



Application guidance

Agency Collaboration Fund: Another chance
Creating partnerships to prevent violence

January 2022

About The Youth Endowment Fund

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is a charity with a mission that matters. We exist to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

Children deserve services that give them the best chance of a positive future. To make sure that happens, we'll fund promising projects and then use the very best evaluation to find out what works. Just as we benefit from robust trials in medicine, young people deserve support grounded in the evidence. Through our grant rounds, we'll build that knowledge. And just as important is understanding children and young people's lives. Through our Youth Advisory Board and national network of peer researchers we'll ensure that young people influence our work, so that we understand and are addressing their needs.

But none of this will make a difference if all we do is produce reports that stay on a shelf. Together we need to look at the evidence and agree what works, then build a movement to make sure that young people get the very best support possible.

Our strategy sets out how we'll do it.



Agency Collaboration Fund

We know that many children and young people at risk of becoming involved in violence are known to local statutory agencies such as police services, GP practices, schools and colleges and children's services. Yet this knowledge is often fragmented across multiple organisations, with different people holding different pieces of the puzzle. Opportunities where agencies could and should work together effectively to better prevent children becoming involved in violence are missed.

To help understand where those opportunities are, we're investing in our Agency Collaboration Fund. We want to understand if, how and when effective collaboration between agencies (and sometimes between departments within the same agency) can prevent children from involvement in violence.

The questions we're aiming to answer over the lifetime of the Agency Collaboration Fund:

- Which partnership models work best to support children and young people and how?
- How do local conditions and contexts affect change?
- Which agency collaboration activities, interventions and approaches are most effective at preventing children and young people from becoming involved in violence?

Our approach

Through our Agency Collaboration Fund, we'll fund and evaluate activities to find the most effective ways agencies can work together to identify and support the children most in need of support.

We'll do this by running at least one grant round each year. The activities we'll fund must be delivered by a minimum of two statutory agencies (for example, the local police force and a local authority, or a hospital trust and local schools), although it might also include working with organisations in the voluntary and private sectors. The project will need to focus on improving the structures and systems that can prevent children and young people from getting the support when they need it. To make sure we fund the right kinds of activity, each Agency Collaboration Round will be shaped by people working to keep children and young people safe from violence.



An overview of the focused deterrence approach

Focused deterrence is an approach to violence reduction that was developed in Boston (USA) in the mid-1990s. It recognises that most serious violence is associated with a small group of people who are themselves very likely to be victims of violence, trauma and extremely challenging circumstances. Their involvement in violence is often driven by exploitation, victimisation and self-protection. Some versions of focused deterrence, including the original 'Boston Ceasefire' intervention of the 1990s, focus primarily on groups rather than individuals. These approaches recognise that violence is often driven by conflict between groups. If two groups are engaged in violent conflict, focusing on the individuals who have committed violent crime is unlikely to prevent future conflict between other members of the groups.

Focused deterrence for group violence attempts to identify:

- ♦ groups and group dynamics (both in groups and between groups), which are driving violence
- ♦ those associated with groups (including children, young people and adults)
- ♦ any key individuals involved in violent incidents (most likely to be adults).

Once identified, focused deterrence then offers support to young people, to help them stop their involvement in violence. The age of the people involved depends on the context and crime problem identified, but projects have worked with children as young as 14 or 15.

In summary, focused deterrence combines several strategies:

Support: help for people involved in violence to access positive support and services.

Community engagement: engaging the wider community to communicate that they want violence to stop and those involved to be safe, provide support and encourage reintegration in the community. Projects will often arrange engagement between the people who are the focus of the intervention and victims' family members, reformed former group members and faith leaders.

Deterrence: clear communication of the consequences of violence and swift and certain enforcement if violence occurs. To note that this strategy focuses on the most influential group members (most likely to be adults).

