

# **Application guidance for Evaluators**

**OPEN CALL**

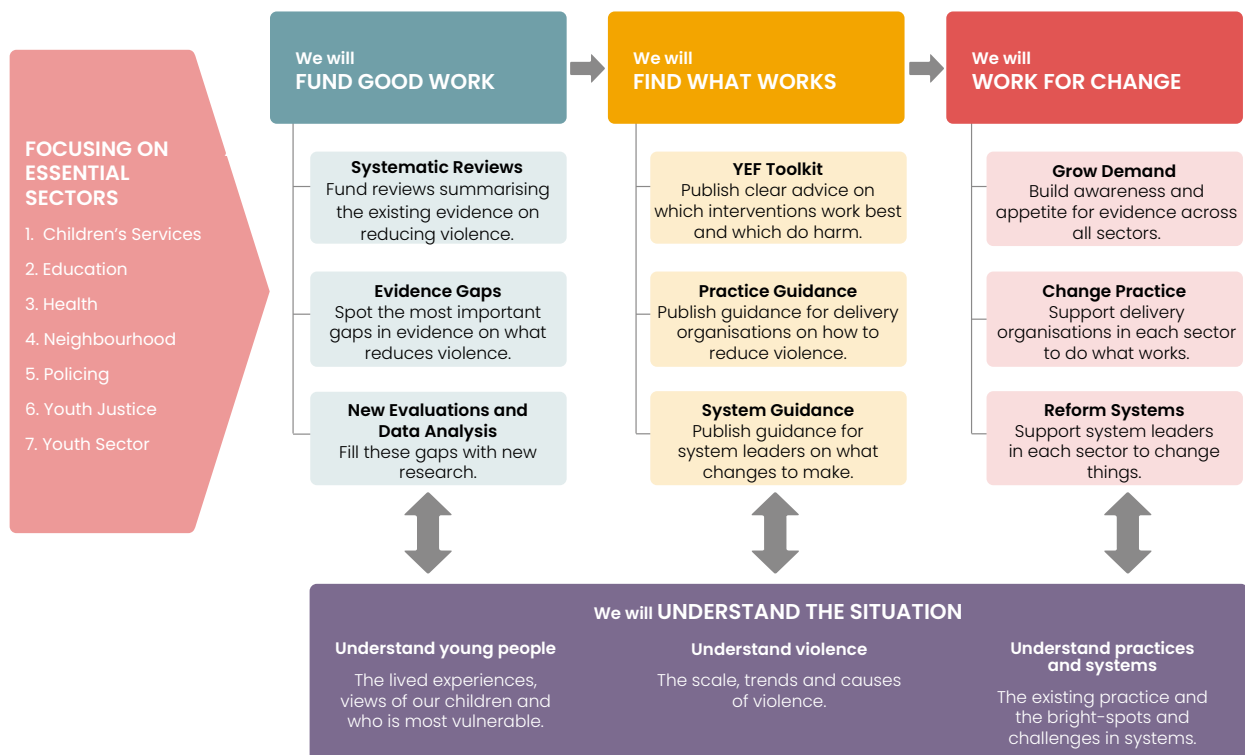
# About the Youth Endowment Fund

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 and young people at risk of becoming involved in violence 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, children and 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 they influence our work, and 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 children and young people get the very best support possible.

Our strategy sets out how we'll do it.







## **Our Sectors – keeping children and young people safe from violence**

We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. To help us make the biggest difference over the ten years of our endowment, we've selected a set of sectors where we'll concentrate our funding and learning.

We believe these sectors present some of the biggest opportunities to improve support for children and young people who are at risk of becoming involved in violence. They were carefully selected after listening to the needs and experiences of children and young people and the adults working to keep them safe.

To date, we have run grant rounds with clear areas of focus. Now, however, we have opened an ongoing call for proposals for projects which are ready to be rigorously evaluated and will help us to fill clear evidence gaps and build robust evidence for specific approaches or practices for reducing young people's involvement in violence across our sectors.

Our standards are high and meeting the criteria for a robust evaluation can be challenging. A rejection does not necessarily mean we feel your project is ineffective or unpromising but simply that it is not suitable for our portfolio at this time, or we cannot identify an approach to a successful evaluation.

## Your application must sit within one of the following sectors:

### Youth Sector

Including Positive Activities, such as sports, music and employment programmes that aim to develop positive behaviours and provide a 'hook' to other support, and services that help children to build trusted relationships with non-family members, such as key workers or youth workers, to reduce children's involvement in crime and violence. More information can be found [here](#).

### Children's Services

Interventions and services which help families deal with challenging situations, including parenting programmes, family therapy, domestic abuse interventions, family support and support for children at risk outside the home. More information can be found [here](#).

### Youth Justice

How we support and respond to arrested children, including activities to divert children from formal criminal justice processes, knife crime education, trauma informed programmes, restorative justice and so on. More information can be found [here](#).

### Policing

Violence prevention strategies that involve the police and focus on the individuals most likely to be involved in serious violence. More information can be found [here](#).

