

Call for Proposals: Education Catalyst Pilot Programme

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 from becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice. The charity was established in 2019 with a 10-year, £200 million endowment from the Home Office.

Context

Our vision for a 'world where no child becomes involved in violence' requires proactive and effective engagement with education leaders, practitioners, and policymakers. Education is a high impact opportunity sector and is one of our 7 priority sectors because educators and education institutions are well placed to:

- Safeguard children
- Identify and intervene
- Provide effective education and support
- Deliver many of the evidenced informed interventions we promote
- Contribute to improving systemic challenges such as racism and poverty.

Last year, we collaborated with education leaders, teachers, and young people to create our [Education Practice Guidance](#), which distils the best available international evidence – including our [Toolkit](#) – into five actionable recommendations to reduce violence. While this guidance provides a strong foundation, education leaders tell us they need support, capacity, and time to implement it effectively. That's why we're launching the Education Catalyst Pilot Programme to help school leaders turn evidence into action.

Overview

YEF is launching the Catalyst programme to help schools, colleges, and AP settings adopt evidence-based strategies to prevent children's involvement in violence. The programme will fund 5–6 catalyst organisations to work directly with education settings in high-violence areas, aiming for sustainable, scalable change.

We seek proposals from trusted organisations with a strong track record of delivering change across multiple education settings. Grants of £75,000 will be provided over an 18-month period.

We are looking for Catalyst organisations that:

- Have a proven track record to improving practice in education
- Can support implementation of YEF's Practice Guidance across a minimum of 10 education settings (settings can include schools/alternative provision/colleges).
- Are committed to improving education leaders' engagement, understanding and use of evidence
- Will work collaboratively and share learnings throughout the programme
- Work towards sustainability of practice and support after the Catalyst programme funding ends.

There are two models of implementation support we're seeking to fund and learn about:

- **Local area catalysts** – Supporting settings within a local authority / geographical area to review practice, plan improvements and implement change. Ideal catalyst organisations would be:
 - Local Authorities
 - Multi-academy Trusts / College Groups
 - School Improvement Organisations
 - Third Sector Organisations
- **Group catalysts** – Supporting settings within a multi-academy trust, college group, cluster of schools or similar, to review practice, plan improvements and implement change. Ideal catalyst organisations include:
 - Multi-academy Trusts
 - School networks
 - College groups

Activities undertaken by Catalyst organisation are likely to include a combination of the following:

- Piloting new roles/responsibilities (e.g., a Designated Violence Prevention Lead)
- Improving systems for early identification and support of children involved in or vulnerable to violence
- Supporting the implementation of evidence-informed interventions
- Reviews of settings' policies and practices
- Professional development for staff

Programme timeline

Phase	Dates	Duration	Focus
Setup and self-assessment	July – Sept 2025	4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build strong relationships between catalyst organisation, YEF, settings and the learning partner. • All settings complete first EPIC self-assessment
Priority setting and Theory of Change development	Sept – Oct 2025		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore common themes and agree priorities for practice development • Develop a theory of change
Implementation delivery and learning	Nov 2025 – Oct 2026	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalyst organisations and settings work on implementation • Testing and learning what works, identifying challenges and sharing learnings with YEF, fellow catalyst organisations and the learning partner.
Evaluation & Sustainability Planning	Nov – Dec 2026	2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of second EPIC self-assessment, reflect on changes, co-create sustainability plans, and contribute to programme learning
Monitoring the embedding of practice	Nov 2027	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of third EPIC self-assessment by all settings, 12 months post project delivery.

Support, learning and evaluation

All catalyst organisations will collaborate with a learning partner to co-design their approach refine their theory of change and gather learning throughout the programme. The learning partner will work collaboratively to gather learnings. They will be particularly keen to explore:

- Stakeholder perceptions
- Barriers and facilitators of implementation
- Adaptations and resources for improved implementation
- Any perceived resulting changes to practice
- Implications for national policy, practice, and scalability.

Funding for Catalyst organisations covers monitoring, reporting activities, and participation in collective learning events. Resources and learnings from the project will be shared publicly after the programme ends.

YEF will also provide:

- Collaboration opportunities with other Catalyst organisations, to enable peer learning and knowledge sharing.
- Access to YEF evidence and resources to guide implementation.

All education settings supported by catalyst organisations will complete the Education Practice Insight Creator (EPIC) self-assessment three times as part of their commitment to this programme.

How to apply?

Please submit a proposal which follows this structure:

- Your organisation's name and type
- Why your organisation would be an effective catalyst (we're looking for collaborative partners who will openly share challenges and learnings throughout, and who have a proven track record of changing practice across school, college or AP settings)
- Why this programme is needed in your area / across your institution
- Whether you're applying to be a local area catalyst or a group catalyst
- A table listing the education settings you will support (including name, type, size and an endorsement signature from the leader of each setting)
- A detailed explanation of how you intend to support settings to adopt YEF Practice Guidance recommendations to prevent children's involvement in violence. Include key activities, resources required, use of funds, expected outputs and outcomes, and timelines.
- How your proposed activities will actively reduce racial and social inequalities, particularly for disproportionately affected children (e.g. Black Caribbean, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pupils).
- How you plan to sustain the work once the Catalyst programme funding concludes

Maximum of 3000 words, submitted as a PDF.

Resources

We recommend making use of these documents to support your application:

- [Our Education Practice Guidance](#)
- [Our Evidence to Decision framework](#) that underpinned the practice guidance
- [EEF's Guide to Implementation](#)

Timeline

Key activities	Timeline
Application deadline	6 th June 2025 12pm
Interviews for shortlisted candidates	19 th – 20 th June 2025
Grant start date	23 rd – 30 th June 2025
Programme setup and self-assessment	July – Sept 2025
Programme end date	December 2026

How to apply:

Complete the application form and send it to change.yef@youthendowmentfund.org.uk

Contact Information

For any questions about the Education Catalyst Pilot Programme or the application process, please get in touch via change.yef@youthendowmentfund.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your proposal and thank you for being part of the movement to prevent children and young people's involvement in violence.