

GUIDE TO CREATING AND ORGANIZING A UKRAINIAN BOOKSHELF
ABROAD FOR VOLUNTEERS, NGOS AND ACTIVE CITIZENS WHO HELP
UKRAINIAN COMMUNITIES ALL AROUND THE WORLD

UKRAINIAN
BOOKSHELVES WORLDWIDE

GUIDE

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

With the support of Stabilization Fund for Culture and Education of the German Federal Foreign Office and Goethe-Institut, **Chytomo**, together with **Ukrainian Literary Center**, launched **Ukrainian Bookshelves Worldwide** Project, which aims to highlight and analyze initiatives that work for distributing Ukrainian books to Ukrainian refugees abroad in times of war.

Fragile and threatened in the times of war, the Ukrainian book publishing industry remains courageous, and publishing houses, independent initiative groups, and librarians organize bookshelves abroad to help children of Ukrainian refugees and their parents feel connected to their lost homes and distant homeland.

The goal of Ukrainian Bookshelves Worldwide Project is to highlight the efforts of the organizers of such initiatives, learn about their work and the challenges they face, and make their experience useful to those who are only planning to create a Ukrainian bookshelf in their city, organization, or establishment, or improve the work of an existing one, and want to help Ukrainian books become more accessible abroad.

Ukrainian bookshelves, as we see it, are books in the Ukrainian language collected on purpose, presented, and made available to the public for free.

We spoke to organizations, cultural institutions and initiatives that have already created Ukrainian bookshelves in their cities in 22 countries, and collected recommendations, advice and tips for book acquiring, engaging audiences and organizing shelves.

The Guide also contains aggregate data from Ukrainian organizations, institutions, and publishing houses that might be useful for those who intend to create a Ukrainian bookshelf in their country of residence, organization, institution, or are looking for access to Ukrainian books outside of Ukraine.

Each and every advice in this Guide are not exhaustive and are based on comments and recommendations provided during a public survey of thematic initiatives within Ukrainian Bookshelves Worldwide Project.

The list of countries where Ukrainian bookshelf initiatives, that provided recommendations for the Guide, exist: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Spain, Italy, Canada, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Finland, France, Czech Republic, Switzerland.

HOW TO CREATE A UKRAINIAN BOOKSHELF, AND MANAGE ITS WORK?

”The best advice is to get started”

If you opened this Guide, you probably intend to create or enrich your bookshelf or even an entire department in your improvised or local library, school, or cultural center. In this project we collected the best examples of volunteer initiatives that have managed not only to present Ukrainian books in different countries and at different levels, but also to influence the formation of book collections in local libraries, to unite literary clubs or active readers. Previously libraries used to buy books only in Russian, and readers have long been accustomed to the fact that you’re hardly able to find Ukrainian books in the “foreign language literature” section. Thanks to volunteers, public associations, and, of course, the high-quality products of Ukrainian publishers we see that this situation has changed.

Our team is quite sure that with your help Ukrainian books will much more often appear on the shelves of libraries, cultural centers, NGOs, schools, in foreign distributor networks, and on the shelves of bookstores and supermarkets — the list could continue.

In this Guide we collected tips for people who are going to create a Ukrainian bookshelf or book space in their community, organization, or institution, using experience of both newly arrived Ukrainians and local communities, professional librarians in exile and local public activists. We have also invited independent experts to share some tips, which you will also find on pages of this Guide. Well, where do you start and how is it better to organize your work?

First of all, you need to gauge your strengths and read this Guide to be able to plan your work step by step, assess the risks, and find the right solutions to make your shelf into a sustainable initiative.

“Know the needs of Ukrainians who are keen for reading”

1. DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

Define the target audience you plan working with. It can be either Ukrainian refugees or, broadly taken, residents of the local community and immigrants from other countries. This might influence the list of books you put on the shelf.

Find out how many Ukrainian children, families and adults live in your area, how many of them are interested in visiting the library and what kind of literature they would like to read. Almost every community has Telegram channels, Viber, and Whatsapp Chats, which are convenient for posting announcements or polls. Be active in cooperating with the Ukrainian community.

You can also place printed posters near centers for refugees, supermarkets, or cultural centers, providing your contacts.

2. FIND OUT THE NEEDS OF YOUR AUDIENCE

Order books and organize bookshelves after you have studied the needs of your audience.

Find out what literature or other materials (CDR, DVD ECT) are needed. Find out what books are borrowed and read the most, what are the needs of your visitors. If you have an opportunity to conduct a survey (directly ask about reading preferences), be sure to do so. It is best to conduct the survey in Ukrainian - you can contact Ukrainian communities or simply use machine translation.

3. FIND OFFLINE AND ONLINE COMMUNITIES OF YOUR AUDIENCE

Find out where your audience goes mostly and what webpages, chats and social media groups they visit. These might be information centers, courses for Ukrainian refugees, hotels and hostels where temporarily displaced people stay. You need to know where to find them and where to talk to them.

