

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

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| **Proposed Title:** Place Based Community Engagement: Participatory Action Research in Birmingham, UK |
| **School:** Social Sciences |
| **Proposed Supervisory Team:**  Professor Harris Beider (Head of School of Social Sciences)  Dr. Dionne Taylor (Deputy Head of Department – Sociology)  Mr Kusminder Chahal (Senior Research Fellow, Project Lead – Birmingham 2029) |
| **Abstract:**  Birmingham City University’s School of Social Science is embarking on an ambitious flagship community-university engagement project called Birmingham 2029. This is a place based ethnographic project focusing on building impactful and transformative community-university engagement processes and projects. The perceived shift away from national and local level government policies and a move towards localism and, asset and community based development offers a challenging environment for universities, as anchor institutions, and communities as strength and place based assets.  The strength of universities to internationalise and attract talent from across the globe also requires such institutions to be embedded in the place they are based; be accessible to local communities; and to work with, reflect and identify the global challenges lived at the local level. Birmingham 2029 asks:     * What are the societal challenges Birmingham residents face? * How can BCU and the School of Social Science respond to these challenges? * How can we work with the people and stakeholders of Birmingham to understand, co-design, co-research and co-create solutions that have a lasting place-based impact?   The PhD is central to the transformation Birmingham 2029 wants to achieve and will investigate how community-university engagement can contribute to place-based change. Utilising ethnographic and participatory approaches the research will give the student an opportunity to conduct in-depth, critical, qualitative research that may focus upon one or two in-depth place-based case studies. The research is expected to be people and place focused, with long periods spent in a community setting. This will require skills in partnership development, community development and engagement.  **Keywords**: Birmingham 2029, place based, participatory action research, community engagement, 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 in local communities, community engagement and 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 |
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