

Budget Guidance for YEF Evaluations

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is 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.

To do this we fund:

1. Promising projects which we hope will help to prevent young people aged 10-14 from becoming involved in violence; and
2. High-quality, independent evaluations of how effective the project is at achieving its intended outcome. The results from all projects will be described in an evaluation report, written by the independent evaluator, and published on the YEF's website.

An important part of that is a robust approach to the budgeting of evaluation work, ensuring expenditure is proportionate to the aims and objectives of the evaluation and the expenditure on the projects and is consistent with YEF's charitable status.

The purpose of this guidance is therefore to:

- Ensure YEF shows exemplary stewardship of public funds.
- Ensure YEF evaluators understand
 - Which costs can be recovered, and which can't
 - That YEF does not operate a Full Economic Costing model
 - Where to go to with queries

Summary of overall approach

Direct costs

These are costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the delivery of a project. These direct costs need to be included fully described in the YEF budget template. They include:

- **Staff:** payroll costs, inclusive of salary, national insurance, and pension, for full or part-time staff who will work on the project. These staff costs should be fully accounted for in the YEF budget template. In each budget template submission, we would generally expect an appropriate balance of staff allocation, with the

most senior staff members providing supervision and quality assurance rather than data collection and day-to-day project management. All staff time spent on the project can be included, including appropriate proportions of senior management time, and similar. We discourage evaluators to avoid having their most experienced (and expensive) staff involved in too many of the day-to-day activities on the project

- **Travel and Subsistence:** funds for travel and subsistence for use by staff who work on the project where these are required by the nature of the work. These should be directly attributable to project work, such as attending YEF meetings or travel associated with data collection. YEF will not typically fund participation at academic conferences. We expect evaluators to make every effort to keep travel and accommodation costs to the minimum and will not reimburse first class travel.
- **Equipment:** YEF will fund reasonable equipment costs, where the work cannot be executed without these items. However, standard office equipment such as laptops, telephones or furniture cannot be charged without explicit agreement. Any significant capital expenditure items must be identified within the budget. The completed budget template will need to provide justification for all equipment requested in the justification of resources document.
- **Test administration:** we appreciate that some standardised tests come at a cost. We have an agreed funding structure for the administration of the SDQ with the developers (see below). We expect evaluators to keep test administration costs to a minimum necessary. For example, we would typically be reluctant to cover the cost of IQ testing for the whole sample unless a strong justification for that can be provided.
- **Incentives:** in principle YEF is prepared to cover the cost of incentives for participation in the evaluation. We expect this to be explored and decided on during the co-design and reflected in the updated budget. We will not typically agree to ad hoc request for incentives that are received after the budget has been agreed by the Grants and Evaluation Committee.

Indirect/Overhead costs

Treatment of indirect costs/overhead costs is the main difference between YEF as a charity and other central government funders which operate Full Economic Costing (or a relatively high percentage of Full Economic Costing such as 80%).

Indirect costs include the costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, library, office costs and some departmental services. These should not exceed 20% of staff costs.

We understand that many universities will need to make business case for bidding for YEF work given that our indirect costs are capped at 20%. We are happy to support the development of those business cases and have done that successfully with several universities.

Evaluation types and indicative ranges

YEF tries to strike a balance between giving evaluators a clear sense of the size and scale of evaluations, whilst avoiding the perverse incentives that can be created by publishing maximum budgets for each type of evaluation. We assess evaluation proposals for value for money and look carefully at whether the costs are proportionate to the type and scale of the study proposed.

The following table gives an indication of the scale of budgets we envisage for different types of study. We will consistently prioritise proposals that give good value for money and strongly discourage evaluators using these figures as the sole driver of their costs.

Type of study	Indicative ranges	Indicative average
Feasibility Study	£50-£110K	£96,837
Standalone Pilot RCT/QED	£100-150K	£126, 219
Efficacy/Effectiveness RCT/QED ¹	£350-500K	£414,832.22

Evaluations over £500K are exceptional amongst our portfolio and we strongly encourage you to discuss with your Evaluation Manager before submitting a budget of that magnitude. We appreciate that many evaluators will be used to larger budgets from other funders, but as we make clear, YEF does not fund evaluators using Full Economic Costing.

¹ These studies may include an internal pilot. These figures are inclusive of the budget for any internal pilot.

Guidance on specific budget specific issues

Increases to budgets

We encourage evaluators to fully work through and allocate resources at the beginning of the project. The evaluation budget resulting from the co-design process and that YEF presents to its Grants and Evaluation Committee is treated as final.

YEF will rarely, if ever, increase budgets because of evaluators not adequately allocating costs for the activities that are described in evaluation guidance.

We appreciate that evaluations do not always go according to plan and that changes to design and methods may, on occasion, need to be made. We do, however, have constraints on the total amount we have available for a given set of projects and have a very high bar in agreeing changes to budget. We expect evaluators to first explore accommodating changes within the existing funding envelope. We then have a formal process for requesting changes to budget, including evaluators completing a variation request. This is discussed by the Programme Manager and the Evaluation Manager and approved, or not, by the Assistant Director of Impact, Programmes and Partnerships and Assistant Director of Evaluation. Therefore, we encourage evaluators to keep requests to a minimum and to let your Evaluation Manager as soon as possible if you think an increase may be required. In the interest of transparency, budget increases are extremely rare.