### Neighbourhoods

Place-based interventions that can help neighbourhoods and communities deal with local violence and reduce young people's involvement in crime and violence. This may include Community Safety Partnerships, neighbourhood and community engagement teams, neighbourhood policing, housing, local charities, community leaders and others. More information can be found [here](#).

### Health

Therapeutic support to help children deal with challenges and protect them from becoming involved in violence. More information can be found [here](#).

### Education

Activities targeted at outcomes associated with offending such as improving school attendance, preventing unnecessary exclusions and helping children to get the most out of school. More information can be found [here](#).





## What we'll invest in

We aim to identify projects which are ready to be evaluated via an **efficacy study** with an experimental design (i.e. randomised control trial) or a quasi-experimental design. We can provide funding for both the delivery of the intervention and the evaluation itself.

### We are interested in proposals from both:

- ◆ **Members of the YEF Evaluator Panel who have identified an evaluable project**, service or intervention that they believe would meet our criteria. Evaluators will be asked to provide details of the intervention as well as their proposed approach for evaluating it.
- ◆ Formal partnerships between delivery organisations and YEF Evaluator panel members. In these cases, the **delivery organisation should apply as the lead organisation using the Delivery Application Form**. Note that Evaluators must be independent of the delivery organisation. Commissioning of a delivery organisation will not necessarily result in the commissioning of the proposed evaluation partner, this will be assessed separately.

In the event where a partnership between a delivery organisation and an evaluator is successful in their bid, individual agreements will be signed with each organisation and they will be managed separately.

This differs from past applications Evaluator Panel members may have submitted, as you are being asked to propose the intervention to be evaluated as well as the method of evaluation. Interventions may be those already in delivery or those which will also need YEF funding in order to deliver during the evaluation. As a result, the application form contains a number of questions about the intervention itself. Please make sure you have taken the time to thoroughly understand it before proposing an intervention for evaluation.

The YEF seeks to develop evidence of what works across all our sectors, and we are always interested in approaches we haven't worked with before. Before applying, please review our [portfolio of currently funded projects](#). If you are proposing an intervention or approach that looks similar to something already funded, **please be clear on how your approach is different** and why it will provide new evidence that existing projects may not. For instance, we have funded a large number of [Mentoring projects](#), and to fund a further such project we would need a clear understanding that it fills a distinct and meaningful gap that the existing projects do not.

While you can apply as a partnership, or suggest a delivery partner, you do not need an established relationship with the delivery organisation. In the event that your application is successful we may seek to reach an agreement with a delivery organisation proposed by yourself, or we may tender for another. Delivery organisations will be managed separately and will be independently accountable for their work.

Applicants interested in proposing a **multi-site trial** (MST) should use the evaluator open call application form, as with any other evaluation proposal, but should first see the [MST Call for Proposals](#).

The interventions to be evaluated must be delivered in **England and/or Wales**. Evaluators can be based in any location.

Please make sure that all criteria are met before applying. If you're not sure, you can contact us at [grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)

## Eligibility requirement checklist

The full eligibility requirements for interventions we might wish to evaluate, are summarised below.

- 1 Location:** your project must be delivered in England and/or Wales.
- 2 Your organisation:** your organisation must be a registered charity, company, statutory body or CIC.
- 3 Activities:** projects must fit within one of the YEF Sectors described in this guidance.
- 4 Children and young people:** projects must be supporting children and children and young people, as outlined in the 'Who we are looking to support' section.
- 5 Outcomes:** we're primarily interested in projects that are focussed on reducing offending outcomes. There are additional outcomes that we're also able to support. Please see the outcomes section for full details.
- 6 Scale:** they must be able to reach enough participants to support a robust and meaningful evaluation
- 7 Willingness to engage in an independent evaluation:** They'll need to demonstrate and explain their experiences of monitoring and evaluating your project.
- 8 Readiness for evaluation:** we are looking for projects which are ready to be evaluated via an Efficacy study.
- 9 Track record:** we require projects to have a track record supporting children and young people and delivering their intervention to at least 150 children and young people. We will fund projects looking to scale, expand or explore different modes of delivery, as long as they can demonstrate the expertise and experience to facilitate this.





## What we're looking to evaluate

We aim to evaluate interventions which support children and young people aged primarily aged 10 - 18, who are at risk of crime or violence (secondary prevention) and/or already involved in the youth justice system (tertiary prevention). Children and young people outside this age range may be included, but should not be the primary focus.

We will only fund those offering secondary or tertiary prevention. Primary prevention approaches will not be funded.

We define these as:

**Secondary prevention** – programmes aimed at young people who are already at risk of involvement in youth offending. This can include individual, familial or geographical risks

**Tertiary prevention** – programmes aimed at young people who have already been affected by violence, offending and/or exploitation

**Primary prevention** – universal provision aimed at the general population of young people to prevent the escalation of risk and likelihood of violence

The primary aim is to help us better understand the impact of interventions on preventing offending behaviour. We are looking for projects that are able to recruit and support a large enough group of children and young people to be robustly evaluated using large-scale impact evaluations, such as randomised control trials (RCTs) or Quasi Experimental Designs (QEDs). Note that where QEDs are proposed, these should be **prospective only**, applications for retrospective QEDs are not being accepted at this time.

