

## **AN INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE YEF TOOLKIT EVIDENCE REVIEW**

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### **August 2020**

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is creating a Toolkit which summarises research on approaches to preventing youth violence and offending. This Invitation To Tender (ITT) aims to appoint an evidence review team to support the design of the Toolkit and conduct an evidence review to inform its content.

### **Background**

The Youth Endowment Fund is a ten-year investment of £200m with the mission of preventing children and young people from getting caught up in crime and violence. The YEF does this by:

- Supporting and evaluating promising interventions;
- Building the evidence base of what works by evaluating interventions and synthesizing existing research;
- Developing a 'place-based' approach to working with local community partnerships in selected areas of high need; and
- Building partnerships with other funders in order to share evidence and best practice, directing more resources to tackling serious violence, and building a legacy beyond the ten-year life of the fund.

### **The Toolkit**

The Toolkit is a core part of the YEF's strategy. It will be an online and freely available resource which provides an overview of existing knowledge and research on approaches to reducing youth crime and violence. The Toolkit will be:

- **Accurate.** It will provide a rigorous synthesis of the best available research.
- **Accessible.** It will present findings in plain English and without jargon.

- **Applicable.** It will address salient and practical topics in reducing youth crime and violence.
- **Actionable.** It will provide practical information to support professional decision making.

The Toolkit cannot provide definitive claims about what will work in every context. Instead it aims to provide an indication of the ‘best bets’ for reducing youth crime and violence based on the existing evidence. Successfully applying this information to the real-world problem of reducing youth crime and violence will require careful professional judgement, consideration of local context, and evaluation of the impact of any action.

Our working model for the Toolkit is informed by existing evidence tools developed by other What Works Centres. We will test this model with our users, but the starting point is that:

- The Toolkit will be organized around different approaches to reducing youth crime and violence. For example, the Toolkit could cover approaches like police in schools, mentoring, sports participation, or social skills interventions.
- The Toolkit will have a front page which presents a list of approaches and summary information. The front page will provide a quick, visual summary of the impact of approaches, and the security of the relevant evidence. For example, see the [front page](#) of the EEF’s Teaching and Learning Toolkit.
- Users will be able to click on an approach to arrive at a second layer of the Toolkit which provides much more detail. This second layer is likely to include more information about impact, strength of the evidence, implementation, context, practice guidance, relevant programmes, and cost. For example, see this [summary](#) of one to one tuition in the EEF Toolkit.
- There will be a third layer to the Toolkit for technical audiences, which provides a clear audit trail describing the underlying research for each approach. For example, see this technical appendix for [one-to-one tuition](#) in the EEF Toolkit.

## **Why do we need an evidence review team?**

The evidence review team will contribute to the development of the Toolkit in four ways.

### **1. Creating replicable processes for research analysis, interpretation and summary**

The evidence review team will design a high-quality review process to ensure that the Toolkit is based on the best available evidence. This review will build on existing work. The Youth Endowment Fund has already funded the Campbell Collaboration to create an Evidence and Gaps Map (EGM).<sup>1</sup> This EGM will create a database of c.1000 studies that have been coded according to intervention type, outcome, study design, location and setting, and population. The EGM contains systematic reviews, impact evaluations, and implementation and process evaluations. The EGM sets the scope and provides the studies for the Toolkit evidence review – for the first version of the Toolkit we hope to avoid conducting additional searching. More information about the Evidence and Gaps Map, including a draft of the map and the protocol, will be made available on request. The final EGM will be shared with the successful team on appointment.

Throughout the project, the successful review team will be able to liaise with the Campbell Collaboration team who created the Evidence and Gaps Map.

The evidence review team will develop the processes and materials required to analyse research included in the EGM and produce research syntheses that will inform the writing of accessible Toolkit content by the YEF team. This will include both quantitative information about impact, evidence strength, and cost, which could be used in the front page of the Toolkit, and qualitative information about implementation, mechanisms and context to inform the writing of the more detailed second layer.

This work will involve:

- Creating an analysis plan, covering:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://campbellcollaboration.org/evidence-gap-maps.html>

- The approach to quantitative synthesis. This will include:
  - The approach to creating quantitative impact estimates to inform a headline statement about the impact of an approach.
  - Any other quantitative analysis to inform the writing of Toolkit summaries. This could include analysis of how impact varies according to population or setting.
- The approach to qualitative synthesis.
  - How will the review team synthesize qualitative information about implementation, mechanisms and context to inform the writing of the more detailed second layer?
- Design issues including:
  - Is it feasible to synthesize evidence from primary research given time constraints and the ambition to launch with content for 10–15 approaches? Or should the first version of the Toolkit only review existing reviews?
- Creating a manual and materials to guide future updates of the Toolkit. This will include:
  - A data structure which can be easily updated and added to.
  - Details of how the code will be recorded and stored
  - Templates for technical appendices

The Toolkit will be a live resource that is updated and expanded over the ten-year lifespan of the fund. The review processes and underlying data structure must be transparent and easy to use and replicate in future updates, including by other research teams who may support the work in the future.