Perhaps one of the best places to create a Ukrainian bookshelf are local, public, and school libraries, where community members come to get books, socialize, and read.

Choose an unobtrusive style of communication, but at the same time make sure that your messages contain facts about where to find you, who to contact for more information, working hours, etc. Try to remind about your shelf every week by promoting a current book. This way the content will not be repeated, and you'll reach your readers through the product. You should also promote events, if you plan them, and an opportunity to simply meet people with similar interests.

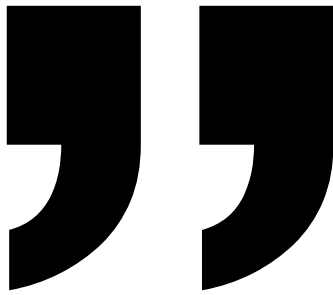
Tell about the conditions for registration or visiting your library or initiative right away, because often fear of a complicated registration procedure and language barriers are an obstacle to going to the library.

“It is essential to seek expertise for the book selection”

1. DEFINE THE QUANTITY OF BOOKS YOU NEED

Be sure to calculate how many books you can take for your collection or shelf. Try to make a list of genres and estimate how many books of each genre you can provide.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Sasha Smetanenko:

When it is difficult to apprehend the number of people in the community, you can visit a bookstore chain. Count the number of books on the shelves (not specialized stands or “islands”). Shelves are usually densely packed, back to back (if memory serves me right, there might be 30–40 books on one shelf). We don’t need such a density, so the calculated number can be reduced by a third, so there will be enough air on the shelves for an interesting presentation. You can easily look up categories in the bookstore but it’s a good idea to add a few unique categories to your own taste and imagination. Have at least one duplicate for each book (i.e., one on the shelf, one in reserve), provided you have enough space for storage. It is better to have additional books when you can’t get to the publisher quickly.

2. ASK EXPERTS FOR HELP

Enlist help of an expert to select books for your shelf. Try to find a specialist who can help you choose books if you don’t speak Ukrainian or have doubts about the choice. Find a consultant in Ukrainian literature. You can apply for help to [Chytomo](#), [Barabuka](#) (literature for children), for instance, [Ukrainian Book Institute](#), or any other experts.

3. STUDY CATALOGS

Contact publishing houses, specialized organizations and platforms. You can subscribe to catalogs newsletter from selected Ukrainian publishers, or look for selections of new books prepared by media and institutions.

Catalogs with selections of the best Ukrainian books are prepared annually by the Ukrainian Book Institute

watch

while Chytomo publishes books selections on

watch

Some online bookstores provide lists of books in Ukrainian

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For more ideas, see “Where to Find Ukrainian Book Ratings and New Releases” section. There’s information about literature tendencies, authors and existing translations from [Translit, Union of translators from Ukrainian](#) in the German language.

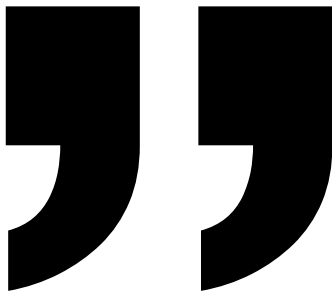
4. FIND OUT ABOUT POPULAR BOOKS

Find out what books are popular in Ukraine. Track ratings from Ukrainian specialized media, organizations, and institutions that work with books. For example, Chytomo and PEN Ukraine publish materials with relevant recommendations. Pay attention to recommendations on Goodreads. Information about the winners of Ukrainian book competitions and awards is also worthy of attention.

5. PROVIDE VARIETY

Initiatives often purchase only books for children, forgetting about adults or teenagers. Don’t forget about the needs of your audience. Try to fill the shelf with different literature, ensure that there is a range of books so that every reader can find something.

EXPERT’S ADVICE



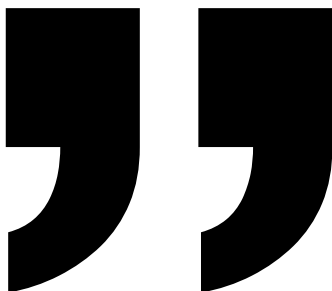
Larysa Luhova:

At the same time, since the bookshelf is a small space, don’t try to cover everything and satisfy every users’ professional or academic interests. Bestsellers, nonfiction, classics, contemporary novels. A preliminary survey will determine the list of topics you should pay attention to.

6. FILL THE SHELF WITH GOOD QUALITY BOOKS

Books should be of good quality, not outdated, and nice to hold in your hands. Make sure you have an attractive and up-to-date collection. It will also be useful to periodically update the assortment.

EXPERT’S ADVICE



Sasha Smetanenko:

It is worth noting that there’s a certain percentage of books people borrow but forget to return (usually 10-20%). It would probably be worth adding a small text or explanation to the book (as is done in bookcrossing initiatives) about a place this book is from, a little bit about the project, and a reminder that after reading you should return or exchange a book. It depends on how the shelves are organized though. Also, the presence of such information on the book can be an additional shelf promotion.