Different focused deterrence models vary in how much they emphasise different stages of the process. Models that emphasise enforcement might focus on using 'call-in' meetings to communicate the consequences of violence and take swift action if the people involved do not stop. It's important to note here that children should not be involved in 'call-in' meetings. Other models might not use 'call-in' meetings at all, have minimal emphasis on enforcement, and instead emphasise developing relationships, rehabilitation and early intervention. However, all focused deterrence models must as a minimum include the following:

- ♦ a focus on a serious youth violence where there is a clear group dynamic (for example, rivalry between two local groups).
- ♦ targeted to those associated with groups involved in serious youth violence.
- ♦ an inter-agency working group made up of law enforcement, community and support services representatives.
- ♦ high quality intelligence gathering and analysis that captures the local group and violence dynamics, its drivers and the young people involved.
- ♦ a special enforcement operation that is swift, certain and includes group consequences.

- ♦ three core delivery partners: a police partner; support service partner/s; and community partner/s.
- ♦ **the police partner** must deliver open, transparent and respectful policing and communicate swift, certain and credible consequences of violence.
- ♦ **the support services** partner must coordinate and mobilise a breadth of services with fast response times.
- ♦ **the community partner/s** must express norms, expectations and aspirations, support violence prevention and increase engagement in support services.

Available research suggests that focused deterrence on violent crime is likely to have a high impact on reducing violent crime. The approach has been implemented extensively in the US, as well as internationally – including in South America and Europe. There have been several attempts to implement focused deterrence in the UK. The best UK impact evaluation is from Glasgow and suggests a beneficial impact. For more information on the approach, please see the focused deterrence section in the YEF Toolkit [here](#).

It is also important that every agency involved in focused deterrence takes active steps to prevent discrimination when targeting the young people to involve in the intervention (who must all be selected on the basis of offending). Focused deterrence must never be used as a justification for unwarranted stop and searches of Black, Asian or minority ethnic young people by the police. In addition, the support and services that focused deterrence approaches offer need to be culturally appropriate and aware of discrimination and inequality (including racism and poverty), which impact on young people's lives.

Why we are investing in this approach

In our consultation for this round, people told us that some children and young people become involved in violence without ever having accessed or effectively engaged with support services – even when those young people are known to statutory agencies. They told us that traditional support services have not been able to fully address the needs of these children and young people, and that agencies are often not collaborating as effectively as they could or should.

In our Toolkit, the evidence shows that focused deterrence could have a high impact on reducing violent crime. However, implementation in the UK to date has had mixed results (often because it's quite complicated to manage all of the different agencies involved). That's why we want to fund and evaluate more focused deterrence programmes in England and Wales. By finding out if and how focused deterrence works in our local communities, we can keep more children and young people safe from violence. more children and young people safe from violence.



What we'll invest in

We will fund three to five partnerships in places across England and Wales. We will invest up to £1 million for delivery at each site and up to £1.5 million for evaluation. All projects will need to be supported by in-kind contributions of at least £200,000 from local delivery partnerships. Delivery funding is for three years and evaluation funding is for up to 5 years.

For this funding round, there is no upper or lower age limit for those taking part in 'call-ins' or support services. That's because focused deterrence is aimed at changing group dynamics rather than individuals. While the YEF focuses on early intervention for children and young people aged 10 – 14, we recognise that some older members of the group might have a significant influence on offending. That's why, to be effective, they should be offered the support that comes through a focused deterrence approach.

This fund is only open to applications from Violence Reduction Units and Police and Crime Commissioners (where an area is not covered by a VRU). Applicants can submit more than one application, though only one will be selected for each area. Partnerships must include as a minimum:

- ♦ a Violence Reduction Unit and/or Office of Police & Crime Commissioner
- ♦ the local police force
- ♦ the local authority
- ♦ probation services
- ♦ lead voluntary and community sector organisations.

Timeline



Delivery specification

This section sets out our delivery expectations for successful partnerships during the three-year YEF funding period. There will be two phases for delivery – a Preparation phase and an Implementation phase. Approval to move from Preparation phase to Implementation phase will be sought from the YEF Grant Committee for each project.



