

News

The Free Listening Day: volunteers listening to people's problems



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Volunteers for The Free Listening Day. Image: Urban Confessional .



Volunteer offering people the chance to be heard. Image: Urban Confessional .



Logo from Urban Confessional. Image: Urban Confessional .

Urban Confessional organises an event to be hosted in cities around the US and abroad. At the moment they already have 2000 US-based volunteers.

Have you ever been in need to be heard? This is exactly the aim of **The Free Listening Day**, a project that dispatches volunteers into cities to simply listen to passers-by who want to talk to somebody. [Urban Confessional](#) is the organiser of this day, to be held the **11th of April**, and recently it has announced the 3rd annual Free Listening Day to be hosted in cities around the US and abroad. Some of the cities where this event is going to take place are:

- Abuja (Nigeria)
- Atlanta (Georgia)
- Barcelona (Spain)
- Chicago (Illinois)
- Lahore (Pakistan)
- Lima (Peru)
- London (England)
- Los Angeles (California)
- Mexico City (Mexico)
- New York City (New York)
- Portland (Oregon)
- Seul (South Korea)

Founded in 2012, this movement has inspired **the world to listen, to stay present and love each other**. "We started at metro stations and we will go out three or four times a week and just listen to people", says [Benjamin Mathes](#), the CEO of the project, in the promotional video. Everything just started after a divorce. He was devastated and all of a sudden he had a short chat with a homeless person sleeping in the street who couldn't offer him anything but his time.

This experience made him think about the world where we live, a place where social networks give us the fake idea of us being connected, but at the same time the same tools are making us less sympathetic with those that need to be heard. This is the starting point of Urban Confessional – Free Listening, an initiative that first began in the US, where now they have **more than 2000 volunteers**, but that has been expanded to other countries such as England, Peru, Japan, Korea or even Spain.

This movement is supported by hundreds of volunteers that offer **imbalanced conversation**. To do so, they hold signs and allow people to talk, sing, dance, yell, cry, and share with them whatever they want to share. "We are not here to change anyone's mind. Avoid disagreeing with the speaker. If someone is saying things that you do not agree with or you find distasteful, search yourself for a greater understanding, smile, and be there for them", they state in their [Keys to Listening Guide](#).

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