Maria Shubchyk:

What is always difficult for all librarians is to part with books. Especially those that many readers love. This means that if your initiative has been around for several years, you should make it a rule to periodically review the entire collection and sometimes “write off” certain books, no matter how difficult it is. But the shelf should be up-to-date and tidy.

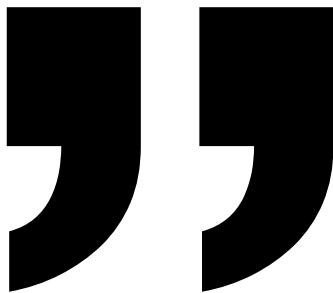
7. PAY ATTENTION TO BOOKS' LANGUAGE

Books should either be in Ukrainian only or placed next to translations (e.g., in English) and next to books about Ukraine. Be sure to check that there is no Russian literature nearby. Unfortunately, in many libraries Ukrainian volumes are still on the same shelf as propaganda books of the Russian Empire, such as “History of Malorossia” and “Reunification of Ukraine with Russia”. This combination is unacceptable in times of war, and can further traumatize readers, cause panic attacks, depression, and play into the imperial chauvinistic view of modern Russia. **It is important to separate Ukrainian and Russian books even in the space of a bookshelf.**

If you are a library, try to initiate changes in the cataloging of Ukrainian books without any mention of Russia.

For the sake of information hygiene please check if the library spreads propagandist books — [you can see examples of titles and authors at Chytomo.](#)

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Veronika Seleha:

As an option, a shelf could be “theme-based”, depending on the preferences of the organizers, the geographical location. For example, an art shelf. There is an emphasis on albums, art books and key artists of the country, but this focus allows the library to be filled with all the other literature around the focus topic. Or the music shelf, which allows you to focus on composers, musicians of the region, even printed music for a specific audience. And again, this does not interfere with the rest of assortment — fiction, nonfiction — but rather highlights it. The focus gives it uniqueness and can generate more interest in visiting than all of them together.



“Think about where to take books”

1. RESEARCH WHERE YOU CAN TAKE BOOKS

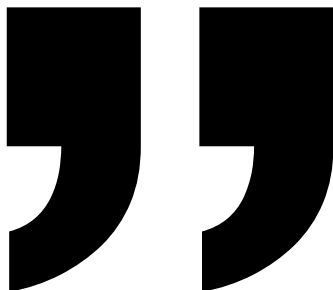
Surf the Internet. Find out what is available and what ordering options you can use. Ask for advice from similar initiatives that already have a shelf or Ukrainian institutions that specialize in books.

2. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF BOOKS FOR YOUR SHELF:

- you could start with the books that Ukrainian refugees have come with;
- cooperation with Ukrainian bookstores and specialized book shops — like [“Є”](#), [Yakaboo](#), [Knyholand](#);
- purchasing books directly from publishing houses;
- purchasing used books in Ukraine;
- some publishing houses are ready to donate books for refugees;
- you could publish books in small quantity independently;
- address to initiatives/organizations that have direct contact to Ukrainians;
- embassies, consulates;
- advertisement about collecting literature for the shelf among local community (in social media or newspapers, for example);
- you could organize bookcrossing;
- organizing events where people can exchange and leave books in a “library on wheels”.

Use several sources at the same time, if you want and can. This can significantly expand your assortment.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Iryna Baturevych:

Distributors in most European countries and North America can help you — they can focus on the needs of bookstores, libraries, institutions, or a combination of these. These companies can often significantly simplify logistics and offer a discount. However, not all distributors have Ukrainian books in their catalogs. In national and university libraries you can find out which distributor they use to order books and try to check their catalogs, or you can contact them and try to negotiate for the books you are interested in. To cooperate, you need to create a legal entity, or find a legal entity in the Ukrainian community, which can even be a non-governmental organization to start with.

Read more about how distributors' work in an article by [Chytomo](#).

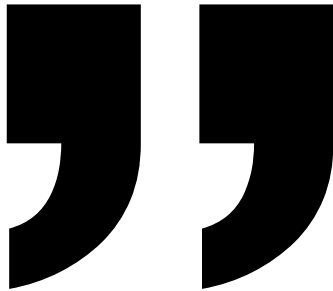
3. CONSIDER LOGISTICS

If you are buying books, logistics will be one of your biggest challenges. Shipping from Ukraine and customs clearance can be expensive, so think about how you will receive the books. Among the most developed postal services in Ukraine are: [Ukrposhta](#) and [Nova Poshta](#). The latter is now actively opening new branches in European countries. Some initiatives involve volunteers and private carriers to deliver books.

