

## **Invitation To Tender for Toolkit and Evidence Synthesis Partner: Request for Proposals**

**August 2021**

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) plans to rapidly expand its evidence synthesis on preventing youth violence over the next two years. We will do this by:

- a) commissioning up to 12 high-quality systematic reviews
- b) updating and enhancing YEF's existing study database, which sits beneath the Evidence and Gap Map (EGM)

This evidence synthesis will play an important role in the development and implementation of YEF strategy. It will support:

- the development of the Toolkit – our main way of communicating research to our audience
- the development of YEF's future grant rounds and inform funding decisions
- the creation of new evidence resources
- YEF's efforts to support the application of research to work that will keep children safe from involvement in violence

This Invitation To Tender invites proposals for the role of Toolkit and Evidence Synthesis Partner, who will oversee the production and quality appraisal of the systematic reviews, update the EGM and central database with the review findings, and produce technical reports to support the development of new Toolkit topics. The appointed team does not necessarily have to produce the reviews themselves but must ensure they are carried out consistently and contribute to the EGM. We plan to publish the reviews commissioned from this work on the YEF website.

## Background

### About the YEF

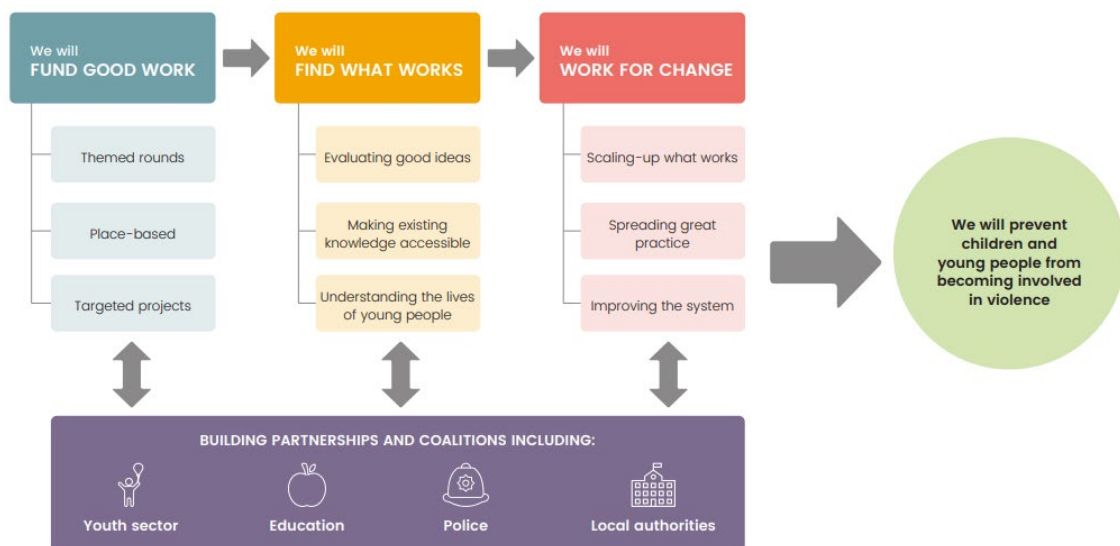
The YEF is a ten-year investment of £200m to fund, support, evaluate and scale-up programmes, practices and local partnerships with the aim of preventing young people becoming involved in violence.

We will do this this by:

- Supporting and evaluating the most promising interventions aiming to prevent 10–14 year olds in England and Wales from becoming involved in crime and violence;
- Building the evidence base for what works by generating and promoting knowledge and practice to transform how we tackle youth violence;
- Developing a ‘place-based’ approach to working with local community partnerships in selected areas of high need; and
- Building partnerships to share best practice and learning while directing more resources to tackling serious violence and building a legacy beyond the ten-year life of the fund.

Our [strategy](#) provides further detail about how we will do this and is summarised in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: YEF’s strategy**



## **The Evidence and Gap Map (EGM)**

The YEF commissioned the EGM to provide an overview of the evidence base from intervention studies. It categorizes studies by the type of intervention they feature and the type of outcomes they report. This allows for a visual representation of where evidence exists, and where there are gaps. Studies are further colour coded to enable an understanding of what type of study was conducted (systematic review, impact evaluation, process evaluation) and study quality. The current version of the map was published In January 2021 and features over 2,000 studies.

A key feature of the map is that it is interactive and allows users to filter by specific properties such as study type, professionals involved, settings etc. This is enabled by detailed coding of included studies stored on a database facilitated by EPPI Reviewer. This is the largest database of studies on interventions that aim to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in violence in the world. This database does not currently include coding related to the effects found in studies.

The EGM is available [here](#) and detailed technical information is available in the [technical report](#).

