

Barefoot Books marks 30th birthday

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Award-winning children's publisher, set up by two young mothers in Bath, celebrates 30 years and 30 million+ books



After publishing over 1,000 titles and distributing more than 30 million books to children across the globe, award-winning independent children's book publisher Barefoot Books celebrates its 30th anniversary this September 'with a commitment to continuing its mission to create visually captivating books that celebrate diversity, spark curiosity and capture children's imaginations.'

The publisher has signed UK publishing PR and marketing agency LitPR 'to bolster its presence in the UK market, cementing its commitment to its original home territory.'

According to a statement issued on behalf of the publisher: 'Barefoot Books started as a small, homebased business in England in 1992 when two young mothers, Nancy Traversy and Tessa Strickland, with four children between them, couldn't find the quality, globally- focused books they wanted for their kids. They worked with storytellers and illustrators from all over the world to launch their first list of 10 titles by 1993.

'As the company grew, its UK publishing team moved from Bath to Oxford, opening one of their flagship 'Barefoot Studios' in Summertown. The colourful retail space quickly became an award-winning and beloved gathering place for families to enjoy global festivals, storytelling and craft events, birthday parties and more.

'Building on its earliest, distinct commitment to creating visually captivating books that celebrate global awareness and diversity, compassion and inclusion, Barefoot Books today remains a rarity in the industry: a fiercely independent publisher offering a deep and diverse collection, published in multiple languages and distributed globally.

'Until recently, the company's emphasis on multicultural, diverse books put them on the fringes of mainstream publishing, prompting them to adopt an innovative business model that focused on independent booksellers, speciality retailers, key educational and literacy partners, and local community outreach.

'In 2012 and 2020, Barefoot was awarded the Independent Publishers Guild's Alison Morrison Diversity Award. They worked with BookTrust to create their bestselling board book *Baby Talk* and bring copies to every baby in England and Wales. And in 2020 the company partnered with BookTrust again to distribute

600,000 copies of *Baby Play*.

'Beyond the UK, Forbes named Barefoot as one of the 25 Best Small Companies in America in 2017 and they were also listed among Publishers Weekly's Fast-Growing Independent Publishers of 2022 and 2023.

'Today Barefoot continues to support literacy initiatives across the globe, having partnered with nonprofits like Books for Africa to send 300K books to HIV / AIDS orphans in Mozambique and Books4School to support literacy-impooverished areas in the US, shipping one million books in 20 languages. Barefoot is now working with major literacy organisations such as Reach Out and Read and the Diverse Books for All Coalition in the US, and developing strong partnership opportunities here in the UK.

'These partnerships raise the need for more books in different languages that reflect the diversity of our world. Next spring, Barefoot plans to release a selection of dual language editions of their books translated into multiple languages.'

Barefoot Books CEO and Co-Founder, Nancy Traversy (*pictured*), said: "Throughout our 30-year journey, I'm proud to say we have never wavered from our commitment to publish diverse and inclusive books that promote sustainability, social-emotional learning, mindfulness and global awareness. The UK is ready now more than ever for these types of children's books, and I'm thrilled we are able to celebrate our 30th anniversary here."

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