You should also be aware of the specifics of customs clearance of books, in particular, there is a limit on the value of the package — up to 10,000 EUR. Please contact customs in your destination country to make sure that all ordered goods are allowed for import and do not require additional permits or licenses. Imports of goods for personal use that exceed the duty-free limit are subject to applicable duties, taxes, and other customs charges. For example, on [Yakaboo](#), you can order books abroad for an amount not exceeding the sub-threshold, i.e., without duty (this figure varies from country to country: on average, from 100 to 250 EUR). If you need more, you can place multiple orders.

To export books published more than 50 years ago, you need to obtain an advisory opinion from the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. If the sender is shipping many items of the same title — books, souvenirs, new clothes or shoes in large quantities — it is advisable that he or she submits a consignment note indicating the number of items and their value. It is also necessary to indicate what kind of books are being sent — books for children, fiction, textbooks, technical literature, historical literature.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Iryna Baturevych:

Depending on the country where you want to create a shelf, you can choose another transporter. For example, Meest Express has proven to be a good choice for deliveries to the United States and Canada.

Be ready that logistics may take more time and money. But don't be discouraged. Look for partners. For example, the Ukrainian Book Institute could be a good one. Foundations and local centers of the Ukrainian diaspora can also help.

To correctly calculate the budget and receive your shipment quickly, ask for help from a consultant or a bookstore with experience in international shipping.

Maria Shubchuk:

When buying books from a bookseller, I would advise you to ask the retailer if they have actual experience in exporting books abroad. Nowadays, almost all bookstore chains have learned how to do this and can take care of the entire procedure for exporting books by agreement but they need to know about it in advance so that they can issue an invoice accordingly.

“First of all, you need a harvest and a place”

1. FIND A LOCATION FOR A BOOKSHELF

In order to organize a Ukrainian bookshelf, you need to find a location for it. The most common recommendation is to contact libraries of the town you live in. They have the competencies to work with books, a well-established system of accounting, cataloging and customer service.

Organizations that work with Ukrainians can also be considered as a location. Take a look at the places where Ukrainians are most frequent: information centers, educational institutions, hospitals, cultural institutions, embassies, cafes, etc.

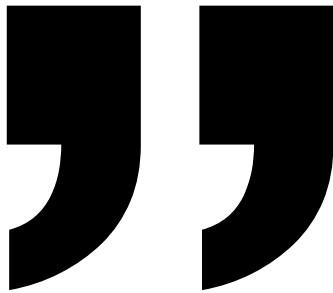
2. TAKE CARE OF THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

If you are not creating a shelf in a library, you need to take care of the necessary equipment and furniture (bookcases, shelves, tables, chairs, poufs, trash bins).

3. PROVIDE ACCESSIBILITY

Make sure the shelf is easily accessible. Consider the needs of your audience, such as parents with strollers or elderly people. Don't forget to organize space in such a way that people do not crowd and can move freely.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Sasha Smetanenko:

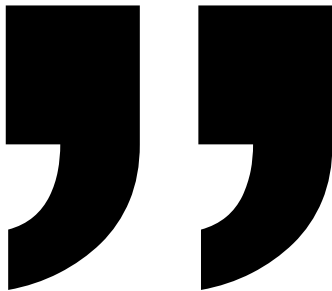
A little more about zoning — books for children can be placed on separate low shelves adapted to children's height, or on small "islands" to make it easier for a child to take a book from the shelf. But this, of course, depends on the possibilities and size of the reading space.

4. ADVICE HOW TO ORGANIZE THE SHELF

- Add a marking that these shelves contain literature in Ukrainian. Do not place books in Russian next to Ukrainian books. Even if it seems obvious, it's worth talking about once again: books in Ukrainian cannot be placed among books in Russian and labeled "books in Russian". Unfortunately, such cases are quite common in libraries, because the library has no room for a new shelf, and sees it as logical that Ukrainian readers can look for the books they need there. Please do not give Ukrainian children and their parents brochures and handouts in Russian, where the language is marked by Russian flags. If you print additional materials about the rules of visiting the library, tips for reading at home, etc., volunteers will always help you translate them into Ukrainian.

- Think about the principle of arranging books. If there are few books, they can be arranged alphabetically, by topic (e.g., for relaxation, brain training, Ukrainian history, fairy tales, animals, space), by genre and category (science fiction, fantasy, romance novels, detective stories, leisure books, professional/business literature, popular science books, art books, graphic novels/comics, classics, historical books, biographies/memoirs, encyclopedias/dictionaries, scientific publications, teenage books, picture books, game books, thrillers/mysteries/horror, contemporary novels, poetry, cookbooks, psychology/self-development, photography/zines).
- When it comes to books for children, you can divide the shelf according to age categories, e.g: 3-6 \ 6-9 \ 9-12 \ 12+.
- Get creative and define "The Most Read Books of the Week/Month", "Curator's Choice", "My Friend Recommends", "For Your TikTok Video", "Bestseller #1". Such interactivity attracts additional attention and can stimulate reading.
- You can periodically organize small thematic book exhibitions somewhere nearby, drawing attention to the shelf.
- You can also put small bookmark flyers in the books with recommendations on why you recommend this particular book or questions to think about after reading it.
- Lighter books go up, heavier books go down.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Larysa Luhova:

It will be difficult for a layperson to catalog books. If the bookshelf is small, you can label the books in another way, for example, by color-coding. That is when you put color marks on the back of the books: green for nature books, red for novels, blue for history, and so on.

