

All programmes funded by the YEF are subject to an independent evaluation, carried out by an evaluator from the [YEF panel](#). This guidance is designed to make sure that you have a good understanding of YEF's approach to evaluation. The guidance also includes further points for consideration among your project team.

There are many different types of evaluation and you should [click here](#) to familiarise yourself with YEF's approach. In addition, all grantees must read, understand and adhere to the [grantee-evaluator relationship policy](#).

This guidance offers information and insight to help you get the most value from your work with the evaluator.

Relationships are key

You should treat the evaluator as a new partner and a member of your project team. Previous grantees have told us that a strong working relationship with their evaluator was critical to the success of their project.

Set up regular catch-up meetings with your evaluator and make sure that they understand exactly what is happening with the project. Difficult discussions and the need to compromise (on both sides) are part of this process. Your joint ability to discuss progress, identify challenges and propose solutions will determine the success of the partnership.

Scrutiny and changes

In order to really understand and evaluate your project, the evaluator will need a lot of detailed information. It's usual for the evaluator to continually question all aspects of the project delivery. This way of working and the level of scrutiny might be new to your project team. It's important to understand this is part of the process – be open and collaborative – the evaluator is on your team.

We know that things don't always go to plan and we expect challenges and obstacles. It's important that when problems or unplanned situations arise, however small, you discuss them with the evaluator. Please do this before you decide on an alternative strategy as any changes to the project must be agreed with the evaluator and approved by YEF.

Sample size

Your evaluator will ask you to commit to recruiting a high number of participants, this is your sample size. These numbers are important as they are the minimum required for the evaluator to demonstrate an impact against your project outcomes. Your project team therefore has to commit to achieving the numbers required, even if this is a stretch. Please talk to YEF and evaluator if you have any questions or concerns about the sample size.

Demographic data

We're committed to understanding who is engaging in the programmes and evaluations that we fund, and for who these programmes are effective. In order to achieve this, we need you to collect accurate demographic data.

All YEF evaluations must collect demographic data across the following three categories.

- ♦ **Ethnicity** (YEF uses the UK government guidance on reporting Ethnicity)
- ♦ **Sex** (YEF uses sex recorded at birth, there is a separate question about gender)
- ♦ **Age**

Across all three categories you should record the number of children and young people (CYP) that were referred to the programme, the number of CYP that are recruited into your programme and evaluation, and the number of CYP who dropped out.

Your evaluator might ask you to collect additional demographic data, depending on the nature of your project and your target group.

Data archive and core measures

All YEF projects must agree to our core outcome measures and the data archive.
[Click here to familiarise yourself with the data archive.](#)

It's important to note that the data archive is highly secure and that:

- ♦ Data cannot be used against a young person under any circumstances
- ♦ Individual children will not be identifiable within the data.
- ♦ Only approved researchers will have access to the data archive

Projects must also agree to the following core outcome measures:

- 1 Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)**
- 2 Self-Report Delinquency Scale (SRDS)**

The SDQ and SRDS data must be collected from all participants – those receiving the intervention and the control group. These are valid and reliable measures that are used across all of our evaluations. Using consistent outcome measures allows us to make meaningful comparisons between projects and build our understanding of what works.

What does success look like?

When the project has finished, the evaluator will start to work on the report. The evaluator is the author of the report, they decide what is included.

Grantees will have an opportunity to review a draft of the evaluation report before it is published, and will be named in the report, but you will not be joint authors. Grantees can comment on factual inaccuracies but – because the report is independent – wider views, comments and opinions will not be taken into account.

The independent evaluation of your project will contain a wealth of information that will be useful to you, *regardless of the impact results*. It's important to note that most randomised control trials show no effect on outcomes. Please speak to YEF and the evaluator about how to read and interpret the report.