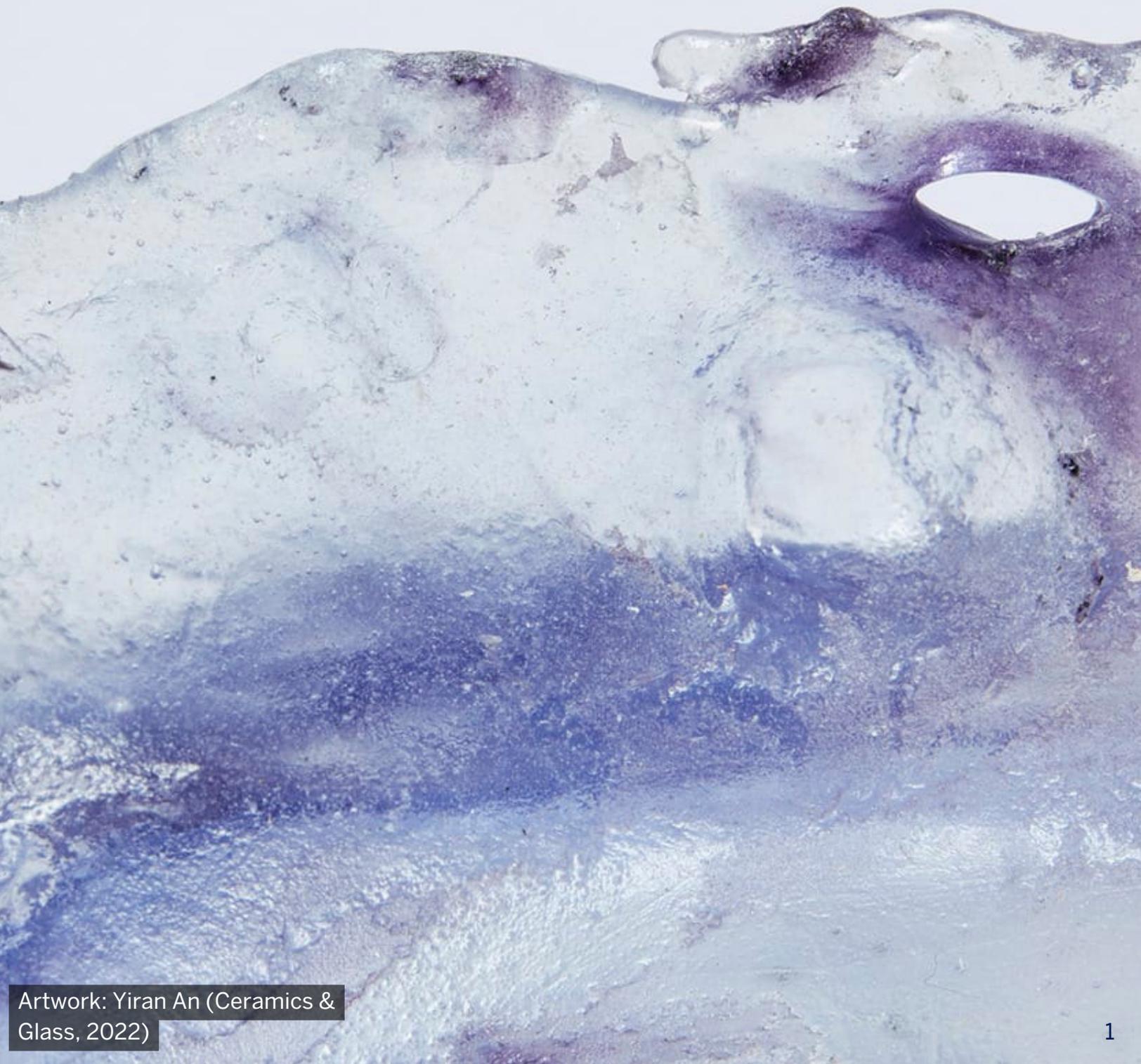


RCA

Research Fellow Research & Innovation September 2023



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics & Glass, 2022)

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Photo: Richard Haughton

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WELCOME TO THE RCA



Photo: Iwan Baan

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 one art and design university for a remarkable nine consecutive years, according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023 – the worldwide survey of academic and industry opinion.