We support projects to start quickly and find our approach works best for projects that can be delivered effectively over a limited time frame. In this call we expect the **maximum project delivery time required to reach the necessary number of young people for an impact evaluation to be 24 months** and are keen to hear from projects that can deliver within a shorter period. This applies to the delivery only, and not the evaluation work.

We know that some children and young people are overrepresented in the youth justice system or struggle to access mainstream support services. We're particularly interested in projects which can show that they successfully and appropriately support these groups. This includes children and young people from Black, Asian and other racially minoritised groups and those who have experience of care, as well as children with special educational needs and disabilities, and young women and girls. For more information about our commitment to equality, please see [here](#).





## Readiness for evaluation

If you are proposing an evaluation of a specific intervention delivered by a particular organisation, then they will need to meet these criteria. Note that if you are in a formal partnership with this organisation **they should act as the lead and apply** via [the Delivery Application](#).

If you are proposing a multi-site trial, you should see the MST Call for Proposals for more details on expectations of the umbrella organisation.

We are looking for projects which are ready to be evaluated via an efficacy study. In some rare instances, we may consider the use of a short (i.e. 6-months or less) 'internal pilot' preceding an efficacy study, to test key evaluation procedures such as randomisation and/or recruitment. However this internal pilot must still fit within maximum 24 months of delivery, and the aim would be to include the sample used in the internal pilot as part of the full efficacy sample that is analysed. The following eligibility criteria will be used as indicators that a project is ready.

- ✓ A strong and clear Theory of Change, with a primary outcome that is included in the following primary outcomes from our [YEF Outcomes Framework](#)
  - ◆ Reducing Violent Offending
  - ◆ Reducing Non-Violent Offending
  - ◆ Reducing victimisation of crime
  - ◆ Reducing behavioural difficulties
  - ◆ Reducing drug and alcohol use
  - ◆ Reducing sexually violent offending
  - ◆ Reducing bullying perpetration
  - ◆ Criminal peers
- ✓ Pre-existing quantitative evidence of impact (for example, via a feasibility or pilot study using either a cross-sectional, quasi-experimental, or RCT design);
- ✓ A cohort of children and young people who are already involved in, or at high risk of becoming involved in, crime and violence (i.e. a 'tertiary' or 'secondary' level of need) that the intervention or service is already delivered to and/or there are viable referral routes to recruit this cohort
- ✓ A clear and consistent intervention which means it could be picked up and delivered easily by others (i.e. an intervention that has been manualised, either formally or informally, and/or where standardised training materials for practitioners have been developed)
- ✓ A clear quality assurance process that ensures implementation is consistent and to expected standards

Delivering a project which is evaluated is a lot of work for an organisation. The following eligibility criteria will be used as indicators that an organisation is ready:

- ✓ Capable now, or with reasonable scale up activities, of delivering programmes to at least 100 children and young people per year
- ✓ Experience of being involved in a previous evaluation (with more than 100 young people in the evaluation)

- ✓ Staff who have an understanding or experience of monitoring and evaluation studies and/or research
- ✓ Experience of delivering large-scale projects, and/or scaling up delivery
- ✓ Experience of delivering at scale to the young people you intend to work with
- ✓ Demonstrable experience of delivering in a culturally sensitive and equitable way

Projects must meet these criteria to be eligible for this grant round. If you are unclear on eligibility, please contact: [grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)





# Specific guidance

## YEF’s approach to Evaluation

Please keep YEF’s position on the following aspects of evaluation design in mind during the EOI, full proposal and co-design stages. These are ‘red lines’ for YEF. We do not compromise on them, unless a very good case can be made for doing so. These ‘red lines’ should be reflected in the final evaluation design and protocol.

Please see our [Evaluator Resources Page](#) for further guidance, templates and policies. We advise you to consider these before completing your application.

**Table 1. YEF ‘redlines’**

<b>RANDOMISATION</b>	We require the evaluation design to be a <b>randomised design</b> wherever possible <sup>1</sup>
<b>WAITLIST DESIGNS</b>	YEF evaluations should <b>avoid waitlist designs</b> .
<b>GROUP ALLOCATION RATIOS</b>	The group allocation (i.e. intervention vs. control) in YEF evaluations should be on a <b>1:1 basis</b> . Trials using unequal allocation will either have less statistical power or require the recruitment of more children and young people than is necessary <sup>2</sup>
<b>MDES</b>	<p>We know that there is a strong upward bias in the existing literature which can give a distorted picture of likely effect sizes. There is therefore a downward pressure on Minimum Detectable Effect Sizes (MDES) for YEF studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For evaluations where the primary outcome is a continuous variable (e.g., behavioural difficulties measured using the SDQ), an <b>MDES of <math>\leq 0.2</math></b> is a good starting point. We would expect to see citations to high quality, independent, unbiased studies to justify MDES higher than 0.2.</li> <li>• For evaluations where the primary outcome is a binary variable (e.g. crime data such as whether CYP have been arrested/cautioned or not) the same downward pressure applies and evaluators should provide clear rationale for the MDES.</li> </ul> <p>Evaluators should use the template below (Table 2) to set out power calculations and the underpinning assumptions/ parameters in their full proposal (during the commissioning stage) and in the draft protocol (at the end of the co-design stage).</p>
<b>PRE-POST CORRELATION</b>	<p>We require evaluators to include an <b>initial estimate of the expected pre-post correlation for the primary outcome</b> as a parameter in power calculations for all proposed RCTs. Estimates should be based on prior research conducted with similar target populations using the same proposed measure.</p> <p>This estimate may be revised in the protocol at a later point in evaluation delivery to improve on its accuracy based on, for example, new pre-post correlations published by other researchers during the YEF trial, or using data collected from the YEF-trial to date (i.e. internal pilot data). Pre-post correlations can also be revised as part of the Statistical Analysis Plan for the YEF trial, written 3 months after the completion of randomisation.</p> <p>For trials where the primary outcome is not continuous, equivalent estimates of correlation for count data (i.e. odds ratio) should be obtained from the best available evidence at the time of proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances will pre-post correlations of zero be permissible, even in cases where evaluators would prefer a ‘conservative’ approach be taken.</p>

