

**Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences**

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| **Proposed Title:**  Youth participation and activism in urban change: A participatory action research project |
| **School:** Social Sciences |
| **Proposed Supervisory Team:**  Dr Geraldine Lee-Treweek (Head of Department, Sociology and Criminology).  Dr Kate Thomson, Associate Professor in Health Policy, HELS.  Dr Olga Fotakopoulou, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Psychology Dept.  Ms Loreen Chikwira, Lecturer in Sociology, Sociology and Criminology.  Mr Kusminder Chahal (Senior Research Fellow, Project Lead – Birmingham 2029), Sociology and Criminology Department. |
| Birmingham is undergoing intense change, which is often assumed to be in the public interest and to be based on broad public concerns and interests. Concurrently, there are growing social concerns in relation to areas of social debate, contestation and activism, such as climate change, mental health, social exclusion, racisms, leaving the EU and local issues related to community wellbeing. These urban public policy concerns require (but often currently do not enable, engage or support) youth to shape civic issues and politics, to invest, commit and get involved with policy related to their lives and urban issues. Focus on this area requires careful and well planned methodology and methods, which will enable the doctoral candidate to research the topic, utilising sensitive, community-embedded and engaged approaches to research. The project will involve the use of youth-led participatory action research methods, including qualitative focus groups and also working with young people to facilitate a youth-run activism project. The aim of the project is to explore diverse youth experiences of activism through the lens of rapid change in Birmingham and then to examine activism in action during the youth-led project, in one locality in Birmingham. Along with youth themselves, the successful candidate will be working closely with youth organisations and other stakeholders in localities in Birmingham.  **Keywords**: Birmingham 2029, youth-led participatory action research, community activism, civic engagement, place based, community-university partnerships, impact. |
| **Research Environment:**  The student will be joining a vibrant teaching and research based School and be expected to complete the PG Cert in Research Practice. The School has regular research seminars and access to relevant conferences and the PhD candidate would be expected to present their work to their peers. The student would be located with the School based Birmingham 2029 community-university engagement project and will have access to training opportunities, for example, learning, supporting and leading on training community based researchers, teaching and supporting capacity building events**.** |
| **Applicant Requirements:**  Undergraduate degree (2:i or above)  Postgraduate research degree  Previous research experience, particularly qualitative research skills  Experience of working with youth and/or local communities, community engagement and/or development  Excellent communication and interpersonal skills  Ability to work independently and contribute to a team  Ability to take initiative, be organised and meet deadlines  Computer literacy  A high level of commitment and enthusiasm to undertake and complete a higher research degree |
| **Contact: Name, e-mail and telephone number:**  **Dr Geraldine Lee-Treweek,** [**g.lee-treweek@bcu.ac.uk**](mailto:g.lee-treweek@bcu.ac.uk)  **Ms Loreen Chikwira** [**l.chikwira@bcu.ac.uk**](mailto:l.chikwira@bcu.ac.uk) |