If the bookshelf is located in the library, try to convince the library management that it shouldn't be a temporary initiative but a part of the library's collection. In that case the cataloging and processing will be done professionally.

Sasha Smetanenko:

There is one interesting thing that works for stores but may also be suitable for a good-looking shelf — frontal presentation of books — when the cover is beautiful (especially when it comes to books for children), put it "facing" the reader, not with the spine. If necessary (and possible), you should also take care of good lighting.

Maria Shubchyk:

If the shelf is created in partnership with other institutions, discuss how books should be presented, perhaps through the shelf's identity and the logos of sponsors and partners.

5. KEEP ACCOUNT OF BOOKS

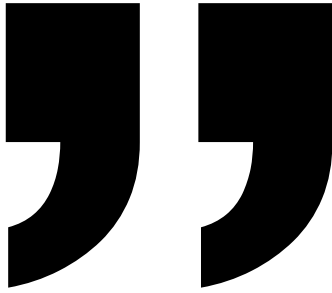
Over time you will have more and more books, so at the very beginning you need to think about keeping account of them. We advise you to do it in electronic form, the easiest way is in a Google

spreadsheet, where you can indicate the section, category, bibliographic description, annotation and person who helped you to purchase the book. You can also indicate to whom and when the book was given, and don't forget to take the reader's contact information to remind them to return it.

Consider whether the books can be read immediately in the reading space, whether they can be taken home (if so, for how long), and how you will remind the reader to return the book.

If you'd like to further develop the space, take care of labeling the books, for example, make marks indicating your initiative on a certain page. As an interesting format, think about the ex-libris which you can use to label all the editions in your collection.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Julia Kozlovets:

The technique of access to books and their registration depends on the location: if it is a library and the books are registered, then all that remains is to find a consultant for these books (or teach librarians). If it's a cafe, refugee center, etc., you need to think about how the books will be issued, returned, and exchanged. Will a separate employee be involved to control the process? What happens when there's no one near a shelf?

Larysa Luhova:

You need to think about how to keep account of books that are issued and returned. Will there be library cards? Automated issuance maybe? Who will be responsible for maintaining the book collection and reminding people to return them? Library is the best option indeed, because initiatives in other places can quickly fade away. Let's imagine a situation where the books are taken out and not returned, or the initiator no longer has the time and ability to be present and maintain the shelf.

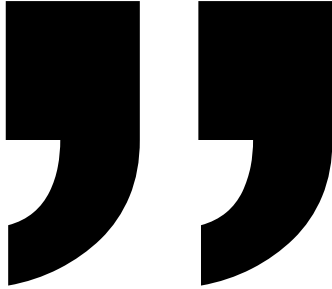
Maria Shubchuk:

Currently, there are quite a few applications that will allow you to systematize your private library and record the dates of issue and return of books and media, e.g. [citavi](#). For a small shelf, such an app may be suitable and will optimize the book borrowing process if it is not in a library with an already established work order. If your shelf does not exist within the library, it is also important to prepare the rules for using books in advance and be sure to ask new readers to check them out: Can readers take books home? How long is the book checked out for? Does the reader have to reimburse the cost of the book if it is lost or damaged? This will simplify your work and avoid many misunderstandings.

6. ENSURE WARM AND NICE COMMUNICATION

Consider the context and be friendly. Create a good atmosphere in communication and space. Remember that not only Ukrainians but also citizens of the countries that host them may be interested in Ukrainian books, so it is important to be able to present them, to tell what Ukrainian literature can be read in a language that your users will understand (see Chytomo's guides to books published in French, English, German, and Spanish. We are planning to add other languages).

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Sasha Smetanenko:

The team should discuss how they create a warm atmosphere, what words to use and how to behave. I would advise teams that choose to work with Ukrainian refugees to consult a psychologist on how to deal with sensitive topics and how to address them correctly (especially children). Such advice and materials are available. The same applies to the selection of literature, you should be careful to avoid retraumatizing topics. There may be a separate shelf with therapeutic books.

Veronica Seleha:

Information about your book space should be spread in the neighborhood. For example, in coffee shops and bars. Usually, these locations are friendly to such neighborhood policies and are happy to help. Especially if the information with basic data has an attractive layout and is unobtrusive in a business card format or simply printed on A5.

In promoting the location, it is worth emphasizing the importance of the place as a public space. For example, if it's a library, it's obviously possible to work with a good internet connection in silence, and this is a reason for many people to come and check if the conditions are convenient. This is just an excuse — the shelf and book assortment will be noticed + the manager at the location will pay attention to it. Not only does the library space have its advantages, but every location where the bookshelf is placed has. What are they? Think about it with your team.