<sup>1</sup> While we acknowledge this is not always feasible for every project, we expect all evaluators to first explore randomisation as far as possible with projects before moving on to discuss other robust impact evaluation designs.

<sup>2</sup> [The questionable use of unequal allocation in confirmatory trials - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

<p><b>INTERNAL PILOTS</b></p>	<p>For some studies, we're sometimes interested in conducting an 'internal pilot' as a precursor to a full efficacy study. In such cases, the internal pilot may form the first part of the trial and the outcome data generated may contribute to the final analyses (i.e. data pooling). The purpose of internal pilots is usually to test the feasibility and/or acceptability of specific elements of the proposed efficacy study. For example, the feasibility of recruitment, randomisation, or consent processes, or the acceptability of measures with CYP/their families. Each element to be tested should be included as pre-specified 'progression criteria' written into the protocol for the efficacy study. At an appropriate 'transition point' pre-agreed between YEF and the evaluator, we will require evaluators to complete a progression recommendation form for YEF reporting Red/Amber/Green progress against each of the criteria alongside a supporting narrative for each. This recommendation will then inform YEF's final decision as to whether progression to the full efficacy trial should be granted.</p> <p>Reports presenting final findings from internal pilot studies are not typically funded by YEF, other than in exceptional circumstances where internal pilots are long (i.e. &gt;1 year) therefore meaning timely publication of findings for the general public is deemed essential.</p> <p>Internal pilots are in contrast to an 'external pilot'; a rehearsal of an efficacy study where the outcome data aren't included as part of the main data set.<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>ATTRITION</b></p>	<p>Evaluations should aim to keep <b>attrition ≤ 10%</b>.</p> <p>During co-design we expect evaluators and projects to work together to plan how they aim to keep attrition rates low. Evaluators and projects should plan how they can encourage and support CYP to engage with the evaluation and complete the measurement tools.</p>
<p><b>PRIMARY VS SECONDARY OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p>We expect YEF evaluations to have <b>one primary outcome</b>. The primary outcome must be at the child/young person level.</p> <p>Multiple secondary outcomes may be measured but evaluators should consider the potential impact the number of measures may have on attrition and avoid duplication, ensuring that tools aren't measuring the same constructs. The <a href="#">YEF Outcomes Framework</a> provides information on YEF primary and secondary outcomes.</p>
<p><b>PRIMARY OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p>In most cases, YEF will have provided an indication of what the primary outcome for the evaluation should be in the specification. The primary outcome chosen should align with the target cohort of CYP the project aims to deliver to. For example, behavioural difficulties are likely to be most appropriate for target cohorts made up exclusively of CYP considered to be of a 'secondary-level' of need ('at risk' of involvement in crime and violence). Offending behaviours, on the other hand, is likely to more appropriate where projects are delivering to a target cohort of CYP of a 'tertiary-level' of need (already involved in the Youth Justice System) or 'blended' cohorts whereby CYP of both a secondary and tertiary level of need may be eligible for the intervention.</p> <p>Where offending behaviour (violent and non-violent) is the primary outcome, we expect this to be measured using either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Administrative data</b> – This may include using data derived from the Police National Database held by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), or routine Service User Monitoring (SUM) data collected by Violence Reduction Partnerships (VRPs) combined with regional-level police data (where sample size allows)</li> <li>• <b>Self-report data</b> – This may include any child-level self-report measure from our <a href="#">Measures Database</a>, e.g. the self-reported delinquency scale (<a href="#">SRDS</a>)</li> </ul> <p>Secondary outcomes must be specified in the refined ToC submitted to YEF at the end of the codesign process and should be theoretically relevant to the primary outcome.</p>

3 Avery, K. N., Williamson, P. R., Gamble, C., Francischetto, E. O. C., Metcalfe, C., Davidson, P., ... & Blazeby, J. M. (2017). Informing efficient randomised controlled trials: exploration of challenges in developing progression criteria for internal pilot studies. *BMJ open*, 7(2), e013537.



