



Royal College of Art

Postgraduate Art & Design

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post:	Research Centres Administrator (MSRC)
Department:	Research and Innovation
Responsible to:	Research Centres Manger (RKE)
FTE:	0.6 FTE
Term:	Fixed term for 18 months
Grade:	6
Location:	Battersea. The role holder will be expected to work at least 60% pro rata on site.

Background

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art is the world's largest community of postgraduate art and design students. It is also the oldest art and design university in continuous operation and has been ranked as the world's number 1 art & design university for a remarkable eight consecutive years (QS World Subject Rankings 2015-2022).

The RCA is research-led, and recognised in the UK-wide REF (Research Excellence Framework) as the UK's most research-intensive institution – with an increased proportion of the College's outputs classed as 'internationally excellent' and 'world-leading' in the most recent REF assessment of 2022.

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for the world's creative leaders. With more than 20,000 RCA alumni across the globe, the RCA's graduates form a unique international network of artists, designers, creators and innovators. Every year, RCA alumni are recognised as leaders in their discipline, making national and international headlines for their work, which shapes the world we live in. Its graduate start-up incubator, InnovationRCA, is one of the most successful in the country with a high proportion of female start-up founders and a high 'survival' percentage after five years of trading.

Over 2,700 students are spread across four schools, studying at Graduate Diploma, MA, MPhil, MRes and PhD levels, with plans for this to rise to 3,300 by 2027. The College's mix of professionalism and creative freedom, together with its renowned academic community and rigorous academic framework provides the ecosystem in which students flourish and achieve their highest potential.

In addition, the RCA has a number of established and planned research centres: the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design; the Material Science Research Centre (which includes the Burberry Materials Futures Research Group and the Textiles Circularity Centre); the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, Computer Science Research Centre, and a future centre in Drawing. The RCA is also home to one of the UK's most successful university incubators, InnovationRCA.

The RCA espouses a hybrid approach, supporting 'traditional' making and technical skills in fine and applied art and design alongside the foundational sciences, engineering and technology which underpin designers' ability to solve today's global challenges. The RCA champions the value of interdisciplinary learning, and was the first art and design university in the world to implement a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Design and Mathematics) academic vision, with investment in new faculty posts in Materials Science; Computer Science and Robotics alongside art and design disciplines. By applying creative insights to evidence-based science, its staff, students, researchers and start-ups are addressing major global challenges such as rapid urbanisation and transport; loss of biodiversity; ageing populations; unsustainable consumption and production; and the rise of AI.

Our People

Prior to the death of Her Majesty, the RCA's Royal Visitor (Patron) was HRH Prince of Wales; however, His Majesty King Charles III's office has yet to confirm which institutions he will continue to serve as a Patron, following his ascension to the throne. The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette. The RCA's Vice-Chancellor – the CEO of the institution – is Dr Paul Thompson, who joined the College in 2009.

The RCA's academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry knowledge to the tutorial-based model of teaching. There is a core academic and research workforce of 230 FTE, supported by around 170 Associate Lecturers and a wide range of Guest Lecturers who bring 'live industry' experience into the taught curriculum – for example, Amin Taha of GrantOn design, whose work was twice shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize in 2017 and 2021, teaches in the School of Architecture; and Yao Yingjia, who is Vice President and Chief Designer at Lenovo teaches in the School of Design.

The RCA operates a high staff-to-student ratio, combined with contemporary and industry-focused teaching perspectives. It also employs a team of 75 highly skilled technicians, many of whom themselves have postgraduate qualifications in their fields of specialism, which range from rapid prototyping and subtractive manufacturing, to film and sound engineering, and from digital modelling to metal fabrication and jewellery making.

Strategic Plan 2022–2027

The RCA's Strategic Plan 2022–27 is attached. During this time, the RCA's strategic vision is to increase its influence on the world stage of globally ranked universities,

punching significantly above its weight, and attracting, supporting and convening the world's most talented faculty, students, artists, designers and creative leaders.

The RCA will remain an independent, postgraduate institution with a sharply distinctive and fresh research agenda and a research-driven approach towards our taught programmes that keeps it always one step ahead. It will focus on areas of expertise that only the RCA can offer – including some big-bet propositions where there is an appetite for well-managed risk and preparedness to enter new ventures with new associates. The RCA will lead in new fields of creative practice and intellectual inquiry where we believe

creative insights and a uniquely RCA perspective will catalyse new solutions to global challenges. The RCA recognises that the winning formula must be built upon a diversity of student talent with a taught Master's model that is more inclusive, affordable and better suited to twenty-first-century lifestyles and careers.

