



## Scope for the Invitation to Tender for Community Research and Co-Design Partners

### Youth Endowment Fund's Place-Based Neighbourhood Fund

#### About us

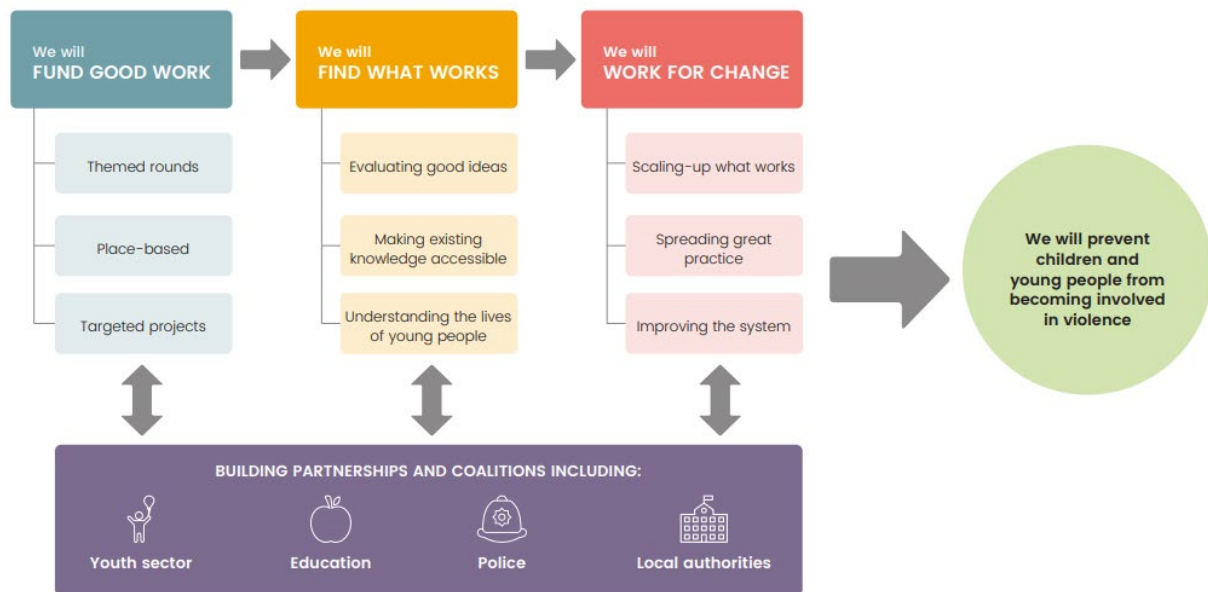
The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is a charity with a mission that matters. We exist to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

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, young people deserve support grounded in the evidence. We'll build that knowledge through our various grant rounds and funding activity.

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 young people get the very best support possible.

Our [strategy](#) sets out how we'll do it. At its heart it says that we will fund good work, find what works and work for change. You can read it [here](#).



### The focus of this Invitation to Tender

Our strategy is to fund good work, find what works and work for change. It explains how we'll fund good work in three ways:

- **Theme rounds.** We'll focus much of our funding on a series of themed rounds, one or two at any one time.
- **Place-based.** We'll focus on specific areas where violent crime is high. We'll build partnerships with local people and organisations through our Neighbourhood Fund to create and test approaches aimed at addressing local challenges. And we'll help local agencies to share power and information, through a dedicated Agency Collaboration Fund.
- **Targeted projects.** If we identify practices that don't fit into the themed rounds or place-based funding but are widely used or promising with the potential to scale, we will provide the resources to fund, evaluate and learn from them.

This Invitation to Tender relates to the Neighbourhood Fund strand of our place-based work, and we are seeking expert community research and co-design organisations to support the early stages of Neighbourhood Fund Round 1.



## The Neighbourhood Fund

### **Our objective**

To understand whether co-designing approaches with local communities to address specific challenges in relation to serious violence can work. We want to test whether such approaches are feasible and promising and if they can identify successful components to reduce the number of children and young people becoming involved in violence.

### **Context**

We know that a lot of violent crime happens in very specific local areas. To make a difference, many believe that it is essential to work with the people and organisations who live and work there as they know their communities best. The Neighbourhood Fund will test different models and approaches to community engagement to better understand how, where and why it supports improved outcomes for children at risk of becoming involved in violence. Through the Fund we will better understand the problems these communities are facing, then to co-design, test and evaluate solutions that respond to their local needs and context. We will evaluate the impact of engaging local communities in this way.

