



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Culture Forward Charter



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What is Culture Forward?

Culture Forward is a forum that draws together the University's experts, students and researchers with organisations across the arts, cultural, creative, heritage and community, and local government sectors that are based - or working - in Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Culture Forward enables member organisations to:

- Meet and engage, share ideas and best practice, and develop new, impactful partnerships
- Work with the University's dynamic research community, as well as our professional services experts, on a range of activities such as policy development, evaluation, proposal writing, bid processes, review activity, research, and research impact
- Enhance their talent through providing internships, work experience and other opportunities for our student community

Network members represent researchers across disciplines and diverse organisational types including commercial entities, public sector institutions, charities, and social and community enterprises.



Public Health Sandpit table discussion / Credit: Francesco Falciani

The Culture Forward Offer

Take part in our annual programme

- Invitation to an annual programme of workshops, sandpits and other events, convened and led by the Culture Forward Team at the University.
- These events provide a valuable opportunity to network with our academics, learn more about their globally renowned research expertise, and explore ways to work with them on projects that are important to you.

- They also provide a forum for the regional cultural, creative, arts and heritage industries to meet and network.
- Events are themed explorations of topics either identified by members as valuable for discussion and/or affiliated with critical areas of research at the University. Recent sandpits have, for example, focused on sustainability and on experiences of incarceration and detention.

Work with world-leading researchers

- The University has research expertise across almost all fields of enquiry, including health and life sciences, engineering, earth and environmental sciences, business and management, education, public policy, law, arts, humanities and social sciences.
- The Culture Forward Team can facilitate collaborations with academics working across any of these fields and who may be able to partner with you in delivering projects, reviews, policies, bids, evaluations, data collection, analyses, interventions or other activities.



Dr Abigail Rokison-Woodall and actor Mia Ward during Signing Shakespeare rehearsals
Credit: Tegen Kimbley

Engage our student community

- With almost 40,000 students – studying in the UK, in Dubai and across the world – the University nurtures the future talent pipeline for every imaginable sector, including the arts, cultural, heritage and creative industries.
- The Culture Forward Team will work with you to identify opportunities for students to support your work through internships, placements, volunteering and other activities.
- We also welcome input from Culture Forward network members to our programmes, for example providing live briefs for students to work on key issues that are of critical importance to your sector.



Student presenting at Eurocities Culture Forum 2023 during Birmingham City Council Internship

Explore our facilities and cultural assets

- The campus in Edgbaston is home to a wealth of [cultural assets](#) across multiple scientific, historical and artistic fields. College facilities include the Birmingham Transformative Humanities Lab, with motion-capture and VR technology, and a suite of podcasting, film, multi-media and creative practice studios that support our education and research activities.
- The University has campuses in Edgbaston and Dubai as well as smaller satellite sites elsewhere including Stratford-upon-Avon ([the Shakespeare Institute](#)) and Birmingham city centre ([The Exchange](#)).



Dr Neelam Hussain showcasing items from the Mingana Collection at Cadbury Research Library as part of the 'Qur'an in the City'

The Culture Forward Ethos

Our working ethos is organised around the following values:

Flexibility

We appreciate that network members will have different objectives, ways of working, approaches, and delivery types. As far as possible, we will work with members as a collective of individuals and individual organisations rather than apply a 'one size fits all' methodology.

Collaboration

We encourage our members to be dynamic participants who actively seek out opportunities to work with us and each other. We will foster both bi- and multilateral partnership arrangements across the network and across sectors.

Equality and Inclusion

Birmingham and the West Midlands region is one of the most superdiverse parts of the UK, representing a kaleidoscope of communities and forms of culture and expression. Through its membership, engagement and activity, Culture Forward will represent and serve our many communities.

Impact

Through the outcomes of its activities and facilitated partnerships, Culture Forward will enable the University and network members to make meaningful, tangible and positive impacts on the communities of Birmingham and the West Midlands.



Public Health Sandpit hosted at Ikon Gallery / Credit: Francesco Falciani

Find Out More

To join Culture Forward or find out more, contact the Team at:

cultureforward@contacts.bham.ac.uk

If you are interested in hosting student placements, internships or other work experience activities, you can [learn more here](#) or contact us at the email above.

If you are interested in collaborative work with our researchers, we suggest reading through the University's [research challenge themes](#).