release](#)

Guardian [article on how to write a press release](#)

Shopify [blog with template](#)

# LOCAL INTEREST

You may want to use your press release to send to other local links, newsletters?

Other ways to gain local interest:

- Flyers and posters in shops.
- Contact the Bookclubs in your area.
- Community groups, e.g Women's Institute
- Places of worship and groups associated.
- Anti racism groups, local Pride, Disability Rights groups.
- Literary festivals, theatres etc
- Forest schools, Beach schools, Farm Schools, Early years settings
- Scouts/Brownies
- Your workplace
- Consider is there anyone interested in match funding what you have raised?

# FUNDRAISING

Folkstone books for change launched during the COVID lockdown and all our campaign was run on social media. Other campaigns fund raising ideas have included:

Children sponsored cycle ride

Sponsored laps in the garden (children)

Readathon

Online raffle of donations from local businesses.

Online DJ night live via Twitch

[Virtual fund raising ideas during COVID](#)

[100 ideas from Eventbrite \(USA\)](#)

Some considerations about [Fundraising during COVID](#)

If you wish to raise fund through putting in bids to local councils, national lottery and other funding bodies you may want to consider setting up your campaign more formally and you will require a bank account. We suggest you take advice on this from the [Resource Center based in Brighton](#) or [the NVCO](#)

## BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS!

The fun bit. There are many wonderful books out there with fantastic characters and stories. There are many books suggestion lists on diversity themes out there. We have a page dedicated to 'books' on our website and key people or organisations to follow to get inspiration from and reviews. We have also suggested places to buy them from.

There are so many wonderful books and you have a limited budget, how do you choose? Discuss and think about why you are doing this, what is motivating you? What are the issues you have encountered? You will start to identify your criteria. Ours? We wanted books that children could see themselves mirrored in and a window to other experiences. Books that speak about the way rights were fought for and empower children to think they can make change. You may have a different set of criteria. It will be useful, as you have hard choices! Please do come back to us if you are still unsure we do have our lists we based our decisions on.

Folkestone Books for Change bought the majority from Letterbox Library, they offer various discounts based on how much you spend. Other campaigns have teamed up with their local independent book shop and negotiated a discount or even at cost.

Please be open and clear when spending the money with each other in the group so that all the money can be accounted for.

**Storage:** Please consider how and where you are going to store the books. Think about social distancing restrictions at the moment. At some point you will need to box up your donations and deliver them to the schools.

**Distribution:** Consider writing about Books for Change and yourselves in a letter or email to the school about your journey and your contact details – you may receive thanks from the children. We have Books for Change stickers that we would like you to put in the cover so that parents and schools can read about the campaigns and discover further resources. The school may want to take this project further. Please direct them back to [www.booksforchange.co.uk](http://www.booksforchange.co.uk), we offer storytelling workshops and discussion using the books to embed them in the schools.

Use the opportunity to share your success on social media and press. Take photos of the delivery exchange and share with the Books for Change community and all those that donated to you.



# BOOKS FOR CHANGE EXCHANGE

We will try to support your campaign as much as possible in social media and try to keep you motivated. We aim to have regular social (online) events, so that we can share our ideas and progress and celebrate success.

We ask that you also encourage other groups by following them and reposting their success or press which will also help your campaign and widen everyone's reach.

We ask that you take responsibility for your campaign and deal with any disputes amongst your team.

Equally we (Emily and Wendy) cannot be held responsible for any financial irregularity that may occur so please be transparent with your spending to your team and the public.

We also ask that you put a Books for Change sticker in each book so that it can be linked back to the website to further campaign of diverse books in every school.

We will ask for feedback after your campaign has ended in the form of some questions, so you can reflect on your experience and we can build on that.

We look forward to seeing your campaigns make great strides to diversifying the bookshelves of schools!

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