## **2. Lead the initial analysis, interpretation and summary of research for the first version of the Toolkit.**

The review team will lead the review work required to create the first version of the Toolkit. The aim is to create a Toolkit which covers 10–15 different approaches to reducing youth crime and violence by April 2021. The final list of approaches will be agreed between the YEF team and the evidence review team based on: YEF priorities, YEF stakeholder priorities, the strength of evidence for different approaches, and the evidence review team’s judgement about what is feasible for the first version of the Toolkit.

The evidence review team will produce a technical research summary for each approach in the Toolkit. These summaries will inform the writing of accessible content for the Toolkit and will be available to download from the published Toolkit as technical appendices.

## **3. Support the design of the Toolkit**

The evidence review team will take part in ongoing discussions about the design of the Toolkit. The evidence review team will be expected to contribute to decisions including:

- How can we summarise findings on the impact of different approaches? Is there an equivalent to the EEF’s additional months’ progress? The evidence review team will be expected to:
  - Contribute knowledge of the outcomes that are measured in the available research
  - Make clear recommendations regarding the feasibility of different approaches (eg, on how impact is reported in the front page of the Toolkit), given the available research
  - Work closely with the YEF team to develop an approach to communicating impact.
  - Work with the YEF to revise the approach in response to user feedback.

- How do we communicate the security of evidence for each approach? Do we create an equivalent to the EEF's padlock rating? Our approach here is likely to involve the adaptation of existing tools like the EEF's [padlock rating](#) or [GRADE](#). The evidence review team will be expected to lead on the development and application of this tool. They will:
  - Develop a proposal for a tool which describes the security of evidence for a particular approach.
  - Lead on the calibration of any tool so that it captures the range in quality of evidence
  - Work with the YEF to ensure that output from the tool can be clearly communicated
  - Work with the YEF team to respond to user feedback and make improvements to the tool
  - Once a rating tool is developed, make decisions about how ratings are allocated in the April 2020 version of the Toolkit.
- The evidence review team will be expected to contribute to other design decisions as they arise.

#### **4. Reviewing draft Toolkit content**

The evidence review team will also support the YEF team to write content for the Toolkit. The evidence review team will:

- Provide advice and support for the interpretation of their technical research summaries.
- Act as a reviewer of Toolkit content and 'critical friend'. The YEF team will seek to maximise the accessibility and usefulness of the Toolkit and the evidence review team will ensure that this does not come at the cost of accuracy.

## Summary of final outputs

The YEF anticipates that the final outputs will include:

1. An analysis plan for the review work required to create the April 2021 version of the Toolkit
2. A clearly written manual describing the processes and templates required to produce, update and expand the Toolkit evidence review in the future.
3. A complete evidence review of 10-15 approaches to inform the creation of the first version of the Toolkit.
4. Data and code used to create the analysis.
5. Technical appendices for publication online

## Evidence review approach and timeframe

The YEF is committed to creating a Toolkit by end of April 2021. We recognise this timeline is ambitious and welcome proposals which outline how this can be achieved. The YEF will finalise the specification and timeline with the successful team. A proposed overview and timeline for the evidence review is provided below, and we encourage teams to provide additional detail to this in their submissions.

<p><b>October 2020</b></p>	<p>The successful review team will be expected to attend a series of initial set up meetings with the YEF. In these meetings we will agree the review approach, budget and timelines. Following these meetings, the successful team will be expected to produce an analysis plan.</p> <p>The YEF, evidence review team and web design partners begin discussions regarding the design of the Toolkit.</p>
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	<p>The review team develops an analysis plan and review materials, including technical appendix template and evidence security rating tool.</p> <p>The review team and the YEF will agree the scope for the analysis, including the 10-15 approaches that will be the initial focus, and which outcomes will form the basis of summary impact statements.</p>
<b>November and December 2020</b>	<p>The evidence review team should produce technical summaries sequentially so that the YEF team can quickly begin developing Toolkit content and testing design options.</p> <p>As the YEF team begin to create Toolkit content, the YEF team will send drafts for the evidence review team to review.</p>
<b>January 2021</b>	<p>The evidence review team continue to review Toolkit summary content produced by the YEF.</p>
<b>February 2021</b>	<p>All analysis should be complete.</p> <p>The evidence review team continue to review Toolkit summary content produced by the YEF.</p>
<b>March 2021</b>	<p>The evidence review team supports the YEF team to finalise Toolkit content.</p> <p>The evidence review team prepares technical appendices for publication.</p>
<b>April 2021</b>	<p>The Toolkit is prepared for launch. The Evidence Review Team finalise the Toolkit manual.</p>

