**Project title:** The Visual Arts in Urban Regeneration: A Tale of Two Cities: Comparative Analyses of Birmingham and Liverpool.

**Supervisor:**

Jonathan Harris, Head of School of Art, BCU

Cultural partner: Lindsey Fryer, Head of Learning, Tate Liverpool

**Project description**

The Project presents an outstanding opportunity for the appropriately qualified PhD candidate to develop and articulate key insights into the role cultural institutions have played and can play in city regeneration strategies in the midlands and the north west. Through comparative analyses with developments in Birmingham and Liverpool across a range of visual arts institutions – the candidate will construct a historical, theoretical and practical thesis on the convergent and divergent circumstances of these two cities that both face continuing major societal and global change, and make recommendations for strategic and policy objectives.

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

1. What have been, and are, the conditions and pressures Birmingham and Liverpool face in continuing to utilise culture and the visual arts in societal transformation?
2. What forms of quantitative and qualitative analysis are needed to assess the problems and what practical steps and forms of social engagement are required to bring about the scale of change Birmingham and Liverpool seeks?
3. How might the evolution of the ecology of cultural institutions in Liverpool provide a useful model for understanding the role visual arts in Birmingham could play in city regeneration strategies in the Midlands and what strategies might both cities develop and synergies emerge?

Embedded in BCUs new STEAMHouse facility in Digbeth, Birmingham, amongst creative professionals and organisations in the city the successful applicant will have opportunities to showcase their research project and develop meaningful networks and relationships in the cultural industries. The applicant will additionally spend a period at Tate Liverpool, a key visual arts organisation involved in the creative and cultural renovation of that city since the 1990s that culminated in its award of ‘European Capital of Culture’ status in 2008.