

Clarification Questions and Answers: Research Partner¹

Questions about the research:

'Serious violence' can be used to mean different things in different contexts. Do you have a steer on types of violence that would be in scope?

Our starting point is YEF's core definition of violence, which is: *interpersonal forms of violent offending: homicide, serious violent assault, robbery, sexual violence, and dating and relationship violence*. However, we are open to considering research on other outcomes if the research on serious violence is limited. Although the resource will focus on YEF's primary outcome of serious violence, it might be informed by wider research on crime and related outcomes.

For project 1², what do you mean by evidence security?

By evidence security, we are broadly referring to our confidence in the underlying evidence, or the strength of the underlying evidence. Specifically, we are interested in the security of evidence for our headline finding on each indicator's association with violence. If new evidence emerges, do we think the findings about an indicator are likely to change?

The criteria for assessing evidence security will be developed by the appointed research partner and agreed with YEF. Evidence security may be based on, for example, the robustness of the underlying research, the amount of research available, the consistency of findings between studies, recency of studies, and/or the relevance to our context. We welcome proposals on how evidence security should be assessed and rated.

For project 2³ what do you mean by causal evidence? It is difficult to establish a causal relationship between most factors and violence, given that randomised studies are generally not ethical or feasible.

We recognise that it is difficult to infer causality when looking at the relationship between most factors and violence. E.g. it is not ethical or feasible to randomise factors such as good school grades or experience of maltreatment, which would be the most robust method for allowing us to understand if a causal relationship exists between the factor and perpetrating

¹ These clarification questions and answers relate to the following opportunity: 'Research partner to review evidence on indicators associated with violence and it's underlying causes', available here: [Tenders Archive | Youth Endowment Fund](#).

² Project 1 is the 'Review of indicators associated with increased or decreased involvement in violence, and support in creating an accessible online resource'.

³ Project 2 is 'Creating an evidence and gap map for literature on the causes of violence'.

violence. However, there are some natural experiments or quasi-experimental methods that could provide credible evidence for causal relationships between factors and violence, even if they cannot be conclusive⁴. Additionally, RCTs of interventions are likely to provide relevant evidence. These might be RCTs of interventions designed to reduce a risk factor, such as poverty, or strengthen a protective factor, such as self-regulation, and test the impact on crime or violence⁵. RCTs of interventions are already summarised in the [YEF Toolkit](#), which the research partner could draw on without duplicating. We're also interested in studies on causal mechanisms. Overall, we welcome proposals on what evidence should be included in the evidence and gap map; inclusion criteria will be agreed with the selected research partner.

Are projects 1 and 2 linked? Will they draw on the same research?

We envisage that Projects 1 and 2 will address distinct research questions and draw on broadly different research. Therefore, they can be seen as separate projects, at least for now.

Project 1 focuses on questions of association. We see this as most useful for helping decision-makers prioritise children for support or allocate resources efficiently. Specifically, it addresses the following two questions:

1. Which single indicators are associated with increased or decreased perpetration of violence?
2. Which combinations of indicators are associated with increased or decreased perpetration of violence?

The research informing these questions will involve studies designed to identify or estimate associations between variables.

⁴ The following studies are examples of designs we see as relevant: Cornish, R., & Brennan, I. (2025). Exclusion from school and risk of serious violence: a target trial emulation study. *The British Journal of Criminology*, azaf015; Herrnstadt, E., Heyes, A., Muehlegger, E., & Saberian, S. (2021). Air pollution and criminal activity: Microgeographic evidence from Chicago. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 13(4), 70-100; Reyes, J. W. (2007). Environmental policy as social policy? The impact of childhood lead exposure on crime. *The BE Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, 7(1).