<b>MEASUREMENT (GENERAL)</b>	<p>When choosing outcome measures, evaluators are expected to consider their <b>validity and reliability</b> and should strive to <b>minimise the burden</b> on participants and potential impact on attrition, particularly avoiding large numbers of secondary outcome measures.</p> <p>Please refer to our <a href="#">YEF's Measures Database &amp; Outcomes Framework</a>. Our <b>Outcomes Framework</b> provides a comprehensive list of key outcomes research highlights as having the potential to reduce the risk of CYP becoming involved in crime and violence, while our <b>Measures Database</b> identifies instruments suited to measuring these outcomes.</p> <p>The <b>YEF has core measures</b>. Where relevant to the project's theory of change the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Self-Report Delinquency Scale (SRDS) should be used.</p> <p>Typically, we would expect YEF evaluations to have <b>two measurement points</b>: baseline and endline. A further follow-up period will need to be strongly justified and make sense for the project's Theory of Change.</p>
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC DATA</b>	<p>All YEF evaluations must collect demographic data across the following three categories: ethnicity, sex and age. Further information can be found in <a href="#">YEF's policy on collection of demographic data</a>.</p>
<b>YEF DATA ARCHIVE</b>	<p>Data from YEF pilot and impact evaluations will need to be transferred to the <a href="#">YEF data archive</a>. To do this, evaluators will need to collect and store personal data on young people that take part in YEF funded activities (including any comparison or control group) so they can be identified in criminal justice records in the future.</p>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS EVALUATION (IPE)</b>	<p>For all efficacy studies with internal pilots an integrated implementation and process evaluation (IPE) must be undertaken alongside the pilot and efficacy phases. It is especially important that the IPE for all evaluations explores in detail the quality, dosage and fidelity of the intervention.</p>
<b>INCLUDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE</b>	<p>Within the IPE, we expect evaluators to have included methods which capture a diverse range of children and young people's (CYP) experiences of the project and evaluation. When designing the IPE studies, evaluators should consider the following key principles as a starting point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The sample includes a diverse range of CYPs' experiences are reflected in the final qualitative data analysed</b> by planning an appropriate sampling frame that promotes intersectionality across characteristics such as race, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, among others.</li> <li>- <b>The amount and quality of qualitative data collected from CYP is proportionate to that collected from adults</b> (i.e. practitioners, families) to ensure that the experiences of CYP are prioritised.</li> <li>- <b>There are multiple ways in which CYP can contribute and express their experiences not limited to any one method of expression</b> (e.g., individual child-adult interviews only) with creative, participatory and alternative approaches afforded wherever possible (e.g., photovoice, drawing/visual means of expression, observations, informal group discussions, story gathering and working with YP to share their stories in an authentic way which is empowering and not extractive).</li> </ul>
<b>RACE EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION</b>	<p>All YEF evaluations must be designed in a culturally sensitive, inclusive and equitable way. <b>Full proposals will be scored against the extent to which race equity, diversity and inclusion has been considered.</b> Further information is provided below.</p>
<b>EVALUATION BUDGET</b>	<p>Evaluators should fully engage with <a href="#">YEF's Evaluation Budget guidance</a> and ensure that final budgets align with what's laid out in the budget guidance.</p>
<b>BUSINESS AS USUAL (BAU)</b>	<p>We expect the evaluator to provide a very clear and transparent description of what is being provided to the control group as BAU.</p>

<b>INVOLVEMENT OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPERS/ LICENSE HOLDER</b>	<p>The programme developer/license holder should be involved from the early stages of set-up and be consulted on key aspects of design i.e. outcome measurement (where applicable).</p>
<b>CODESIGN PERIOD</b>	<p>All projects will be taken through to a 'codesign' stage where the evaluator and delivery organisation will be paired to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Produce a refined Theory of Change (ToC)</b> – Most projects have an existing ToC, but these may require refinement, guided by the appointed evaluator, to ensure it is fit for purpose for a YEF evaluation with appropriate and measurable secondary and primary outcomes. The ToC should also clearly articulate 'what' the intervention is and 'who' the target population are (pre-specified list of characteristics that CYP eligible). We will require the finalised ToC to be submitted at two points during codesign: an initial draft YEF will review and provide feedback on, and a final draft (submitted as an appendix in the protocol) which YEF will review against the initial feedback provided to ensure this has been incorporated into the final output.</li> <li>2. <b>Refine the proposed intervention to ensure it is evaluable as an impact evaluation (RCT) where the evaluation specification requires it</b> – this should involve consideration of the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is a typical journey of a young person through their project?</li> <li>- What data is collected and by whom along the journey?</li> <li>- What does business as usual look like in their context, and what does this mean for the control group?</li> <li>- What can they do to ensure that of all CYP reached through the project, a proportionate number of the total sample are CYP from Black, Asian, or other Minoritised Ethnic backgrounds?</li> <li>- Can the project be delivered and evaluated in a racially equitable way?</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <b>Work with the project team to develop a clear, joint final proposal for our Grants and Evaluation Committee (GEC) in early 2025.</b> We will require the final full proposal to include the following key outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protocol</li> <li>- ToC (as an appendix in the protocol)</li> <li>- Evaluation budget (using YEF template)</li> <li>- Joint risk register (using YEF template)</li> <li>- Joint gantt chart (using YEF template)</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Successful evaluators will be appointed following submission of a full proposal and interview. Once appointed, evaluators will lead the co-design process.</p> <p>Please note that evaluators will be expected to facilitate at least one ToC workshop (approximately 1.5 hours), followed by a co-design period involving a minimum of 2-3 workshops (each of approximately 2 hours) involving the relevant members from the evaluation team and project team. In between the co-design workshops, it is expected that work will be conducted by both the project and evaluator teams to complete key tasks. All workshops are led and chaired by the evaluation team.</p> <p>The number of meetings and workshops varies, but we usually recommend teams allow for around 35 hours, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>ToC workshops</b> – 3 hours of meeting time per evaluator</li> <li>5. <b>Co-design workshops</b> – 8 hours of meeting time per evaluator</li> <li>6. <b>Work between co-design meetings</b> – 15 hours per evaluator</li> <li>7. <b>Submitting the final proposal</b> – 8 hours per evaluator</li> </ol> <p>Please see our <a href="#">commissioning guidance</a> for more detail regarding co-design.</p> <p>Payment for work undertaken during codesign will be paid regardless of whether the evaluation is approved by our GEC and the amount to be paid will be agreed in writing by YEF prior to codesign work commencing.</p>

