



Eliminating barriers to postgraduate research study in the West Midlands



**BIRMINGHAM CITY**  
University

# 021 RESEARCH EXCHANGE AND COMPETITIONS

## THAT'S ME!

ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO  
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDY  
IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research exchange, broadly defined as the sharing and utilisation of knowledge through methods appropriate to the context and purpose of participants, plays a vital role in academic development (Fazey et al., 2014; Marzocchi et al., 2023). Established mechanisms such as seminar series and poster competitions enable researchers to present their work, develop professional skills, and engage audiences in interactive and visual ways. Technological advancements have further expanded the reach and inclusivity of these activities, allowing research exchange to engage broader and more diverse communities.

Building on these principles, Birmingham City University (BCU) launched the **That's Me!** Research Exchange Programme in June 2025. This three-strand initiative was designed to enhance visibility, skills development, and community among Global Majority researchers. The programme comprises:

1. **An online seminar series**, open to the public, providing a platform for Global Majority researchers to present their work, engage with peers, and develop professional skills.
2. **The That's Me! podcast**, publishing each seminar episode on a free-to-access platform to extend the global reach and long-term impact of the research shared.
3. **A Poster Competition**, inviting Global Majority researchers to submit digital posters, offering an additional avenue to communicate research, build skills, and engage with the research community.

This report details the programme's design and development phases (Section 1), key aspects of delivery (Section 2), and promotional strategies and their impact (Section 3). Section 4 presents insights from initial evaluation mechanisms, highlighting successes and areas for improvement. Key recommendations to support the programme's future development and sustainability focus on linking the programme to broader professional development opportunities to enhance engagement and confidence, optimising promotional timelines to maximise participation, and better aligning speaker topics to encourage meaningful feedback and discussion.

The report concludes that the **That's Me!** programme demonstrates the value of research exchange in fostering professional growth, increasing the visibility of Global Majority researchers, and building inclusive academic communities. By addressing identified challenges and implementing these recommendations, the programme is well-positioned to continue empowering researchers, extending its reach, and providing a sustainable model for inclusive, high-impact research exchange.

# REFERENCES

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