## **The Toolkit**

The [Toolkit](#) is a core part of the YEF's strategy. It launched in June 2021 and is an online and freely available resource which provides an overview of existing knowledge and research on approaches to reducing serious youth violence. The Toolkit aims to be:

- Accurate. It provides a rigorous synthesis of the best available research.
- Accessible. It presents findings in plain English and without jargon.
- Applicable. It addresses salient and practical topics in reducing youth crime and violence.

- Actionable. It provides practical information to support professional decision making.

The Toolkit does not provide definitive claims about what will work in every context. It aims to provide an indication of the 'best bets' for reducing youth crime and violence based on the existing evidence.

Each Toolkit topic is based on high quality systematic reviews. However, many salient topics do not have systematic reviews, or have only older reviews that may be missing the most recent studies. To add these topics to the Toolkit, the YEF must develop a pipeline of new systematic reviews.

## **Aims**

We have three aims for this project.

### **1. Create a pipeline of new systematic reviews.**

The YEF will work with the review team to commission a series of 10–12 new systematic reviews on topics related to preventing youth violence. Annex 1 contains a longlist of potential review topics. YEF aims to commission new systematic reviews where existing reviews are outdated or low-quality, or on topics where a review does not currently exist.

New systematic reviews will allow YEF to apply consistent, high quality methods to answering important questions. These systematic reviews will examine both the impact evaluation literature ('what works?') and the implementation and process evaluation literature ('how does it work?').

These systematic reviews will be published on the YEF website and will inform the development of YEF strategy and funding decisions.

**2. Use these reviews to expand and update the YEF Toolkit and develop new evidence resources.**

Each systematic review will be used to create a new topic in the YEF Toolkit. The Toolkit and Synthesis Partner will write a short summary of the review in the form of a Toolkit technical report. The YEF Toolkit team will use this technical report to write an accessible topic summary for the online Toolkit. The technical report will be published in the YEF Toolkit, as an appendix to the accessible summary.

Examples of technical reports are available to download from the 'downloads' section of all existing summaries in the online Toolkit.

The YEF will also use the systematic reviews to develop new, accessible summaries of the research. This could include practical guidance similar to the [guidance reports](#) produced by the Education Endowment Foundation.

**3. Use these reviews to expand and update the EGM and central database**

The Toolkit and Synthesis Partner will use the systematic reviews to update and expand the central database that sits beneath the EGM. The reviews will be used to:

- Add new studies to the map (EGM).
- Add more detailed coding to the studies already in the map. Currently, the EGM does not include information about the impact of interventions.
- Ensure all studies coded in the central database follow a consistent coding framework.

This aim is informed by the Education Endowment Foundation's work to create a database of the studies in its Teaching and Learning Toolkit. You can read more about the EEF's work [here](#).

We expect the expanded central database to provide the following additional benefits:

- New analyses. Collecting data on impact from many studies in the same central database would enable us to conduct new analyses that could provide insights into questions which cut across different intervention types. For example: how does impact vary by location or population? Do intervention impacts generally translate across international contexts? Are some young people more responsive to interventions? What is the impact of different types of research design?
- Efficiently and easily updating reviews. We will want to update our systematic reviews in the future as new evidence becomes available. Having a clear and consistent data structure for retaining information from reviews will make this much faster and easier. In addition, a central database means we only need to code a study once and it could be used in several reviews. This saves time that would be otherwise spent by different teams extracting the same information from the same papers for different reviews.
- Supporting the development of review methods. For example, developing new tools to decrease the time required for finding and coding studies. In order to use this technology we will require a big dataset of coded studies.
- Support for researchers. The aim is to develop an infrastructure that can be made available to support new research and insights. In time, by creating a system for researchers to access the database we can work with them to generate new approaches to using the data.

## **Activities, deliverables and ways of working**

### **Producing 10–12 new systematic reviews:**

- Developing a process to ensure the high quality and timely production of systematic reviews.
- Work closely with the YEF team and other stakeholders to ensure that systematic reviews answer important questions and are as useful as possible to both internal and external stakeholders.
- Work with the YEF to develop a set of standards and processes to ensure systematic reviews can contribute to the EGM and Toolkit.
- The appointed team (i.e., the Toolkit and Synthesis Partner) does not necessarily have to produce the reviews themselves. We are open to teams proposing the best ways to approach this work. However, the reviews must be conducted in a consistent manner which contributes to the creation of the central database.
- These systematic reviews will be published on the YEF website. The authors can also pursue publication in academic journals but the first publication must be the version on the YEF website.

### **Supporting Toolkit updates, methodology and writing technical reports**

- Writing 10–12 technical reports on the new systematic reviews.
- Supporting YEF to select topics for inclusion in the Toolkit
- Working with the YEF on the development of the Toolkit methodology.
- Ensuring that systematic reviews support the development of new evidence resources, such as guidance reports.

### **Updating the EGM and central database**

- Develop a coding framework and protocols that will be used in the central database and to extract information from studies in the new reviews. The Toolkit and Synthesis Partner must establish the framework before coders begin extracting information for studies in the new and updated reviews.