We expect the Toolkit to be a live resource, which will be updated regularly with new evidence, additional approaches, and based on the feedback of users.



Beyond April 2021 we will commission a research team to provide ongoing support for Toolkit development and updates.

## **How to apply**

### **Team specification**

Essential requirements:

- Subject expertise. The team must demonstrate an expert understanding of the prevention of youth violence and crime, and related research. Broad knowledge of this subject is preferable to deep expertise in one aspect.
- Methodological expertise and experience in systematic review and meta-analysis.
- A track record of producing research with an impact on policy or practice.
- A good understanding of the aims of the Toolkit and the need to balance the competing demands of rigour, accessibility, usefulness, and timeliness.
- A problem-solving approach. A willingness to work flexibly and iteratively.
- Willingness to work in collaboration with the YEF team to co-construct the toolkit.

Desirable requirements:

- Direct experience of policy making, commissioning, programme development, or practice.
- Experience of creating or supporting the creation of accessible evidence summaries for non-academic audiences.

## **Application process**

If you are considering applying, please get in touch with Peter Henderson ([peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)). We will share the draft

evidence and gaps map and protocol with interested teams to support the writing of bids.

Please prepare a proposal of no more than 4000 words, including tables and appendices but excluding budget and references. In the proposal, please include the following:

- The relevant experience of the team and credentials for undertaking the work, including:
  - Knowledge of reducing youth crime and violence and related research;
  - Knowledge and experience of systematic reviews and meta-analysis;
  - Track record of producing research with an impact on policy or practice.
- Your proposed approach to conducting the work, including:
  - An overview of the proposed review methodology;
  - An overview of a proposed approach to creating an evidence security rating;
  - An overview of a proposed approach to analysing diverse outcomes in the literature, and communicating impact in a clear and consistent way;
  - Risks and mitigations
- A detailed budget. Please contact [peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) for a budget template.
- A detailed timeline. Please refer to the draft timeline above, and provide suggested amendments and additional detail.

The deadline for applications is **9am 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020**. Please send your proposal to [peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) . All proposals will be reviewed by the YEF, using the criteria provided in Annex 1. A shortlist of teams



with promising applications will be invited to interview in the week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020. We will be aiming to appoint a team in w/c 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 or soon after.

The YEF is happy to consider bids from consortiums, if consideration is given to communication and how the teams will work well together. The YEF would expect to contract with one lead member of the consortium.

Please submit any questions you have by 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020. Questions will be responded to in writing and answers will be made available to all who have expressed interest. Please submit questions to Peter Henderson ([peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:peter.henderson@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)).

## Timeline

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Deadline for questions	Wednesday 2/9/2020
Proposals deadline	Monday 28/9/2020 9am
Interviews	Week commencing 5/10/2020
Appointment	Week commencing 5/10/2020

## **Annex 1: Application scoring criteria**

### **Proposal scoring criteria**

#### **1. Relevant experience and track record of core project team and understanding of topic area (40%)**

- a. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates expertise in reducing youth crime and violence and relevant research.
- b. The extent to which the proposed team demonstrates a track record of delivering systematic reviews and meta-analysis.
- c. The extent to which the proposed team has produced similar resources or reviews with an impact on policy or practice.

#### **2. Methodology and approach (40%)**

- a. The extent to which the proposed methodology and approach demonstrates an understanding of the review aims and objectives.
- b. The suitability of the proposed approach to analysing, interpreting, and summarising the research available in the EGM.
- c. The extent to which the team demonstrates a flexible, iterative and problem-solving approach.

#### **3. Value for Money (20%)**

- a. The cost of the proposal and whether this demonstrates value for money

<b>Scoring criteria</b>	
0	Totally fails to meet the requirement - information not available
1	Meets some of the requirements with limited supporting information
2	Meets some of the requirements with reasonable explanation
3	Fully meets the requirements with detailed explanation and evidence
4	Exceeds the requirements with extensive explanation and evidence

