

CHEAD Conference 2020

The Challenge of Change: The value of creative education supporting inclusion and diversity

Venue: Birmingham City University

Birmingham is the most culturally mixed city in the UK. Birmingham City University is a large and diverse place to study with around 24,000 students from 80 countries.

The artistic strengths of Birmingham and the region are unrivalled: the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Shakespeare Company and Birmingham Royal Ballet; great galleries - the Barber Institute, the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; and impressive venues including the world acclaimed Symphony Hall, Rep, the Hippodrome Theatre and The Drum, one of the UK's biggest African, Asian and Caribbean arts centres. Birmingham will host the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

Birmingham's cultural diversity is reflected in the arts: the city is the centre of the Asian music industry, the UK centre for Garage Music and the base for the UK's first South Asian Music Performance and Dance company, SAMPAD. The city celebrates its artistic culture with annual festivals of jazz, comedy, poetry, film, comic art, literature and television and ArtsFest, an annual art showcase with the UK's largest concentration of free events. Around 75,000 people attend the city's gay pride event every year and is becoming the biggest two-day LGBTQ festival in the UK.

Aim of the Conference

The fusion of cultures within CHEAD has created a unique community characterised by "Unity without Uniformity" - our diversity is our strength. This conference will explore how our community is responding to change by embracing diversity.

To celebrate the union of art and design across culturally diverse domains, how our openness and differences are our strengths and are a powerful catalyst for change.

To advocate for step-change in the dynamics, benefits and value of an increased and expansive focus on diversity and inclusivity in arts education.

Content: To explore how we can develop the breadth of art and design education to encompass diverse and underrepresented art forms, engage all audiences and enrich creative education by embracing a wide range of influences and practices.

Context: To engage with emerging opportunities and contexts for transformational change addressing how our people, practice and provision should draw on and reflect the full range of backgrounds and perspectives to be found in our contemporary society.

Themes:

- Drivers of change: Political, Economic, Societal/Cultural and Technological.
- Dynamics of change, diversification and transformation: Embracing a diversity of influences and cultural inclusivity as an opportunity for transformational change. Making change strategically significant.
- Capturing change in the academic role. Future academic leadership roles, inclusive recruitment, developing and reflecting better workplace representation, equality, resilience and adaptability.
- Showcasing diversity in people, practices and provision across arts schools and multi-disciplinary institutions as a catalyst for change. Addressing imbalances of power, who speaks, who listens, who hears and acts?
- Critiquing the civic engagement agenda, who leads change in place-based strategies and regeneration, the challenge of working proactively and inclusively with communities, partners and diverse organisations and settings.
- Exploring our commitment to diversity and equality and the changing demographics of academic and student profiles. Are we fit for purpose?