- Ensure that studies found through the systematic reviews are used to expand and update the EGM. This will involve both adding new studies and more detailed coding (for example, information about the impact of interventions) to the studies already in the map.
- Ensure all studies in the EGM and central database are coded consistently, and appropriate coding protocols are followed at all stages.
- Work closely with the YEF team, Advisory group, individual systematic review teams and other stakeholders to ensure that the central database can answer the right questions and are as useful as possible to both internal and external stakeholders.

### **Quality Assurance**

- Develop a process for quality assurance in all stages of the work. This could possibly include delivering a training workshop to individual systematic review teams on coding or pilot testing the coding framework with dummy studies. We would like bidders to suggest best ways of approaching quality assurance.
- Setup a clear process for quality assurance during all stages of review and how you will detect any errors, big or small.

### **Co-ordination between and across projects**

- Liaise and coordinate the different teams involved in the systematic reviews and the database projects, advisory group, YEF, as well as working potentially with other partners such as EPPI Reviewer.
- The development of a process to allow all future systematic reviews commissioned by the YEF to update the database (and therefore the EGM).
- Efficiently manage the production and quality oversight of systematic reviews. If reviews are conducted by different teams, work closely with individual teams to ensure that consistent coding protocols are followed and systematic reviews analyses and reports have a high standard of robustness and rigour.



## Outputs

List of Outputs and Deliverables
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree list of systematic review topics with YEF and milestones for individual systematic reviews</li> <li>• A clear plan for how the work will proceed.</li> <li>• A coding framework, tools and process.</li> <li>• A Quality Assurance process for various stages of work</li> <li>• Complete systematic reviews to a publishable, high standard</li> <li>• An updated and expanded EGM and underlying database</li> <li>• Technical reports for 10-12 Toolkit topics</li> </ul> |
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We encourage bidders to set out their initial thoughts in the expressions of interest.

## How to apply

If you are interested in undertaking this work, please send an Expression of Interest to [nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) by **5pm Monday 13th September 2021** (no more than 1,500 words) setting out your interest, about your team, relevant experience, and brief, high-level thoughts on your approach. We will then invite full proposals.

Full proposals should be no more than 5,000 words, including tables and appendices but excluding budget, references and CVs. Please send your proposal to [nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) by **5pm Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021**.

In reviewing full proposals we will consider:

**1. Relevant experience and track record of core project team and understanding of topic area (40%)**

- a. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates expertise in research on reducing youth crime and violence.
- b. The extent to which the proposed team demonstrates a track record of delivering systematic reviews, databases and other evidence synthesis projects.
- c. The extent to which the proposed team has produced similar resources or reviews with an impact on policy or practice.
- d. Experience of working with a variety of partners (for example, individual systematic review teams, advisory groups, funders, database/website hosting partners, other stakeholders etc.) in similar projects.
- e. Ability to manage complex projects involving multiple outputs, competing priorities, and detailed quality assurance.

**2. Methodology and approach (40%)**

- a. The extent to which the proposed methodology and approach demonstrates an understanding of the project aims and objectives.
- b. The suitability of the proposed approach to delivering high-quality evidence synthesis that meet the needs of the YEF.
- c. The extent to which the team demonstrates a flexible, iterative and problem-solving approach working with various stakeholders.
- d. The likelihood that the approach will ensure timeliness, consistency and quality.

**3. Value for Money (20%)**

- a. The cost of the proposal and whether this demonstrates value for money

Responses will be scored against the following scoring criteria:

<b>Scoring criteria</b>	
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

We encourage teams to justify the budget that is necessary for the work they propose. We are open to teams providing provisional budgets that may be amended later (in particular we do not expect detailed or final delivery budgets).

For full proposals (if invited), please contact

[nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk) for budget template.

We encourage teams to get in touch prior to submission if they have queries about the suitability of their EOI or proposal. If you have any questions, please contact [nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:nayyara.tabassum@youthendowmentfund.org.uk).

## **Timeline**

Below is the provisional timeline for tendering and commencement of the work:

Date	Activity
31 August 2021	ITT issued
13 September 2021	Deadline for expressions of interest
11 October 2021	Deadline for full proposals
20 October 2021	Interviews
21 October 2021	Notification of decision
28 October 2021	Inception and kick-off meeting with YEF

## **Annex 1: Longlist of likely review topics**

We will select the list of review topics in collaboration with the appointed Toolkit and Synthesis Partner. The longlist of topics currently includes:

### Updates to existing reviews

- Restorative justice
- After-school interventions
- Diversion

### New reviews

- Contextual safeguarding
- Trauma-informed practice
- Stop and search
- Awareness raising
- Weapon amnesties
- A&E navigators
- Arts participation
- Implementation
- Violence interrupters