The evidence shows that, to be successful, there needs to be a lot of preparation between partners ahead of delivering a focused deterrence project. As such, once the partnerships have been selected through the application process, we will support applicants through a preparation phase. During this period, partnerships will work together to understand and map issues with serious violence in their community, as well as their local services. This will support partners to develop a shared vision and strategy for change, and to effectively prepare for local delivery of the focused deterrence approach. Readiness and commitment to the preparation phase will be assessed in the application process.

The learning partner for this funding round will collaborate with local partnerships through this phase, and will facilitate the following activity:

- ♦ Development of local systems maps.
- ♦ Identification leverage points – places in the system where small, well-focused actions can produce significant lasting improvements.
- ♦ Development of a local theory of change.
- ♦ Development of an action plan to explain how focused deterrence would be delivered
- ♦ Development of a local evaluation plan.

Activity during the preparation phase should be informed by essential and flexible criteria as set out in the Focused Deterrence Delivery Framework table below.

Depending on local context and readiness, we anticipate that the Preparation phase should take between 6–9 months (and no longer than 12 months).

Implementation phase

To make sure we're learning as much as possible from the evidence, we want to make sure applicants deliver the core elements of a focus deterrence approach (as set out by the existing evidence) while still allowing partnerships to adapt to their local needs and contexts.

The following table sets out a list of essential delivery criteria, which must be offered by YEF-funded partnerships, as well as a list of flexible delivery criteria that may vary between places, depending on local context. Through the application process, applicants must be able to clearly describe the scale of the serious violence problem in their area, and the extent to which group dynamics are driving this problem.

Focused Deterrence Delivery Framework		
ESSENTIAL	FLEXIBLE	NOTES
1. Focused deterrence must address Serious youth violence, where there is a clear group dynamic.	1. Crime problem itself is flexible	By group dynamics, we mean the way members of a group interact with each other (including group norms) and/or the way members interact with other people, or with other groups (for example, retaliating against others). Example crime problems are violent and non-violent crimes such as homicide; knife crime; violence with injury; drugs offences; and weapons carrying.
2. Focused deterrence must be targeted to those associated with groups involved in serious youth violence	2. People of any age may receive focused deterrence-related interventions.	To be effective, people involved in driving group dynamics should be included in focused deterrence interventions – these individuals may be older group members and have the most influence on how other group members engage with the intervention.
3. Focused deterrence must include an inter-agency working group made up of law enforcement, community and support services representatives	3. The type of support services can be adapted to local need.	3i) The working group should include members who have experience of violence prevention and who are able to make commitments (for example, related to budget or staffing) on behalf of their organisation. 3ii) The group should include senior police officers. 3iii) Support representatives on the group should act as single point of access for all support providers in the programme. 3iv) The group should be led by a programme manager who is respected by the community and the police, to balance the different deterrence, community and support goals. 3v) There should be sufficient preparation to support effective agency collaboration, including understanding of roles, co-responsibilities and timelines. 3vi) The group should be committed to repairing harm in the community and changing policies and practices to better support young people. 3vii) The group should deliver staff training to ensure consistent and effective delivery across their individual teams.

