

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 EOTAS settings adopt evidence-based strategies to prevent children's involvement in violence. We are seeking to fund 1-2 catalyst organisations to work directly with education settings in Wales to support practice 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.

Learning about implementation

At the YEF, we are committed to learning about the implementation of evidence-informed practice, therefore, this programme has been designed to fund activities that meaningfully and sustainably change practice in education settings.

Catalyst organisations are not expected to deliver interventions to children directly. Instead, they will work with education settings to support the change process – helping leaders adopt, adapt and embed evidence-informed approaches that reduce children’s risk of involvement in violence.

The activities undertaken by Catalyst organisations will help answer the question: ‘What support is needed – and what works – to enable education settings to implement YEF’s practice guidance?’

We are looking for Catalyst organisations that:

- Have a proven track record of improving practice in education in Wales
- Can support implementation of YEF’s Practice Guidance across a minimum of 10 education settings (settings can include schools/EOTAS/colleges).
- Are committed to improving education leaders’ engagement, understanding and use of evidence
- Will work collaboratively and share learnings throughout the programme
- Can put systems in place to support practice to be sustained post programme.

We are seeking catalyst who can work effectively with a cluster of settings within a local authority or geographical area.

The focus should be on reviewing practice, planning improvements and implementing change. Ideal catalyst organisations would be local Authorities or organisations who focus on school support/improvement.

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
- Reviews of settings’ policies and practices (In addition to YEF’s EPIC self-assessment tool)
- Practice improvement planning and support to embed changes
- Supporting the implementation of evidence-informed interventions
- Training and professional development for staff

Programme timeline

Phase	Dates	Duration	Focus
Application and selection	July 2025	1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and interviews • Catalyst organisations selected • Grant agreements signed
Setup and self-assessment	August – Sept 2025	3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build strong relationship with 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
- Your track record of supporting practice improvement in education settings
- Why this programme is needed in your area
- A table listing the education settings you will support (minimum of 10) including their name, type, and whether they are supportive of this application)
- A plan showing how you would support leaders to develop their practice in line with the [YEF education practice guidance](#), including key activities and a proposed budget
- 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 seek to sustain and embed the practice change following the programme.

Maximum of 2750 words, submitted as a PDF.

How to apply

Submit an application following the format outlined above by 7th July at 5pm.

Please send your application to change.yef@youthendowmentfund.org.uk

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](#)

Contact Information

For any questions about the Education Catalyst Pilot Programme or the application process, please get in touch with dennis.simms@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.