**Project title:** Mediating Jazz Festivals: a study of the impact of digital media on artists and audiences at jazz festivals

**Supervisors:** Prof Nick Gebhardt and Prof Tony Whyton

Cultural Partner: Cheltenham Jazz Festival (Emily Jones and Ian George)

**Project Description:**

The project is about the impact of digital media technologies on artists and audiences at jazz festivals. Building on previous AHRC Knowledge Exchange work at BCU (Wall and Dubber, 2010) and the CHIME digital heritage project (CHIME 2016-17), the study will serve as an important resource for understanding the changing relationships between artists and audiences at jazz festivals, as well as exploring ways in which festival experiences are mediated by mobile and online environments. Focusing on the issues and challenges that digital media present to artists and audiences, the project will consider different models of digital engagement at festivals, and their potential for transforming the festival experience. The dissertation will examine the use of mobile technology and online platforms as tools for understanding the festival experience among artists and audiences, and provide a context for rethinking issues of mediation, participation, individual and collective identity, technological change, musical value and the cultural significance of jazz festivals.

**The project will focus on the following research questions:**

1. In what ways do digital media technologies transform the experiences of artists and audiences at jazz festivals?
2. How can digital media encourage new forms of engagement with festival events?
3. Does the application of digital media technologies at jazz festivals offer new perspectives on how these tools can support **innovative approaches to arts and humanities research**?

The successful student will devise and undertake their project collaboratively with academic supervisors at BCU and the festival team at Cheltenham Jazz Festival who have extensive experience of working with festival audiences and developing projects around the application of digital media. The student will also have opportunities to showcase and network their research project in BCU’s new STEAMHouse facility in Digbeth, Birmingham, as well as engaging with other UK and international jazz festivals and organisations through the University’s established networks and partnerships.