“It is possible to create everything from scratch if you have a big desire and people who support your idea”

1. GATHER A TEAM

Find people with the same interest who will be willing to work with you and deal with communication, promotion of the location, searching for or purchasing books, cataloging them, organizing thematic events, working with visitors (issuing and returning books), etc.

2. FIND UKRAINIAN SPEAKING PEOPLE FOR YOUR TEAM

Make sure you have Ukrainian-speaking staff. These can be volunteers knowing the language.

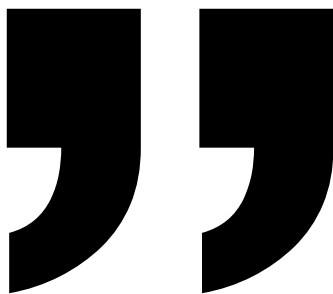
3. LOOK FOR LIBRARY EXPERTISE

Try to engage or contact a professional librarian or bookstore employee. At least to consult you.

4. DON'T DENY VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are a very helpful and valuable staff for such initiatives. On the other hand if you work only on a volunteer basis, you may face problems with project sustainability, work hours, fatigue and burnout. Therefore, think about motivating volunteers right away and look for opportunities for ongoing involvement.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Maria Shubchyk:

There's a wide-spread notion of [reading volunteers](#) in many European libraries, which means that people come to the library to read aloud to children and adults. Involve active readers — a few comfortable poufs, an interesting book, even a few visitors — why not read together? After the reading, you can offer children to make something or discuss the characters in the book.

5. PAY ATTENTION TO TEAM BUILDING

Hold meetings, learn about the needs of team members and volunteers. It will also be useful to develop team members and invest in educational initiatives for them. Discuss difficulties that have arisen and offer solutions to problems.

2.6

PARTNERSHIP

1. LOOK FOR PARTNERS

Whether it's finding a location or equipment, raising funds or people to join a team, attracting an audience, organizing events, purchasing books, or simply seeking advice and guidance, the help of partners can be extremely valuable in many ways.

Potential partners can be:

- specialized national institutions of Ukraine and your country
- embassies and diplomatic missions of Ukraine in your country
- culture institutions and organizations
- educational institutions and initiatives (universities, clubs, courses, saturday schools)
- publishing houses
- bookstores and specialized online and offline shops and platforms
- donors and foundations that help Ukrainian initiatives
- local organizations, establishments, institutions
- Ukrainian or local business.

Iryna Baturevych:

Not only organizations that you expect to purchase or deliver books for your shelves can be your partners. Local librarians are also strategically important. Don't forget that libraries around the world are open and accessible to all spaces, and they can become important hearts of community. In addition, you can count on the professional advice of experienced librarians, and perhaps your acquaintance will help them add Ukrainian books or books about Ukraine to their collections.



“People, not money, played the most important role in our initiative. We have spent 100 euros on everything so far. There were always people eager to help”

1. SEEK FUNDING

At the very beginning a bookshelf may not require funding if you get books for free and it is run entirely by volunteers. However, if you need to hire qualified staff, to purchase equipment, books or deliver them, you may need money. There are many agencies that support Ukrainian initiatives through donations, scholarships, grants or simply advice.

Potential sources of funds mentioned by project respondents are:

- specialized Ukrainian support programs
- grant possibilities
- charity organizations
- motivated businesses and organizations
- public fundraising, donations, Patreon
- private donations

What can you use the funds for?

- purchase or printing of books
- delivery of books and their customs clearance
- renting a location, a place
- cleaning, utilities, Internet
- equipment, computer, printer, furniture (for the location and the team)
- food at the location (cups, napkins, water, tea, coffee, sugar, cookies, etc.)
- payment for the team's work
- payment for the work of the involved experts (translation, webpage layout, design of promotional materials, accounting, library and book expertise)
- organization of book events and activities (e.g., travel, accommodation, and guest author fees)
- printing of materials (posters, banners, flyers, stickers)
- stationery and things for workshops
- production of location merchandise (branded souvenirs)

“Promote your Bookshelves”

1. SEARCH FOR EXPERTISE

If there's no professional media specialist in your team, take courses on communication strategies, the specifics of working with audiences on social media, targeting, etc.

2. LOOK HOW OTHER BOOK SPACES WORK

We are sure that local libraries have a lot of experience in communicating with readers through their social media. There's a very simple tip to inspire you: take a look at the content they produce, and you may find it relevant as well.

3. PROMOTE YOUR LOCATION AND INITIATIVE

Tell your target audience about yourself and what you have to offer. Clearly state your working hours, address, services, and additional opportunities.

4. USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media works well when you have limited resources. Create a page or a group for your space on social media to keep readers informed about your news.