The Strategic Plan includes the rollout in 2022/23 of an entirely new model of delivery for the RCA's taught postgraduate programmes to support access, widening participation and student flexibility; it underscores the RCA's commitment to remain the world's most research-intensive art and design university; and it commits to a number of equity and diversity goals which will lead towards the RCA becoming an anti-racist institution. Many of the initiatives within the former and current Strategic Plan are predicated upon the success of a very active comprehensive capital campaign, entitled GenerationRCA which launched in early 2018 and which has raised over £85m to date against a goal of £100m. GenerationRCA supports major capital projects, professorial posts, student financial aid and scholarships. The College's five-year Financial Plan assumes c.£45m of new cash receipts will be secured between 2022–27.

The Strategic Plan is 'twinning' with an underlying Operating Plan which outlines the delivery and KPIs which will enable the institution to deliver its ambitious strategic plan.

Materials Science Research Centre

Research in the Materials Science Research Centre (MSRC) focuses on the invention and the experience of materials to address real world challenges, specifically environmental sustainability, and human health and wellbeing. Established in 2017, the Centre is part of the RCA's ambition to increase interdisciplinary research, particularly bringing science subjects together with Art & Design (STEAM) to tackle global challenges. As the MSRC has evolved, it has developed partnerships with a wide range of academic and industry partners in the UK and across the world. The MSRC is developing a number of research areas, including AlteR Materials, HX Materials, and has a number of funded projects, including the UKRI Interdisciplinary Textiles Circularity Centre (TCC).

Purpose of the post

An administrator is required to assist with the efficient day-to-day operations for the Materials Science Research Centre (MSRC). The post will act as first point of contact for general queries to the Centre providing a broad range of high administrative support to the MSRC team, and tailored assistance to senior staff on research-related activity and

development. They will assist in the planning, coordination, and organisation of the centre's activities, including administering HR and finance processes, overseeing event delivery and professional posts to the MSRC social media and online platforms, and maintaining a supportive environment for all staff and students.

The ideal candidate will be highly motivated, have a passion for sustainability, be able to work in a self-directed manner and will have experience in administration, preferably from within a research or HE environment. You will be a member of the MSRC administrative team, being mutually supportive and covering duties as necessary during colleagues' absences and at times of additional pressure, as directed. You will be able to confidently liaise with senior colleagues and work effectively across multiple projects and stakeholder groups at any given time.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Administration, planning and development

- To act as the main administrative point of contact for the Centre, both internally and externally, including the MSRC inbox.
- Provide comprehensive administrative support for MSRC staff for all processes relating to preparing, submitting and managing research, Knowledge Exchange and Executive Education bids, budgets and projects.
- Assist academic staff with the preparation of project documentation such as reports and presentations (both paper and digital) for research funders, industry partners, donors and others.
- Assist academic staff with the preparation of research proposals, including completing information in application forms, gathering financial information, working in conjunction with the Research & Knowledge Exchange (RKE) Office team as appropriate.
- Providing project support to senior staff as required, including arranging meetings and acting as the point of contact between research centre academic, support staff, research students, industry partners, academic partners, funding bodies, philanthropic donors and other third parties.
- Implement, manage and improve administrative processes related to the MSRC, including the creation of templates and guidance notes, to make the workflow more efficient.
- Support senior staff by providing updates on the Centre's activities for reporting to College Committees and Council, including as requested by the MSRC Director and the Director of Research & Innovation.
- To act as secretary to Centre meetings, including booking rooms, preparing agendas, circulating papers and taking minutes.
- Assume any other administrative tasks and responsibilities as requested by the line manager.

Marketing, communications & events

- Lead on the effective planning, organisation and delivery of the key MSRC events including project workshops, London Design Festival, open days, visits, meetings, lectures and other events, liaising with other College teams (e.g., Building & Estates, IT, etc.) as required, in consultation with the centre director(s), including arrangements for travel, space use, catering and preparing presentations and external materials.
- Lead on the effective delivery of regular, timely and professional posts of Centre events, news and activities to both internal and external audiences across all platforms including social media, eBulletins, RCA Intranet, website and microsites.
- In collaboration with the Centre Managers, Communication & Content Officers and Research Centre Administrative Assistant improve the quality and range of MSRC marketing and communication to both internal and external audiences.
- Support the Communication & Content Officers and Centre Managers on key marketing campaigns, press releases, evergreen posts and the setting up and maintenance of an image and project repository.
- Be responsible for meeting room configuration and set-up, including ensuring AV equipment is working, setting up video/Skype calls, proactively liaising with ITS where appropriate, and ordering catering where appropriate.
- Maintain information and digital filing systems that meet the operational needs of the MSRC.