⁵ For example, Averdijk, M., Zirk-Sadowski, J., Ribeaud, D. & Eisner, M. (2016) Long-term effects of two childhood psychosocial interventions on adolescent delinquency, substance use, and antisocial behavior: A cluster randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. 12, 21–47; or Ludwig, J., Duncan, G. J., & Hirschfield, P. (2001). Urban poverty and juvenile crime: Evidence from a randomized housing-mobility experiment. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 116(2), 655-679;

Project 2 focuses on questions of causality. The findings from this project ultimately aim to support decision-makers in identifying which underlying causes to address to prevent children from becoming involved in violence. Specifically, it addresses the following two questions:

1. Which factors have a causal relationship with perpetrating violence?
2. Which factors have a causal relationship with preventing violence?

The research used to answer these questions should aim to infer causal relationships. As outlined in the answer above, relevant research designs could include natural experiments, quasi-experimental designs, or other methods suited to causal inference.

However, projects 1 and 2 are linked in that:

1. The studies that inform them might look at the same factors/ indicators e.g. project 1 might look at whether school exclusion is associated with violence and project 2 might look at whether school exclusion causes violence.
2. Both projects are designed to gather evidence that will be turned into accessible resources for our audience. In the future, we may produce an accessible resource that presents evidence on both association and causation in one place. We will decide this once we have a better idea of the available evidence.

17 single indicators are mentioned for project 1. Why is it so precise and have you already identified them?

The target of 17 indicators was set to meet an internal goal of publishing information on 15 indicators by March 2026, with a small buffer. These 17 have not been pre-identified. If time allows, we expect the research partner to review and extract information on a broader set and, in consultation with YEF, prioritise the 17 to include—based on factors like relevance to our audience and strength of evidence.

Is this exclusively review, or are you open to teams doing analysis of data?

We had envisaged this as a review, mainly for pragmatic reasons that it may not be feasible to conduct new analysis in the time available. However, we are open to the research partner conducting new analysis. We recommend that you propose any new analysis as an optional addition to a bid focused on synthesising the existing evidence.

Will data be available from other agencies through YEF if new analysis is conducted, or will teams need to make arrangements for this?

Teams will need to make arrangements for any new analysis. YEF does not have access to data.

Does YEF have preferred evidence mapping software?

We are open to different evidence mapping software. However, our existing evidence and gap maps have used EPPI-Mapper powered by [EPPI Reviewer](#).

Questions about operations, budget, and project planning:

Can we have Co-PIs on the bid?

Yes.

Does the work need to be led by universities, academics or a 'rainbow team' of multidisciplinary experts?

We do not set a requirement for who leads the work. However, please see the sections of the Call for Proposals entitled 'What are we looking for?' and 'Assessment Criteria', which provide a guide for the team are looking for.

Can we propose edits to the timeline?

Yes, we welcome proposals that suggest improvements to activities, outputs, or timelines. For project 1, we are committed to publishing a resource in March 2026. However, we welcome applicants suggesting improvements to the intermediate deadlines as long as they improve our chances of meeting the final deadline. The appointed team will finalise the detailed plan with us.

Should CVs and the project plan be submitted alongside the budget as separate appendices?

The proposal should outline team experience, including information on relevant qualifications, experience, and roles of team members. Additional CVs for each team member are optional. Proposals should also include a proposed timeline (a detailed project plan with milestones). This can be a separate appendix.

The budget template asks for number so days at each phase of the work. Will the appointed research partner have to keep records of days worked and submit invoices to match that?

While we ask for a specific budget as part of the application process, once the budget is signed off, we don't require records of the days worked and you don't need to submit invoices to match that. Instead, we will set up an agreement with the appointed research partner which includes a payment schedule corresponding to key milestones/ activities on the project. We make payments following completion of activities, which will normally be evidenced by the relevant output (e.g. completion of the protocol).

What is your position on overheads for this project?

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.

Please note that the range provided of approximately £200k-£250k is the total budget for this project. Therefore, all costs, including overheads, should be accounted for in this range. We will assess all proposals on value for money.

Are there any limits on how the research team appointed could use/publish the research results from this project?

Please see our research publication policy which you can find [at this link](https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/resources-for-evaluators/), located in this section of our website: <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/resources-for-evaluators/>. This policy outlines how research can be used by the research partner team.