5. COMMUNICATE REGULARLY

Create a communications plan. Make regular posts on the platforms where your target audience is most frequent (this can be a Facebook group or a bulletin board in the information center). For example, you can talk about novelties and get people interested in books. Enlist the help of Ukrainian communities or volunteers to translate or even conduct such communication.

6. COMMUNICATE ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS

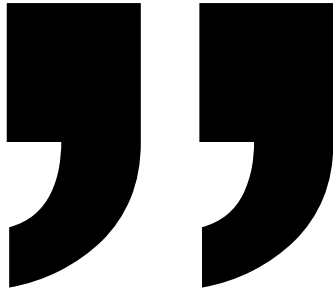
Reaching and engaging your target audience is an extremely important task. Study where your target audience takes information in most cases.

Possible channels of communication:

- social networks (pages of organizations and groups in messengers, for example, groups in different regions are popular)
- webpages and other platforms your audience visits
- local media, newspapers and magazines (free newspapers and magazines are distributed in many communities, for example, at churches or schools, and you could make friends with them)
- radio and television

- bulletin boards in places of TA frequent visits
- handouts, flyers, brochures / It is worth making brochures and distributing them to governments, administrative buildings, assistance centers, volunteer centers, libraries and other places where there are many Ukrainians.
- public space
- language learning courses, schools, kindergarten etc.

EXPERT'S ADVICE



Sasha Smetanenko:

It is also worth communicating why you are doing this. Tell interesting stories about yourself, visitors, publishers, volunteers.

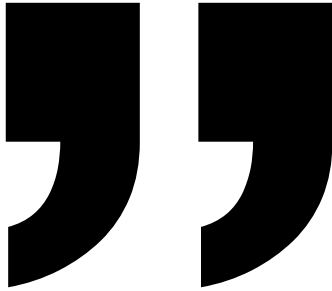


“Present the books as something multi-faceted, something that could inspire and enrich our lives”

1. ORGANIZE DIFFERENT EVENTS CONNECTED WITH BOOKS

Organize initiatives that are comfortable and interesting for your audience. This will help to build a community around the shelf and work to strengthen the sustainability of the initiative and interest in it.

EXPERT'S ADVICE

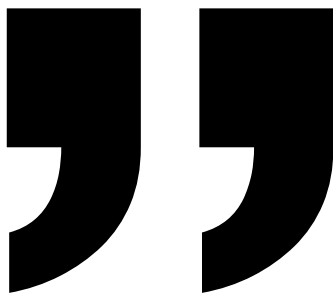


Sasha Smetanenko:

A large number of events can be “user generated”, especially at first, when the strategy is just being built and something needs to be done. It’s the same with a survey of needs. You can make a questionnaire to collect requests during events (this was how Urban Space 500 worked, for example). Of course, this should be coordinated with the owner of the premises, but the venue is a great resource. As for building communities, there is, for example, [this tool](#), but perhaps not for the initial stage. So, probably, creating a Google doc and accepting requests will be the easiest first step.

Examples of activities and initiatives provided by respondents:

- activities of a literary/book/reading club
- public readings and presentations
- inviting interesting authors
- organizing events for different age groups (drawing and reading books with children, etc.)
- educational initiatives, lectures, language courses
- games or workshops around the plot or ideas of the book
- events about common interests / for specific fan communities
- events about favorite books or sharing favorite things
- “baking the same cake as the one mentioned in the book”
- organizing discussions
- holding events in the park, in a public space
- book picnics
- bookcrossing, etc.

EXPERT'S ADVICE

Maria Shubchyk:

You can always make reading interactive and thus even more interesting. Many media projects have released free versions in the Ukrainian language for Ukrainian children, and you can use them at your event. For example, [the picture book e-book service Onilo](#) already has several projects in Ukrainian.

Kamishibai Theater has an interesting format. Here are some links to Ukrainian audio tracks for reading:

**2. THINK THE BUDGET OVER**

No matter what brilliant ideas you have to surprise your visitors, first think about the budget of the event and foresee all possible costs. If the amount turns out to be unaffordable, offer people to attend the event for donation.

2.10**PROJECT'S SUSTAINABILITY**

The war will be over, and many people will return home to rebuild their lives, help beloved ones, and create book spaces in Ukraine. What happens to the Ukrainian bookshelf if your users return home/your resource is not available anymore/if the people with same interests with whom you started the project are no longer able to help you for various reasons?

Let's assume you don't have the resources to maintain a bookshelf that is already filled with books. However, in every country there are active Ukrainian communities, if not in the city where you organized it, then in the neighboring one. Do not forget that the books purchased with the money of sponsors and benefactors should continue to fulfill the function for which the benefactors supported their purchase. Remember that if you haven't invested your own money into the shelf, the books are not your property. Try to negotiate with active community members about the transfer of the library, involve the community in its work, and introduce them to the business — transfer not only the books but also your experience.

