

Postgraduate study



Postgraduate research

Search courses by subject area

Our research programmes involve the completion of original academic research, or a piece of scholarship, which you will conduct under expert supervision from a Birmingham academic. You will also be supported by a thriving academic community of internationally renowned research staff and talented research peers, alongside research skills training.



Birmingham – research that matters

At Birmingham, you're free to pursue your own independent research, while building the skills and confidence to make an impact on global society. A platform for significant, pioneering research, Birmingham is a hub for innovation, delivery and academic rigour. We focus on global issues, with a collaborative, cross-disciplinary culture. Combined with modern facilities and academic expertise, it's an approach that shapes and inspires all our teaching, creating and learning.

There are generally two routes to a Birmingham research degree.

1. Apply for an 'advertised PhD'.

You can apply to an 'advertised PhD', which means it is part of an established research project and is usually funded by the University or other funding body. Generally, advertised PhDs are associated with the physical and life sciences subjects. Some advertised PhDs will be pre-defined but some may require you to propose your own research.

2. Propose your own research

Apply to any of our PhD programmes and propose your own research that is 'self-funded' (by you, a sponsor, or other sources not explicitly attached to the PhD on application). Usually you submit a research proposal and identify your proposed supervisor. These are generally associated with the arts and social sciences.



Apply for an advertised PhD



Propose your own research



NOW IS the time



125th Anniversary Scholarships for Black British Researchers

Our new PhD scholarship will fund up to 12 talented Black PhD students in Autumn 2024



How to apply

Once you have decided if you'd like to apply for an 'advertised PhD' or propose your own research, you'll need to follow a few simple steps to get your application to the University started.

What to do next →

Funding your research

Each year we invest in research funding to attract outstanding students to our PhD programmes, nationally and internationally. Find out what opportunities are available to help you fund your research degree.

Explore funding →

BLOG: Starting a PhD: The Basics

1st year PhD student Felicity shares how she got started with her research degree



Not sure on your research topic?

Birmingham is one of the most popular UK Universities for postgraduate study. We offer 140 research degrees across 47 different subject areas to suit your interests and specialisms. We also offer flexible research options that can be studied part-time or online to help fit your research around your other current job or other commitments.

Browse our subject areas →

Meet our researchers



Bahadir Sancak – PhD Law



Charity Nankunda – PhD Civil Engineering



Chat with our postgraduates



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