**YEF TEMPLATES**

Outputs (e.g. protocols, statistical analysis plans, evaluation reports) should use YEF templates. These can be found [here](#).

## Sample size calculations

**Table 2. Template for sample size calculations**

		PARAMETER
<b>MINIMUM DETECTABLE EFFECT SIZE (MDES)</b>		
<b>PRE-TEST/ POST-TEST CORRELATIONS</b>	<b>LEVEL 1 (PARTICIPANT)</b>	
	<b>LEVEL 2 (CLUSTER)</b>	
<b>INTRACLUSTER CORRELATIONS (ICCS)</b>	<b>LEVEL 1 (PARTICIPANT)</b>	
	<b>LEVEL 2 (CLUSTER)</b>	
<b>ALPHA<sup>1</sup></b>		
<b>POWER</b>		
<b>ONE-SIDED OR TWO-SIDED?</b>		
<b>AVERAGE CLUSTER SIZE (IF CLUSTERED)</b>		
<b>NUMBER OF CLUSTERS<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>INTERVENTION</b>	
	<b>CONTROL</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>INTERVENTION</b>	
	<b>CONTROL</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Please adjust as necessary for trials with multiple primary outcomes, 3-arm trials, etc., when a Bonferroni correction is used to account for family-wise errors.

<sup>2</sup> Please state how the data is clustered, if there is any clustering (e.g. by delivery practitioner or setting).



### 3. How to apply: using our online portal

When you've thought about the evidence and the scope of this grant round, you can start your application online.

Application forms are split into two parts.

- ♦ **Part One** – A high level summary of the proposed intervention and target cohort
- ♦ **Part Two** – Further detail on the intervention and the delivery organisation

There are separate forms for evaluators and delivery organisations. Proposals from partnerships between delivery organisations and evaluations should be led by the delivery organisation and completed on the delivery organisation form. If successful, proposed evaluators will be considered and assessed separately.

#### Important application tip

We'd recommend writing your responses in a document that you regularly save and then copy your responses into our form when you're happy with them. That way, if there are any technical issues, you won't have lost your work.

#### Step one: find the form

[Click this link to open part one of the application](#)

Please see the Open Call website for application assessment dates. If we believe your proposal has promise, we will send you a link to the part two application. We recommend using Google Chrome as your browser if you can.

#### Step two: enter your information

Start filling in the information. We've got step-by-step guidance on how to respond to each question in this guidance – [see How to apply: how to respond to our questions – a step-by-step guide.](#)

**When you're writing, please don't use the forward and back buttons on your browser, as you could lose your work. Instead, use the Next and Previous buttons to move through the form.**

#### Step three: save and come back to your work

Save as you go along. You can save your work at any stage and return to it later, by clicking the Save button on each page. When you save, you'll be sent an email that includes a password. You can use the password to return to the form and pick up where you left off.

#### Step four: send us your application

When you've completed the form, don't forget to click Submit! If you don't, we won't receive your application.

When you've sent us your finished form, you'll receive a confirmation email from us. You'll also be able to save and download your application, so you can use it for your personal records.



## Data and privacy

If you want to know how we store and use the data in your form, you can read our [data privacy policy](#). If you want to learn more about data sharing between grantees and evaluators, you can read the guidance on our secure [data archive](#).

## Get in touch

If you're struggling to use our online form, or have any questions, please get in touch. Email [grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:grants@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) specifying 'Open call' in the subject line of your email.