Focused Deterrence Delivery Framework

ESSENTIAL	FLEXIBLE	NOTES
4. Focused deterrence must include high-quality, structured intelligence gathering and analysis		<p>4i) Intelligence gathering and analysis must gather and assess information, about who and what is driving serious youth violence. The purpose of collecting this information is to support the development of a strategy that meaningfully addresses local issues.</p> <p>4ii) The intelligence gathering should be police-led with strong inter-agency and community collaboration. Data gathering will usually involve the most knowledgeable personnel and units connected to violent crime, as well as practitioners who have the most knowledge of and experience working with children and young people involved in violence.</p> <p>4iii) The process of gathering and collating intelligence in new ways could involve additional research expertise (e.g. universities)</p> <p>4iv) Information should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details about local groups associated with violence (e.g. group names, territories, numbers of members, alliances.) • incident reviews, which assess the link between groups and recent fatal (and non-fatal) violent incidents in the area • social network analysis, to illustrate how group members are connected to each other, through contacts or arrests. • 4v) Intelligence should draw on mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative data). • Quantitative information might assess crime locations and concentrations, the demographics of those involved in crime, street network configurations, weapons used and so on. • Qualitative information will need to be gathered by front-line practitioners (including the police and probation officers, youth justice workers and street outreach workers,) to capture the context of violence (for example, who the most influential and/or violent group members are, where groups are active) <p>4vi) Information and intelligence gathering relationships, processes and protocols must be sustainable.</p> <p>4vii) Intelligence should be accurate and responsive to the changing dynamics of group violence; getting this wrong could compromise legitimacy.</p> <p>4viii) Data should (where possible) be organised and analysed using statistical analysis software.</p>
5. Focused deterrence must include a special enforcement operation that is swift, certain and includes group consequences	The way that enforcement happens (and the consequences of being involved in violence) can be flexible.	<p>5i) The enforcement operation must not happen before scheduled communication with those people identified as being involved in crime and violence.</p> <p>5ii) There are legal restrictions in the UK with regards to collective enforcement. This should be considered when considering group consequences in the case that a crime takes place.</p> <p>5iii) Consideration should be given on how to deal with relapses most appropriately, especially in the early stages of a project.</p> <p>5iv) Collective enforcement on group members could include educational approaches (for example, sessions with group members and the police to learn about the consequences of violence) or anti-violence community messaging.</p>
6. Focused deterrence must include direct and frequent communication with target groups	<p>6i. A partnership's communications strategy can be flexible</p> <p>6ii) the use of call-ins is flexible</p>	<p>6i) Messages around the focused deterrence project should be unified across local police, and support services, and should be delivered to all members of the local community.</p> <p>6ii) If the approach is using 'call-ins', these meetings should be reinforced (for example, through visits to group members' homes).</p> <p>6iii) Additional communications can also be used to reach group members who do not attend call-ins.</p> <p>6iv) Before holding a call-in, research should be undertaken to make sure that dynamics within the meeting are well-managed</p> <p>6v) Communications must provide evidence on why specific groups are the focus.</p> <p>6vi) Call-in meetings should take place on neutral territory and high numbers of visible police are not recommended.</p> <p>6vii) For children and young people under 18, delivery of communications should involve parents, child-centred police officers, support providers, influential community representatives and peers who have been affected by youth violence. Call-ins should not involve children and young people under 18.</p> <p>6viii) Communications need to acknowledge that effectively preventing violence requires organisations and statutory bodies to work differently to how they have in the past.</p> <p>6ix) When communicating, consideration should be made about discrimination that communities may have experienced when accessing services or in contact with the criminal justice system. The partnership's commitment to equality and change should be upfront.</p>

Focused Deterrence Delivery Framework

ESSENTIAL	FLEXIBLE	NOTES
<p>7. Police partner: to deliver open, transparent and respectful policing and communicate swift, certain, and credible consequences of violence</p>		<p>7i) Getting police buy-in to the strategy is essential, this includes buy-in to the collective aim and the co-responsibilities across the inter-agency working group.</p> <p>7ii) The role of the police should be clear. This will help the partnership avoid potential confusion about the role of focused deterrence in providing support for those involved in crime and violence.</p> <p>7iii) Officers should have local ties to the places where group members live.</p>
<p>8. Support services partner: to coordinate and mobilise a breadth of services with fast response times</p>	<p>8. Available support services should be adapted to local needs.</p>	<p>8i) The lead partner must have the ability to co-ordinate and mobilise a breadth of key services and support. This support could include housing; family support; counselling; education or employment opportunities.</p> <p>8ii) The lead partner must be able to access information from all other support providers.</p> <p>8iii) The lead partner must have the ability to report and track the engagement, progress and outcomes of the people receiving support.</p> <p>8iv) The lead partner must have the ability to provide or refer a young person to immediate and meaningful support (for example, immediate protection from harm, providing food, clothing, shelter or assistance with outstanding warrants.).</p> <p>8v) Support partners may include both statutory and voluntary sector organisations.</p>
<p>9. Community partner/s: to express norms, expectations and aspirations, support violence prevention and increase engagement in support services.</p>	<p>9. The extent of community role will depend on local context</p>	<p>9i) The community partner should have high moral standing and credibility with young people.</p> <p>9ii) There should be genuine opportunities for community members to voice their experiences and narratives.</p> <p>9iii) The work of the partner should involve a community 'warm-up' period, where information about the focused deterrence strategy is spread through multiple methods (for example, door knocking leafleting, or presence at local events.</p> <p>9iv) The community need to be involved before any other element of focus deterrence goes ahead.</p> <p>9v) Work with the media to make sure any communication is accurate and sensitive to communities. Do not do any proactive media engagement before speaking to communities.</p>



