

Call for Proposals: Youth Justice Partnership

Background

The Youth Endowment Fund is a charity with a mission that matters. We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We think any credible plan to reduce violence has to recognise that children rely on seven essential sectors to be safe, one of which is youth justice. We plan to work with delivery organisations and system leaders to better understand and deliver on the changes most likely to reduce violence. There are three key reasons why we are focusing on youth justice:

1. **Improving the way we support children means less victims and better lives for children**

At least one in three children who are arrested and then convicted or cautioned go on to commit further offences. There is clear evidence that improving the way we respond to these children can reduce crime – this means less victims, more people feeling safe and better lives for children.

2. **Better evidence-based support to children who are diverted means less victims in future**

Diverting children to effective support is a big opportunity to reduce re-offending. Evidence from many rigorous reviews, summarised in the YEF Toolkit, shows that approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy, mentoring or sport programmes can reduce offending. Conversely, approaches such as prison awareness programmes are known to be ineffective or can even *increase* the chances of re-offending. Faster referrals to more effective services have the potential to improve outcomes for children.

3. **Improvements can be made to the way we respond to arrested children.**

Although the use of diversion has increased over the last 20 years, there is insufficient awareness of what effective diversion looks like. The funding formula for youth justice services does not reflect local levels of need or properly recognise diversionary work. Vulnerabilities such as child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation are too often missed at the point of arrest. Referrals to support are sometimes not made or can be slow, particularly for therapeutic interventions.

Partnership

We are looking to grant to a credible and trusted organisation(s) within the youth justice sector, in order to build a partnership which will:

- Build awareness and appetite for evidence across the sector.

- Support Youth Justice Services to improve practice and do what works.
- Support the Youth Endowment Fund to deliver the recommendations set out in our Systems Guidance: 'Arrested Children: How to keep children safe and reduce reoffending.'

To deliver on these aims, we would like to partner with an organisation(s) to deliver the following tiered level of support across the youth justice sector in England and Wales:

Level of support	Activity per year
1. Grow Demand for Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarterly open access virtual learning events to build awareness of existing and emerging evidence on approaches, interventions or policy related to arrested children. ▪ Monthly bulletin/newsletter.
2. Change Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intensive support for ten youth justice services to adopt evidence-based approaches to supporting children at-risk of or involved in violence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This is likely to include document reviews, peer observation, and hands-on support to change practice. – We anticipate this being ten different youth justice services each year, although recognise that some services may require support beyond the first 12 months. ▪ Lighter touch training and support on the effective use of formal and informal out of court disposals for young people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We would like to hear applicants' ideas on how best to engage relevant youth justice professionals, e.g. running an online training session for each region in England and Wales or cascading training through existing channels/networks.

Specific KPIs will be agreed to measure progress against each level of support, and they will be included in the detailed project plan. We will assess the effectiveness of this partnership against an agreed set of goals and metrics over a 12-month period, before deciding whether to continue funding the partnership over Year 2 and Year 3.

The partner is required to commission an independent evaluation report capturing key learning, outputs and outcomes delivered for each year of delivery.

Budget

The total budget for this three-year grant is £265,000. This covers the cost of delivery and commissioning a learning partner.

We require a minimum of 10% match funding. This can be in-kind (e.g. existing staffing or overhead costs that you are contributing to delivery) or other grant funding secured (or to be secured).

Please note that these funds will be issued in the form of a grant, and as such will not be considered for any taxable supply for VAT purposes by the successful Grantee to YEF. The YEF obligation will not extend to paying the Grantee any amounts in respect of VAT in addition to the Grant, and that the Grant made by YEF is deemed to be inclusive of VAT if applicable.

Outputs and timeframe

Final outputs will be agreed with the organisation, but at a minimum are expected to include:

1. Quarterly reports on progress against agreed goals and metrics
2. Sustainability plan
3. Report produced by a learning partner detailing performance, achievements and lessons learned

Timelines are provisionally outlined below:

Activity	Expected time frame
Proposal deadline	17 th May 2024
Questions accepted until	26 th April 2024
Interviews held	w.c. 28 th May 2024
Preferred partner appointed (including all agreements completed)	7 th June 2024
Timeframe for Year 1 delivery	June 2024 – May 2025

How to apply

We invite bidders to prepare proposals of no more than 4,000 words, excluding references and are aiming to notify bidders on 22nd May 2024.

In the proposal, we expect bidders to include the following:



- Objectives of the partnership, including rationale for why these are important.
- Your proposed approach to delivering tiered support across the youth justice sector, including a detailed description of each activity.
- Your proposed approach to achieve progress against at least two recommendations included in YEF's System Guidance, 'Arrested Children: How to keep children safe and reduce reoffending.'
- The relevant experience of your organisation and team. Specifically:
 - your expertise in the youth justice sector
 - your existing network and connections
 - your knowledge of the evidence-base
 - your experience of changing practice and reforming systems
 - your experience of commissioning/working with a learning partner
- A detailed budget (including in-kind funding) with justification for spend.

Bidders have until 17th May 2024 to prepare their proposals and will be able to submit questions until 26th April 2024. All proposals will be reviewed by the YEF, using the criteria provided in Appendix 1.

The YEF is happy to consider bids from consortiums, as long as consideration is given to communication and how the organisations will work well together. The YEF would expect to grant to the lead member of the consortium only.

Appendix 1: YEF scoring criteria

1. Relevant experience of the organisation(s) and understanding of topic area (40%)

- a) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates expertise and understanding of youth justice and the evidence-base.
- b) The extent to which the organisation(s) demonstrates an established network and track record of providing support to youth justice professionals, teams and decision-makers.
- c) The extent to which the organization(s) demonstrate experience of commissioning/working with a learning partner.

2. Approach (40%)

- a) Suitability of the approach to deliver against the partnership aims and objectives.
- b) Suitability of approach to achieve progress at least two recommendations from YEF's System Guidance.
- c) Suitability of the approach to ensure organisation engages with different stakeholder groups in different geographies.
- d) Suitability of proposed strategies to maximise participation rates across different stakeholder groups in activity, especially in areas of greatest need (e.g. high rates of serious violence).

3. Value for Money (20%)

- a) Detailed cost of your proposal and how this demonstrates value for money.

Scoring criteria	
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