

M4C Collaborative Doctoral Award

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| Project Title | | | | |
| Black Practice, Hidden Culture, and Access within the UK Creative Industries | | | | |
| LEAD INSTITUTION | | | | |
| Name of HEI institution | De Montfort University | | | |
| Lead regional city | Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/> | Coventry <input type="checkbox"/> | Leicester <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Nottingham <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PARTNER ORGANISATION | | | | |
| Name of organisation | Creative Industries Federation | | | |
| Website URL | https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/ | | | |
| THE RESEARCH PROJECT | | | | |
| <p>Working with the Creative Industries Federation (CIF) on creative policy design, this project will examine and address access and participation patterns for Black and Minority Ethnic artists in the UK creative industries. The project will require at least 15 months of work from CIF's main offices in London to support the collaborative element of this project.</p> <p>As the major membership organisation in the UK's creative industries, CIF's influential policy and advocacy work and UK-wide events programme brings together the different sectors that bring together our creative industries and going right to the heart of government on policy issues for the creative industries. This project provides a unique opportunity to conduct original research on aspects of practice in the creative industries using a variety of semiotic and phenomenological techniques, while also leading major policy campaign work on access and participation in the UK's creative industries.</p> <p>It is now acknowledged that there is marked underrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) practitioners and practices in the creative industries. Empirical research has noted the underrepresentation of BAME practice and consumption in the UK's creative industries as well as marginalisation from discussions of cultural value and participation. Debate extends beyond widening participation to the political spaces through which 'invisible creativity' and exclusion materialises, and divergent motivations and ideas emerge from policy. In some cultural arenas such as Drill music, there are complex and interweaving characteristics, including strong and largely independent underground practices, formal and institutionalised upper grounds, and policy assemblages that all shape the affective spaces, through which creative practice occurs. Thus, BAME practice in creative industries intersects with broader complexities of policy, power, actor-agency, and austerity that need decoding using cultural sociology and critical race theory. There are dangers in depicting black access and under-representation in the creative industries without broader investigation of hidden cultures, affective spaces, and political power, from within.</p> <p>Starting from the premise that Black creative industries are not part of the creative mainstream, this project addresses questions about the extent to which an authentic black creative contribution becomes hidden within the creative industries' institutions of power, whether access and participation is conscious or indeed uniform, what the structure of experience is for practitioners, and the role of</p> | | | | |

policy assemblages from sector-to-sector and place-to-place. There is a dearth of understanding of the role of affect and emotion (as well as affective connotation), spaces, and power on creative practice, participation, and access in black creative studies. Decoding and understanding these patterns will provide a basis for promoting a coherent and authentic understanding of the complexities of Black creative practice.

Examining the experiences and processes of the UK's creative industries through a political and experiential lens, the project will be guided by 3 objectives, each aligned to a 'mini-impact project' (MIPs 1-4), with paper and conference contributions feeding into substantive thesis chapters:

- Objective 1 – Influence and Semiosis – examining the semiotics and spaces of power that shape hidden black practice within a creative industry, selected by the student.
- Objective 2 – Access and Power - Conducting a phenomenological study of the experiences of black artists in accessing and working in the UK creative industries. The purpose is to understand access and practice from within the creative industries, by considering personal barriers, reflective experiences, and political elaborations.
- Objective 3 Policy Development - To develop a policy campaign with CIF to create spaces and resources for envisioning and enabling all cultures within the creative industries, leading to decolonising work through policy development.

The proposed timeframe for the project:

- Months 1-15 - conduct research on BAME access and barriers to creative industries, developing frameworks for decoding and interpreting experiences of black culture through a selected creative industry (impact activities for MIP 1-2).
- Months 15-24 the student will work directly with the Creative Industries Federation to publish policy research on Black creative industries through first-stage research, develop skills in evidence-based policy making, and develop experience in conducting policy campaigns.
- Months 25-33 – the student will conduct a phenomenological study on BAME experiences in the case study, identifying themes and spaces of power (including MIP 3 paper and conference).
- Months 34-40 – the student will work directly with the Creative Industries Federation to develop and lead on a policy campaign to decolonise the creative industries (including MIP 4 paper and conference).

Successful applicants will need to demonstrate an understanding of policy, semiotic, and phenomenological research, as well as outlining a viable creative industry to be researched.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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| Lead HEI Supervisor: | Professor Rachel Granger |
| Lead HEI Supervisor Email: | rachel.granger@dmu.ac.uk |