Our approach to evaluation

We'll commission an independent evaluation partner to work across the three delivery sites for a period of up to 5-years. We publish the outcomes of all our evaluations. You can see our Publications Policy [here](#).

The focus of the evaluation will be to generate **evidence of impact** (in other words, measuring/estimating the extent to which effective implementation of the focussed deterrence framework prevents children's involvement in violence).

The evaluation also aims to understand why and how the framework leads to impact, for whom and in what contexts, to generate **lessons** that can influence policy and practice.

The evaluation of this programme is vital in filling in the gaps in the **UK evidence base** to support policy, commissioning and practice developments. It's therefore important that the most rigorous methods are adopted to generate high-quality evidence as far as possible.

Delivery partners will be expected to work closely with the evaluation partner to develop local delivery plans in the preparation phase. Delivery partners will be expected to be **open and supportive** to the best evaluation methods identified by evaluation partners. A strong commitment to our evaluation approach will be assessed through the application process.

How to apply

Applications should be made using the attached application form. Completed application forms and any appendices should be emailed to place-basedfunds@youthendowmentfund.org.uk by **5pm on Monday 21 March 2022**. All applications will be reviewed by YEF. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview on either **4 April or 5 April 2022**.

Following interviews, successful applicants will be required to take part in co-alignment workshops with our evaluation partner, to make sure that they are happy and confident about the research elements of the project. These sessions will take place on **27 April and 9 May 2022**.

Please note – successful applicants at interview, will be required to take part in a short co-design exercise involving preferred applicants and learning partners prior to Board grantee sign-off. Mandatory dates for this activity are **27th April 2022 and 9th May 2022 as per timetable above**.

Clarification questions

If you have a question, please let us know at any point between **24 January and 14 March 2022**. Questions should be emailed to place-basedfunds@youthendowmentfund.org.uk.

Frequently asked questions and responses will be updated on the YEF website at the end of each week from 15 March.



Assessment criteria

Introduction

We're interested in hearing from areas that can clearly outline issues with serious youth violence in their area; who are already delivering some partnership work to prevent violence; and who are looking to further understand and develop their partnership approaches through this funding round. Selected areas must be committed to changing the way their own systems work, as well as improving the lives of young people involved in serious violence. In terms of scope, applications should be for one or two local authority areas.

Partnerships will work closely with YEF and our approved evaluation partner. This will involve responding to evaluation and monitoring requirements.

Each successful area is required to contribute £200,000 of in-kind match funding – for example, staff time – to programme delivery.

In return, selected areas will:

- ♦ receive YEF grant funding to support their agreed delivery plan
- ♦ be part of an action learning set with other partnerships seeking to address similar challenges
- ♦ contribute to the evidence base of what works to reduce serious violence.

The eight criteria we will consider when shortlisting local areas are set out below:

AGENCY COLLABORATION FUND CRITERIA	WHAT WE'RE ASSESSING	HOW WE'LL ASSESS IT
1. Likely to lead to change	We're trying to assess whether, if what you deliver is shown to be effective, it could reach many more young people (either through you scaling up, others learning from what you do, a change in the system or maintaining delivery locally).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Track record of successful partnerships between police, social/support services, and the community.♦ Demonstration of strong multi-agency partnership arrangements in place at both strategic and operational levels.
2. Aiming to reach the right type of young people	We're trying to assess whether the people you are planning to work with, are in most need of this type of support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Ability to demonstrate evidence-informed understanding of local serious violence problem a clear group dynamic. This may include a local needs analysis or case studies.
3. If delivered well, how likely the project is to achieve the outcome	We're trying to assess whether your approach and intervention is likely to achieve the fund's learning outcomes. We'll also look to assess whether police and support services have the capacity to deliver swift, certain and credible responses to group members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Demonstration that police partner will be able to deliver swift, certain and credible responses to participants.♦ Demonstration that support service provider(s) will be able to provide effective and timely delivery of services to participants, according to their individual needs.♦ Demonstration that community partner(s) will have the skills and capacity to support the project effectively, and that they are representative of the young people the project will work with.♦ A draft initial Theory of Change.