### **Theory of change**

We are developing our overarching theory of change for the Neighbourhood Fund. The theory of change will be refined with partners as we together learn about how best to co-design approaches to addressing young peoples' involvement in violence in local areas and generate transferable evidence about these approaches. Our theory of change will be shared and refined with Community Research & Co-Design Partners once appointed.

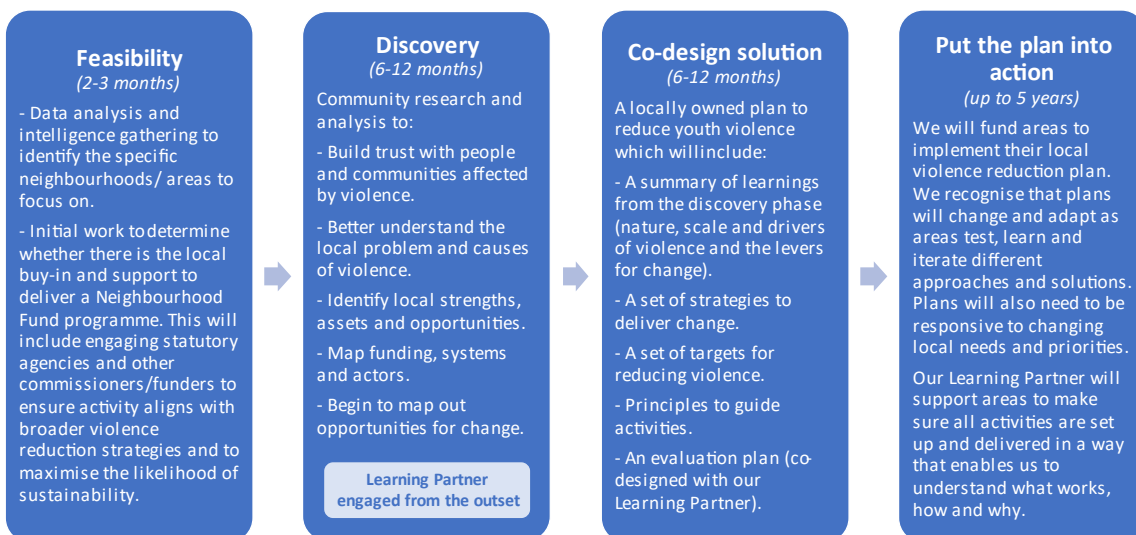
It is expected that each Neighbourhood Fund area will also develop its own theory of change based on its specific needs and context. It will be important to consider how these local theories of change relate to the overarching theory of change for the Fund. However, the ultimate intended impacts of the Neighbourhood Fund are:

- Fewer young people become involved in violence in areas where violence is highly concentrated.
- Evidence is generated on whether and how community engagement and co-design approaches can reduce local levels of young peoples' involvement in violence.
- Learning from the Neighbourhood Fund informs place-based policies and practice in other areas.

## Our approach

We will build long-term partnerships in a small number of hyper local areas where violence affecting young people is highly concentrated and where there is the opportunity to make sustainable change happen. Our focus is on learning what works for children aged 10–14 years, however, our funding can support children under 10 years and up to 17 years where appropriate.

There are four phases to this work:



We will set up five partnerships in 2021 to test different models and approaches to community engagement across different Neighbourhood Fund sites to better understand how, where and when it leads to improved outcomes for children at risk of becoming involved in violence.

We are particularly interested in understanding more about four interconnected aspects of the programme, as we recognise that any learnings will need to be understood in relation to the specific local needs, context and approach.

- **What the local context and conditions are**
  - Scale and nature of violence
  - Levels of trust
  - Extent of empowerment and control
  - Existing partnerships and community structures
  - Perception and use of evidence and external experts
  - How context and conditions change over time

- **How the community is engaged.**
  - Stakeholders engaged
  - Levels and methods of engagement
  - Points of engagement
  
- **What activities, interventions and approaches are delivered**
  - Target beneficiaries
  - Interventions delivered and/or approaches or practices introduced
  - Skills and expertise of practitioners (including if peer led)
  - Quality of project management and implementation
  - Cost
  
- **Change that has happened as a result**

Outcomes specific to each project but could include:

  - Social trust (self-reported measures)
  - Level of risk/violence
  - Intervention specific measures

### **Community Engagement Spectrum**

In relation to **How the community is engaged** aspect of the programme (above), we have created a [Community Engagement Spectrum](#) to communicate the range of different engagement approaches that we are interested in exploring through our Neighbourhood Fund. The optimal level of engagement may vary depending upon the local context and conditions, desired outcomes and phase of the project. A project might even use different levels of engagement for different stakeholder groups within a particular phase and will need to be flexible and responsive to learning. However, we believe it is important to have a common language to talk about community engagement approaches. We are interested in understanding which levels and methods bidders would plan to use and why. This will help support our anticipated research questions below.