Our team sincerely advises you to try to ensure the sustainability of such a project, because Ukrainian diasporas will not disappear from all European countries, nor will they dissolve into the language and literature of other cultures. The presence of Ukrainian books abroad is an opportunity for many children and adults to read in their native language, to meet, create book clubs, and invite Ukrainian writers.

Iryna Baturevych:

It is likely that after reading this Guide you will become passionate about Ukrainian literature and want to do a little more to ensure that Ukrainian literature is represented in the world. And you may well go beyond your bookshelf:

1. Go to your local library and ask them if they have any Ukrainian books. Libraries usually work to meet reader needs — most often, the library fulfills the request of readers. Try to provide Ukrainian books to your local library in this way.
2. Contact distributors to find them and, according to the company's profile, offer to include Ukrainian books in their offer. If you want, you can also offer books translated from Ukrainian into your native language to these companies.

These small steps will help Ukrainian publishers and authors who are facing unprecedented difficulties, as well as ordinary Ukrainians who have been cut off from their homes with no fault of their own. But such books will also contribute to a better understanding of Ukraine among local residents.



THERE'S SOME USEFUL INFORMATION FROM UKRAINIAN ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLISHER

Information from Ukrainian Book Institute (UBI)

General advice: Contact your local library. Contact your local library. They are usually responsive to the needs of their readers. If they are ready to buy, you can use the UBI's recommendations on the book assortment:book assortment:

watch

watch

Eng and Ua on the same page

Where to look for Ukrainian books abroad? A series of visualized landmarks, each dedicated to a different country:

watch

in Ukrainian — but with links on pages of different languages

The Ukrainian Digital Library application from the Ukrainian Book Institute offers contemporary and classic literary works by Ukrainian and foreign authors:

watch

e-books in Ukrainian for your users

Information from Goethe-Institut in Ukraine

Goethe-Institut in cooperation with the German Library Association and the Ukrainian Book Institute, with the support of the German Foreign Office, launched the project "A Suitcase With Books From Ukraine".

The project is aimed at enabling Ukrainian families who were forced to leave their homes to find their favorite books by Ukrainian and foreign authors in Ukrainian translation in German and Goethe-Institut libraries. Along with the books, parents, librarians and teachers will be able to use the tasks developed for the "Living Writers" program, as well as didactic materials created specifically for the "A Suitcase With Books" project.

Project webpage (UA/DE):

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On the project page you can find a list of books in Ukrainian and German languages, information about authors and didactics for most of the books that will make preparation for reading easier.

Example of didactics and handouts in Ukrainian:

[watch](#)

Example of didactics and handouts in German:

[watch](#)

General recommendations for conducting events using didactic materials:

UA:

DE:

[watch](#)

[watch](#)

List of 600 libraries and institutions that received "Suitcases with books":

[watch](#)



Information from publishing houses and other organizations

1. **40 mockups of books for children** in Ukrainian from publishing houses "Veselka", "Krokus", "Apriori", "Bohdan Books", "K.I.S.", "Mushlya", "Black sheep/Books XXI", "Ranok", "Vivat", "Talant/Unisoft", "IRIO" та "Nasha Idea":

watch

2. Ukrainian publishing houses make it possible to download **books for Ukrainian children**.
For example:

watch

3. Books for free download:

watch

4. Collection of **books for children** in PDF, gathered by Osvitoria:

watch

5. You can order books for children who were forced to leave Ukraine because of the war in Poland:

watch

6. "Abuk" has made a selection of free audiobooks for children available:

watch

7. Ukrainian books cross the borders, or how international distributions works

watch

The above list is not exhaustive and is based on the mentions of project respondents.

3

WHERE TO FIND UKRAINIAN BOOK RATINGS AND NEW RELEASES

RATINGS

UBI

Catalog of Ukrainian books for children 2022

[read](#)

Catalog of Ukrainian adult literature 2022

[read](#)

List of the most popular books in Ukrainian libraries 2022

[read](#)

New books from Ukraine 2021

[read](#)

Chytomo

Despite the war: novelties of Ukrainian fiction 2022

[read](#)

What to bring from Ukraine: 10 books that will be a wonderful gift

[read](#)

Translate this: non-fiction that will help you understand Ukraine

[read](#)

Ukrainian books about the war for urgent translation

[read](#)

The Guide was created as part of the Ukrainian Bookshelves Worldwide project, implemented by Chytomo (chytomo.com) in cooperation with the Ukrainian Literary Center (lincentr.in.ua) with the support of the Stabilization Fund for Culture and Education of the German Federal Foreign Office and the Goethe-Institut.

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⚠Disclaimer: The advice in this document is not exhaustive and is based on comments and recommendations provided during a public survey of thematic initiatives within the Ukrainian Bookshelves Worldwide project.

The list of countries where Ukrainian bookshelf initiatives, that provided recommendations for the Adviser, function: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Spain, Italy, Canada, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Finland, France, Czech Republic, Switzerland.

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