## 4. How to apply: how to respond to our questions – a step-by-step guide

### Evaluator Application Part One

1. We are applying because we:

- a. We are an independent evaluator who has identified an intervention or service we believe should be evaluated
- b. We are a partnership between an organisation delivering an evaluable intervention or service, and an independent evaluator

If you answer b and are part of a formal partnership with a delivery organisation, then that organisation should submit the application via the Delivery Application form, unless you are proposing an MST, in which case this should be led by the evaluator and you should proceed with this application.

2. If you have already identified or engaged with a specific delivery organisation, whose intervention you believe should be evaluated, please name them here, provide a brief description and your relationship to them

If you have already entered into a formal partnership then your application should come from the delivery organisation and not via this form. If you are proposing a multi-site trial please describe your suggested umbrella organisation here. For criteria on umbrella organisations, see the MST Call for Proposals.

3. Name of the project, intervention or service to be evaluated

Please give the name of the project.

4. Where will the delivery take place?

At the Youth Endowment Fund, we only provide grants to organisations operating in England and Wales. We can't provide funding for an organisation or any activity happening outside of England and Wales.

5. What is the Sector of the proposed intervention or service?

All proposed projects must work primarily within at least one of the YEF sectors. You can read more about YEF Sectors here on the [YEF website](#). Work outside of these will not be considered.

6. We are focused on achieving positive outcomes for children and young people. Please select the primary outcomes the proposed intervention expects to achieve.

- ◆ Reducing violent offending
- ◆ Reducing non-violent offending
- ◆ Reducing sexually violent offending
- ◆ Reducing victimisation of crime

- ♦ Reducing behavioural difficulties
- ♦ Reducing drug and alcohol use
- ♦ Reducing bullying perpetration
- ♦ Criminal peers

You can read more about the YEF outcomes framework [here](#). Please make sure that you've looked at the guidance carefully and select the key primary outcome your project seeks to target from the following list.

**7. Please give a brief overview of the project, intervention or service.**

Explain the key elements, how it is delivered, by whom and in what settings. Provide only a summary description at this point. If you are asked to complete part two of the application you will be able to provide more detail. If you are proposing an intervention or approach that looks similar to something we have already funded, **please be clear on how your approach is different.**

**8. What type of prevention does the intervention offer?**

We will **only fund those offering secondary or tertiary prevention.** Primary prevention approaches will not be funded.

We define these as:

- ♦ **Secondary prevention** – programmes aimed at children and young people who are at risk of involvement in youth offending. This can include individual, familial or geographical risks
- ♦ **Tertiary prevention** – programmes aimed at children and young people who have already been affected by violence, offending and/or exploitation
- ♦ **Primary prevention** – universal provision aimed at the general population of young people to prevent the escalation of risk and likelihood of violence

Proposals for primary prevention work will not be considered at this time. Describe the target cohort for the intervention

**9. Describe the target cohort for the intervention**

Please provide estimated proportions of children and young people by each measure. These can be indicative only.

**10. How many children and young people did the intervention reach last year and approximately how many would it expect to reach across the life of the proposed evaluation (excluding the control group)?**

Target numbers must be sufficient to allow a robust evaluation. Note that numbers to date should only include participants who fit within the demographic described in question 9 and received an intervention which is largely or wholly the same as that which you are proposing here.

**11. For how long has this intervention been delivered?**

Interventions with no previous history of delivery will not be considered.



**12. Please provide a brief overview of any evidence you have that the intervention impacts children and young people's involvement in crime and/or violence**

A summary is sufficient at this point. You can also include weblinks or attach any relevant documents.

**13. Broadly speaking, what is your proposed evaluation design for the impact evaluation of the project?**

We are only accepting proposals for QEDs, Internal Pilot and Efficacy or Efficacy trials at this time. Please note that we expect all impact evaluations to be accompanied by an implementation and process evaluation.

**14. Please describe the content, methodological knowledge and experience your organisation has to evaluate this project**

**15. Briefly describe the main methodological considerations**

See the ['YEF Approach to Evaluation'](#) section above.



## Evaluator Application Part Two

If you are invited to complete part two of the application, you will be sent a link to the form. The form begins by repeating a few key pieces of information you provided in part one. If this information remains correct you can click past it, if it has changed then please amend it here. The following are the additional questions for part two.

**4. Have you already engaged with an organisation delivering this project, and if so what is the name of the organisation and the nature of the engagement?**

You are not required to have entered into a partnership with a delivery organisation, either formally or informally. If you are in a formal partnership, then the delivery organisation is expected to lead the application. While the YEF will consider all proposed partnerships we will make the final decision on which organisations partner with which evaluators.

If you are proposing a multi-site trial, then you must suggest a relevant umbrella organisation and have as a minimum secured interest from them to proceed further. Please describe the suggested management structure of the trial. You do not require a formal agreement.

**5. Where is the project currently delivered?**

You will be asked the country, region and local authority where delivery currently takes place. If you do not know the region or local authority select 'Don't know'.

**6. In what setting are the activities mainly delivered?**

You will be given a list of settings where the activity could be delivered. You are free to choose more than one.

**7. Please provide a timeline of delivery activity and describe how these activities lead to the intended outcomes**

This is a key part of the application. We are asking this question to assess whether the activities are likely to achieve the outcomes suggested, so please describe as clearly as possible. A good way to do this can be by explaining a young person's journey through the stages of the project step-by-step.