Across all sites Community Research & Co-Design Partners will be expected to engage the local community with any existing evidence of what works to tackle the problems identified. We are interested to hear from prospective partners on creative and effective ways to engage communities with this evidence, from interactive sessions to bring evidence to life to bringing local residents together with experts.

### **Our approach to evaluation**

We will commission an independent Learning Partner that will work across the Neighbourhood Fund areas and Community Research & Co-Design Partners to evaluate our co-designed local solutions. The Learning Partner will use a mixed-methods approach and make use of a range of local and national data to learn lessons and, ultimately, assess impact.

Alongside testing whether the solutions we have funded have made a difference to the issues which local communities identify as the most pressing, we are also seeking to understand the most successful elements and approaches to building local partnerships focussed on tackling serious violence.

The research questions will be refined in collaboration with the appointed Learning Partner and Community Research & Co-Design Partners. However, we are currently anticipating that the evaluation will ask, in no particular order or priority:

- Which community engagement and partnership models (if any) contribute to improved outcomes, how, for whom, and in what context?
- Which hyper local activities, interventions and approaches can contribute to reducing young peoples' involvement in violence, and how?
- What different local conditions and contexts influence the optimal approaches to achieving the desired change and how?
- What are the optimal methods and measures for learning about place-based approaches to reducing local levels of young people involved in violence?

We will use our learning to help strengthen other neighbourhood approaches to preventing young people becoming involved in violence. It is anticipated that the evaluation will need to be theory-based, iterative, sensitive and responsive to the complexity involved in place-based approaches, whilst also aiming to draw transferable lessons.

The Community Research & Co-Design Partners will be expected to work closely with the appointed Learning Partner to develop and refine their theory of change and agree a plan for how best to evaluate it and learn lessons over the course of the project. It is anticipated that the Learning Partner will be appointed by the start of the Discovery Phase of the project.



## **Selecting Neighbourhood Fund areas**

We identified a shortlist of Local Authority areas with high levels of youth crime from analysis of available Youth Justice Board data and using a combination of rates and absolute numbers of Youth Violent Offences. Based on this analysis and a drive to test and learn across a variety of different geographies, demographics and contexts, we selected five Local Authority areas to pilot the Neighbourhood Fund in 2021:

- Birmingham
- Bradford
- Cardiff
- Manchester
- Norfolk

We will review our approach in 2022 to inform the second round of the Neighbourhood Fund.

We will work with the appointed Community Research & Co-Design Partners and Local Authority to identify one hyper local area in each local authority to focus the Neighbourhood Fund activity on. These areas are likely to vary across delivery sites in terms of size and focus. All areas will be at a neighbourhood level, such as a housing estate, a ward, an area around a shopping centre or an area straddling two neighbourhoods. Hyper local areas will be confirmed in the Feasibility Phase.

### Timeline for project delivery

We recognise that different approaches to the discovery and co-design process may take varying amounts of time, yet we expect all sites to have completed both phases within a total of 18 months. All Local Action Plans will therefore need to be completed and submitted by December 2022 at the latest.

Below is an indicative outline of the project timeline.

April 2021	Appointment and onboarding of Community Research & Co-Design Partners
May 2021 – July 2021	Feasibility Phase
July 2021	Appointment and onboarding of Learning Partner
August 2021 – July 2022 <i>6-12 months dependent on model</i>	Discovery Phase
January 2022 – Dec 2022 <i>6 – 12 months dependent on model</i>	Co-Design Phase
July 2022 – Dec 2022 <i>Dependent on model</i>	Local Action Plans completed and submitted to Youth Endowment Fund for funding approval
August 2022 – Jan 2023 <i>Dependent on model</i>	Local Action Plans launched