Material changes to budget, such as those more than 10% of the total budget, will only be agreed to in exceptional circumstances, and with approval of our Grants and Evaluation Committee. As this Committee meets, on average, four times a year, evaluators should factor in a delay in agreeing any material budget changes.

Clinical Trial Units

YEF is interested in ensuring the highest standards of methodical rigour in the evaluations we commission. As such, our Grants and Evaluation Committee are interested in evaluators exploring the involvement of Clinical Trial Units (CTUs) in YEF evaluations where appropriate.

We have commissioned a trial fully managed by a CTU. We do not anticipate funding any further trials fully managed by a CTU until 2025 once the existing trial has been completed.

Nevertheless, we are still interested in CTU involved in less comprehensive ways in YEF evaluations, such as in an advisory capacity or CTUs performing discrete tasks such as the randomisation.

SDQ test costs

The cost of using the SDQ should be included in each evaluation budget. As described in YEF's SDQ guidance there are two options for implementing the SDQ each with different budget considerations.

Paper version

- The paper versions of the SDQ and the scoring criteria are free to download and can be manually scored.
- The SDQ, whether in English or in translation, are copyrighted documents that may not be modified in any way.
- The developers of the SDQ (Youth in Mind) recommend online scoring due to the level of errors that occur when scoring manually (<https://admin.sdqscore.org/>).
- Online scoring has a fee of 40p (plus VAT) per use – which should be accounted for in evaluation budgets if evaluators choose to use paper version of the SDQ. Evaluators will need to communicate directly with Youth In Mind (youthinmind@gmail.com) to arrange payment. When doing so please quote that it's for work on a YEF evaluation.

Online

- Using the SDQ online has an authorisation and usage fee
- Evaluators looking to use an online version of the SDQ in evaluations should create their own version of the SDQ
- YEF has agreed a discount with the developers (Youth In Mind) for evaluators working on YEF evaluations. The cost for YEF evaluators is:
 - £1000 one-off authorisation charge
 - 40p (plus VAT) per SDQ used
- Evaluators will need to communicate directly with Youth In Mind (youthinmind@gmail.com) to arrange authorisation of the online version and payment. When doing so please quote that it's for work on a YEF evaluation to ensure the above discount is granted.
- These costs should be accounted for in evaluation budgets if evaluators to choose use an online version of the SDQ.

Value Added Tax

YEF's position on VAT is like that of other What Works Centres. Evaluations are not a supply of service to YEF, the evaluators are collaborators on the project with the Grantee, they are not serving YEF.

As such evaluations are for the public benefit and not to serve YEF in the delivery of our mission. This stance is predicated on the fact that – in themed rounds – the relationship between the grantee and the evaluator is a collaborative one to deliver the project, that in all evaluations the results of our evaluation and research is publicly available on the Toolkit for the public benefit, and that the research data is archived and can be accessed by other researchers for the public benefit.

Input VAT is the value added tax added to the price when you purchase goods or services that are liable to VAT. If evaluators are including equipment or other items in their budget, and those items include input VAT, that input VAT can be charged to YEF and should be included in the budget template.

Co-design

The co-design period takes place before projects and evaluations have received final sign off from YEF's Grants and Evaluation Committee (GECO). Work done during the co-design period is essential to set up the evaluation. In recognition of this payment will be provided for the co-design period. We do, however, expect some in kind contribution from evaluators for this period.

Evaluation budgets submitted to YEF should therefore include the co-design period. In the interest of transparency, we would not typically expect the budget for this period of work to exceed £20,000.

The agreed upon amount for work done during co-design will be included in the first payment of the Project Evaluation Agreement following GECO approval. In the event that GECO doesn't approve the project and evaluation, the evaluator will be reimbursed for the agreed upon amount.

Data archiving processes

As described in our [Data protection information and guidance for YEF evaluations](#), available here: <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/evaluation-data-archive/>, at the end of the evaluation period (for pilot and efficacy studies), a single participant level dataset

will need to be passed to the DfE. This dataset will need to contain a range of different outcome data and participant information.

Guidance will separately be prepared for evaluators on the exact specification of this final dataset, how it should be structured, and any metadata supplied.

We recommend that evaluators expect to allow 5 days for the preparation of this single participant level dataset.

The Evaluation Report

The time evaluators need to write the Evaluation Report and responding to comments from YEF, the peer reviewers and the grantee must be incorporated into the budget. YEF will not increase budgets due to evaluators not adequately allocating costs for reporting process.

The usual stages of the reporting process can be found in the table below.

Stage	Timing
1. Draft report submitted by evaluator	
2. YEF review	2 weeks
Evaluator responds to YEF review	2 weeks
3. Peer review by two experts	2 - 4weeks
Evaluator responds to peer review	2 - 4 weeks
4. Shared with grantee for comments	
Grantee provides comments	2 weeks
Evaluator responds to grantee comments	2 weeks
5. Final editing for accessibility and proofing by YEF	8 weeks
6. Publication and archiving	

As described in the Publications Policy, the Evaluator is free to publish subsequent articles based on the Evaluation Report once the Evaluation Report is published. These subsequent academic publications are not funded by YEF and should not be included in the budget.



What if I still have questions?

If you have a question about this guidance, you can contact your Evaluation Manager or email evaluation@youthendowmentfund.org.uk