Questions you should think about answering in your response:

- ◆ How are children and young people recruited to the project?
- ◆ What specific activities will a child or young person receive and in what format? How often will they attend?
- ◆ Who delivers your activities? How long for? Where do they take place?
- ◆ How are your activities delivered? How do the activities lead to the outcomes?
- ◆ How are children and young people transitioned out the project? Are they signposted to other services? Who are these services run by and how do you ensure eligibility?

**8. We are interested in the level of experience of the people delivering the activities. Could you tell us a bit about who these people are (volunteers or paid staff), their average level of experience, any training or professional qualifications they would have. What experience do those delivering the activities have working with the children and young people they support?**

Please make sure that through your answer we have a clear understanding of the necessary qualifications and experience of the staff delivering the project.

If you are submitting a partnership application, make sure you tell us about the expertise of all partnership members.

**9 & 10. On average, how long does the project work with participants (in months), and what is the reason for that length of delivery?**

Please answer this from the perspective of the child engaging with your activity, not the amount of time it takes staff to do the activity. For example, if a key worker is running a project for a period of 15 months, but a single young person will be taking part in the project for 6 months, please enter 6 months.

**11. How do children and young people get referred or recruited to your project? What do you do to ensure children and young people of all backgrounds have an equal chance of being referred or recruited to your project? If you have multiple referral or recruitment pathways, please tell us where most of the children and young people will come from?**

We want to know why you think the specific group of children and young people the project work's with need the project that you're proposing. Please share any evidence that supports your reasoning.

For example, is there a specific issue with violent offending in the area(s) they work in? Are there statistics from police or local authority providers that demonstrate the extent of this need? Is there currently a waiting list?

**12. How many young people could receive the intervention?**

Please provide estimates for up to two years. Note that these numbers should not include the required control group, which is expected to be of equal size to the group receiving the intervention.

**13. to 16. Please provide an overview of**

- ♦ the proposed team and their track record of delivering similar evaluations using similar methods
- ♦ the team's track record of conducting qualitative and quantitative research with children and young people at risk of crime and youth violence and, if relevant to the project, their families
- ♦ the team's understanding of the context and key topics relevant for the project
- ♦ any conflict of interest the team has with the evaluation of this project

Use these questions to describe your evaluation team.

**17. to 21. Please describe**

- ♦ the evaluation's research objectives
- ♦ the sampling considerations
- ♦ the proposed approach for collecting data on cost

- ♦ the ethical issues raised by the evaluation approach and how these would be addressed
- ♦ how the research design considers racial diversity and inclusion

Use these questions to describe your proposed evaluation approach and the considerations it requires.

**22. Please enter the total budget cost for your proposed evaluation**

Do not include any delivery organisation costs. Evaluators are required to contribute 10% of their budgeted costs through supplementary funding or in-kind support. You must upload the budget using the [YEF Evaluation budget template](#).

**23. Attach any further supporting documentation**

Attachments must be referenced in the question answer to which they relate.





## 5. What happens next

### Step one: Assessment

We will be assessing part one applications at set points throughout the year, please see the website for assessment dates. Where we feel your application shows promise we will ask you to complete the part two application, which provides further detail.

We aim to assess part two applications, and provide you with a progress update, within fifteen working days. At any point we may come back to you with questions on further detail or clarification, or seek to arrange an interview.

Based on the two parts of your application, and any further information received, our assessment team will make a recommendation on whether your proposal should progress.

### Step two: Matching you with a delivery organisation

If we decide to proceed, the next step will depend upon identification of a suitable delivery organisation. If you have identified a delivery organisation in your application, we will consider them whilst retaining the prerogative to seek other organisations instead. If a suitable delivery organisation cannot be secured then we will review with the applicant if and how it may be taken forward in other ways.

### Step three: Grants and Evaluation Committee review

Once a delivery organisation has been identified and has committed to take part, this pairing will be presented to our Grants and Evaluation Committee for review and agreement to progress to 'co-design'.

### Step four: Co-design

Once you're paired with a delivery organisation, you'll enter a 'co-design' period where you'll work with them to refine their Theory of Change if necessary, and design a final proposal and project design that has the best chance of achieving an effective evaluation. This means components of the original design and application could change.

We'll work with you to make sure this is done thoughtfully and strategically, and if this means that your budget or your timeline changes, we understand that and will support that. Our goal is to make sure this is done collaboratively and you're supported through whatever changes are made.

### Step five: Final proposals

Once you submit your final proposal, which has been co-designed with your delivery organisation, we will send it to our Grant and Evaluation Committee who will make the final decision on whether or not to award the grant and the evaluation.

The length of time this 'co-design' phase will last will depend on the type of evaluation your project.





## Time

It's important to be aware that from the time you submit the first part of your application to the point you hear the final outcome (i.e. whether or not YEF will be award the grant and the evaluation) is may be between 6 to 12 months, depending on the nature of the proposal. We believe that this amount of time working with our team and your paired evaluator is critical. Together, it will help you develop a strong foundation to find out what works to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence.