## Responsibilities of the Community Research & Co-Design Partners

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Outputs</b>
<b>Feasibility Phase</b>	To identify a local hyper area to work with both high levels of violence and high likelihood of achieving sustainable change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong local links established with stakeholders at local authority level and have begun to be developed at a local neighbourhood level</li> <li>• Steering Group established</li> <li>• Detailed Project Plan produced</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of levels of youth violence across the Local Authority at a neighbourhood level, drawing on available data, information and local intelligence including broader violence reduction strategies.</li> </ul>
<b>Discovery Phase</b>	To build a highly detailed profile of the nature, scale and drivers of violence in the community – which has drawn on a wide range of perspectives, data sets and intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear understanding of varied local stakeholder needs and perspectives</li> <li>• Strong local relationships with increased trust and buy-in</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of how violence impacts the community</li> <li>• Robust community mapping identifying local infrastructure, assets, gaps and opportunities for change</li> <li>• Map of potential supplementary funding opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Co - Design Phase</b>	To produce a co-designed and fully costed Local Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local theory of change (in consultation with Learning Partner)</li> <li>• Local Evaluation Plan (in consultation with Learning Partner)</li> <li>• Summary of learning from Discovery Phase</li> <li>• Strategies to deliver change, including any capacity-building requirements</li> <li>• Shared evidence-base of what works with local community</li> <li>• Principles to guide activities</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence reduction targets</li> <li>• Formalised partnership and governance arrangements</li> <li>• Detailed budget.</li> </ul>
--	--	--

The Community Research & Co-Design Partner will be required to attend regular review meetings with YEF and to make links with other related YEF initiatives as appropriate. The Community Research & Co-Design Partner will also be required to ensure alignment with local Violence Reduction Strategies and Community Safety Plans.

While this tender specifically relates to the Feasibility, Discovery and Co-Design Phases of each local programme, we are likely to want to commission an on-going support function at each site to implement the Local Action Plan. Our proposals for this will be shared with Community Research & Co-Design Partners once appointed.

A discretionary budget of £20,000 per site is available for Community Research & Co-Design Partners to enable effective and inclusive engagement of all parts of the local community.

## Application

### How to apply

Bidders are requested to send a detailed proposal. Please complete the separate response template, outlining our key assessment criteria and naming the local area/s you wish to apply for. Please prepare a proposal of no more than 4000 words, including tables and appendices but excluding budget, references and CVs.

Bidders are welcome to apply for more than one local area if they meet essential criteria and have capacity to deliver in multiple sites. We welcome applications from single organisations, partnerships or consortiums. Partnerships and consortium bids must identify their lead bidder.

Please note, to ensure impartial evaluation, the National Learning Partner organisation cannot also be a Community Research & Co-Design Partner organisation.

**Assessment criteria**

*1. Your organisation's relevant experience and credentials for undertaking the work, including (40%):*

- A track record of successful delivery of supporting place-based initiatives which utilise community development and asset-based approaches involving young people, especially young people at risk of involvement in violence
- Knowledge of place-based initiatives and networks across England and Wales
- Knowledge of target geographical areas and/or plans and methods to work effectively in the local community
- Experience of engaging communities with evidence of what works
- Demonstration of commitment to and participation in our approach to evaluation (see above)
- Three references from relevant previous contracts.

*2. Your proposed approach to conducting the work, including (40%):*

- A project or operational plan, describing how you will meet the responsibilities outlined, demonstrating an understanding of our aims and objectives for the Neighbourhood Fund generally and the Community Research & Co-Design Partner specifically and indication of which level of community engagement you propose to deliver – using the Community Engagement Spectrum link as a tool.
- An outline of how you will ensure there is appropriate consideration of and activity to encourage diversity and inclusion throughout the project.
- An overview of your Social Value offer and how it will benefit the local area/s and its residents.
- An overview of how the approach is informed by what is known around best practice in place based and community engagement work.
- An outline of main risks and how they will be mitigated.

3. A budget setting out the time for each staff member and their rates. (20%)

Responses will be scored against the following scoring criteria:

Scoring criteria	
0	Totally fails to meet the requirement – information not available
1	Meets some of the requirements with limited supporting information
2	Meets some of the requirements with reasonable explanation
3	Fully meets the requirements with detailed explanation and evidence
4	Exceeds the requirements with extensive explanation and evidence

### Budget

An indicative budget for the work is £120,000 (inclusive of VAT) per site.

### Application timeline

The deadline for applications is **28 March 2021**. Please send your proposal using the template attached to [neighbourhoodfund@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodfund@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) All proposals will be reviewed by the YEF, a shortlist of teams with promising applications will be invited to interview on **either 1 or 2 April 2021**.

Please submit any questions you have by **15 March 2021**. Anonymised questions and answers will be collated and published on our website on **19 March 2021**.

Please submit questions to [neighbourhoodfund@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodfund@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)

Date	Tasks
1 March 2021	Invitation to Tender goes live
15 March 2021	Deadline for receipt of questions
19 March 2021	Anonymised summary of questions and answers is published
28 March 2021	Deadline for applications
1 and 6 April 2021	Interviews of shortlisted applicants
13 April 2021	Notification of decision