AGENCY COLLABORATION FUND CRITERIA	WHAT WE'RE ASSESSING	HOW WE'LL ASSESS IT
4. Able to deliver	<p>We're trying to assess whether you're likely to be able to deliver the plan you have laid out and sustain engagement with the people who take part.</p> <p>We're also trying to assess whether you're able to provide the required amount of match funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through a letter of commitment from core representatives. This should include overall support for the project and commitment to evaluation; commitment to in-kind funding contribution and what this will fund; commitment to joint working across the delivery partnership; and commitment to sharing data across the delivery partnership. • In your application, we want to see that you have a clear understanding of the different roles within the partnership, and that you're open to being challenged on preconceived ideas. • Evidence of key delivery staff skills and experience. • Evidence of effective track record of your delivery partners engaging with the young people you want to work with through a focused deterrence approach. • Detailed draft budget, including in-kind costs. In preparing the draft budget, applicants should pay particular attention to essential elements outlined in the Focused Deterrence Delivery Framework above, including remit of the three core delivery partners.
5. A worthwhile outcome	<p>We're trying to assess whether you'll be able to change things that are likely to ultimately reduce the risk of young people becoming involved in violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-agency strategy which recognises the differences, vulnerabilities and needs of children and young people, and takes the opportunity to understand and listen to their views. • Track record of quality engagement with young people affected by serious youth violence. • Skillset and capacity of core delivery team in work with both children and adults.
6. Able to deliver at the required scale	<p>We're trying to assess that you'll be able to deliver to the number of people you intend to reach. We'll also look to see how you plan on sustaining the project after our funding ends.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the scale of the issue in your proposed geographic location and the estimated number of prospective participants in your project. • Evidence that you can engage the required minimum number of participants for your project. • Proposed governance and project management arrangements for this project. • Initial sustainability plan.
7. Likely to reach the right type of people	<p>We're trying to assess whether you have the right systems in place to mobilise and sustain enhanced intelligence gathering and analysis, so that you can reach people involved in violence and identify the right cohort. We are also trying to assess whether your delivery partnership has the appropriate experience and skillset to engage with your cohort</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of skills and experience required for high-quality intelligence analysis. • Information on how you'll ensure that the way you identify potential participants is appropriate, equitable and proportionate, with the aim of eliminating bias. • Evidence that effective data-sharing agreements are in place for your delivery partnership and that your partnership has the appropriate experience and skillset to engage with your cohort.
8. Committed to evaluation	<p>We're trying to assess whether we can properly evaluate your project, and that you are committed to working with an independent learning partner throughout the co-alignment, preparation and implementation phases of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that you've read, understood and committed to the YEF evaluation principles. • Confirmation that this funding will not fund current or planned VRU/PCC activity. • Evidence that this project will complement existing activity.

Our commitment to equality

It's important to say that, when we're making our decisions, we'll make sure we meet our commitment to equality. Children and young people from marginalised backgrounds – including black and Asian children and young people, and children and young people who've been in care – are significantly overrepresented in the justice system. If we're truly going to make a difference, we need to make sure that our funding is used in a way that reaches and represents the people we are here to serve. So, through this grant round, we'll make sure that the projects we fund are supporting children and young people from marginalised backgrounds and we'll ensure our partnerships include projects that are led by black, Asian and ethnic minority leaders. This is something we'll take into account through our assessment process to ensure that our overall range of successful applicants is diverse.