Finance and record-keeping

- Be responsible for MSRC financial administration, including the setting up of suppliers, raising purchase and sales orders, managing financial activities using Unit4 and ordering stationery, supplies and equipment.
- Provide support, guidance, and best practice advice on all post-award financial, administration and reporting matters relating to research awards.
- Coordinate updates to the MSRC project tracker, activity tracker and PURE (the RCA's Research Information System as required).
- Keep an accurate record of Centre income and expenditure and complete monthly financial housekeeping during the first week of each month and year end accruals.
- Liaise with the RKE Office, Schools and Registry staff on all processes relating to the recruitment, support, supervision and funding of research students in the Centre.
- Help ensure all casual workers are set up on Dashboard, timesheet deadlines are communicated in advance and timesheet submissions are accurately recorded.
- Support the workflow for the approval and signature of MSRC contracts with the Vice Chancellor's office, in consultation with the Research Centre Manager and RKE Office where appropriate.
- Regularly review information created and managed by the Centre to ensure adherence to standards for managing, protecting, sharing and reusing data, in line with College policies and best practice in information security and data protection.

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records and schedules relating to RCA Research Centres partnerships, agreements and contract

Teamwork and Motivation

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with administrative and academic staff across RCA's Schools, Centres and Professional Services.
- Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Research Centres Admin team, the RKE Office team, and colleagues in Professional Services, sharing information as required and keeping up to date with all relevant policies, processes and deadlines.
- Demonstrate a professional, collaborative and proactive approach to work at all times, and be prepared to suggest improvements where appropriate to ensure efficient, accurate and high-quality administrative support is maintained.
- Work collaboratively with Centre Administrators to ensure all aspects of the Centre administration is delivered to a high standard

Person Specification:

Essential characteristics of the post-holder:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience.
- Experience of administration in a research or higher education environment.
- Excellent organisational skills and attention to detail with the ability to service multiple project teams concurrently and to effectively manage multiple / shifting deadlines.
- Experience of providing financial support for research projects, including proven ability to monitor a budget and track expenditure.
- Excellent communication skills with people at all levels of seniority and confidence in building relationships with academic and professional staff, research students and with external partners in other universities, businesses, public sector organisations.
- Ability to set up standard office systems and procedures and make improvements as appropriate.
- Experience of coordinating the processes relating to preparing, submitting and managing research bids.
- Proven track record of marketing planning, and production of effective communication and marketing materials, for print, website, social media and internal systems.
- Experience of college systems, software and platforms – Meetings (Zoom), Financial (Unit4), CMS (Wagtail), Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn), HR/Payroll (iTrent).
- Experience of coordinating the administration of internal meetings and external events such as symposiums and online seminars, and providing a professional and efficient front of house presence.
- Self-starter with ability to work both in a team and autonomously.
- A genuine interest in the work of the MSRC and RCA Research Centres.

Desirable characteristics of the post-holder:

- Familiarity with the UK research funding landscape.
- Innovative and flexible approach to work.
- Minute-taking and diary management skills.

Additional Information:

- Location - Battersea Campus
- Salary working 21 hours per week (0.6 FTE), £20,272 - £23,170 per annum inclusive of London Allowance. Which is pro rata the full-time salary £33,786 - £38,617 per annum inclusive of London Allowance. The successful applicant will be appointed to the first increment on the advertised pay grade. Thereafter and subject to satisfactory performance, the role holder will be eligible for an annual increment each year, normally with effect from 1 August.
- 25 days annual leave pro rata plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter at the discretion of the College.
- Normal hours will total 21 per week over three days between 9.30am and 5.30pm with 60% (pro rata) on site.

FEBRARY 2023

PAY & BENEFITS

Pension

The Royal College of Art is a member of the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL) which is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme. The college will contribute a sum equal to 21% of your salary while you pay 6%.

Holiday

5 weeks (25 days) paid leave a year plus bank and public holidays normally observed in England and Wales. In addition, the college is normally closed for six days a year, one day either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year, at the discretion of the college. Part-time staff will be entitled to the pro rata equivalent.

Season ticket loans

Interest-free loans are available for staff to purchase annual season tickets.

Enhanced maternity and adoption pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to enhanced maternity/adoption pay: 26 weeks' full pay, 13 weeks Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay. This compares to the statutory provision of 90% of average pay for 6 weeks followed by Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay for 33 weeks.

Enhanced paternity pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay. This compares to the statutory provision of two weeks' pay at the statutory rate.

Enhanced sick pay

Occupational sick pay after six months' service is three months' full pay/three months' half pay.

24/7 confidential support

Staff and family members in their household have access to a free, external confidential support service for work, financial, legal, family and personal problems 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Occupational health

Occupational Health support for the College is provided by Imperial College's occupational health service at their South Kensington Campus.

Cycle to Work Scheme

The Royal College of Art has signed up to the Cycle to Work Scheme – part of the government's Green Transport Initiative – which allows employees to make significant savings on purchasing new bikes and safety equipment.

Life Cover

Active members of the SAUL pension scheme automatically receive life cover. A lump sum of four times your salary together with a refund of your contributions and a 2/3 pension for your dependent/spouse is payable should you die whilst in employment.

Library

All staff are welcome to join the college library.

Events

All staff are welcome to attend exhibitions, lectures and private views held by academic schools and programmes.