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.

More than 2,700 students are spread across four schools and research and academic departments, studying at Graduate Diploma, MA, MFA, MDes, MArch, MEd, MRes, MPhil 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.



Photo: Richard Haughton

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 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 Strategy

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. For more information on The RCA's Strategic Plan 2022–27, please click on this link: [Strategic Plan 2022–27](#).

Our People



Photo: Richard Haughton

His Majesty King Charles III is Royal Visitor to the RCA (ie Patron). The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette (please see link to Council independent members' biographies). 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 practice-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 combines contemporary and industry-focused teaching perspectives. It also employs a team of 95 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.

Our Values



Photo: Shaun James

The RCA community operates in line with four agreed values:

Curiosity

We have a tenacious commitment to innovation and openness to change. We positively interrogate ideas, assumptions and plans and welcome the honest scrutiny that is alive in a learning community.

Inclusion

We celebrate diversity and embrace difference as a source of strength. We strive for an inclusive RCA community, removing barriers and challenging exclusionary and discriminatory practices.

Collaboration

We value what happens together and we help and support each other to achieve our collective goals. We work in partnership with our students, staff, alumni, institutions and communities across the globe to make a lasting difference.

Integrity

We are always willing to listen, we offer constructive feedback and we promote accountability, building relationships of mutual trust and respect. We are resilient in the face of challenges, pursuing outcomes with individual, cultural, societal and economic impact.

AI Design Lab (AiDLab)



Photo: Richard Haughton

The AI-Design Lab is a major collaboration between the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU) and the RCA, funded by the 'InnoHK' programme to support collaborations between Hong Kong universities and world-leading universities around the world. Building on the research and innovation expertise of the two institutions, the AI-Design (AiD) Lab will explore how artificial intelligence and design can address some of the major challenges of the 21st century. The AI-Design Lab is built around three programmes of research, all with an interdisciplinary and industry-facing focus and opportunities for commercialising the project outcomes:

- Using AI and 3D modelling to improve fit, customisation and performance in clothing manufacture.
- Using AI and robotics to explore customising products and services in the cultural sector, healthcare, ageing / wellbeing, new knowledge systems and in future transport systems.
- Using AI and machine learning to improve efficiency, quality control and sustainability in the fashion industry.

The RCA is leading seven projects across these three programmes, involving staff from the RCA's research centres and academic schools, working in collaboration with HKPU colleagues.

Research Fellow



Photo: Richard Haughton

Purpose of the post:

The Research Fellow will represent and promote the RCA's AiDLab research projects in Hong Kong, creating opportunities for further collaboration and funding on behalf of the RCA. The Research Fellow will work alongside the AiDLab lead researcher for Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) to ensure the success of the AiDLab as a collaboration between the RCA and PolyU. On behalf of the RCA AiDLab researchers, and in consultation with the RCA AiDLab Management Group, the Research Fellow will develop and submit research funding applications to support the future sustainability of the AiDLab, engage with industry partners in HK & the UK to deliver the commercialisation ambitions of the research programme, work in collaboration with the RCA AiDLab Programme Manager to deliver all elements of the AiDLab research programme including outputs (publications), and impact (commercialisation), and supervise RCA research staff in HK including the RCA researchers that are employed on the Researcher Talent Hub scheme. This position will also have the opportunity to undertake their own research with impacts and commercialisation potential in line with the thematic priorities of the AiDLab. The post is fixed-term until the end of the current phase of AiDLab funding in June 2025 in the first instance, with the possibility of renewal dependent on the availability of further funding.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- To support the RCA AiDLab project teams to collaborate with PoyU in the delivery of the AiDLab Research Programme.
- To undertake high-quality, rigorous, and (where relevant) collaborative research projects which lead to robust research outcomes.
- To develop personal research objectives and interests, working with the Centre Director to ensure these are in line with the strategic direction of the Centre and of the College as a whole.
- To prepare and submit major funding proposals to major UK and international research funders, industry partners and other funding sources, to support the AiDLab's research agenda and the RCA's strategic objectives for research, knowledge exchange and innovation.
- To work with the AiDLab Program Manager to manage the AiDLab research programme ensuring the execution of proposed research, efficient management of resources, and effective delivery of research outcomes and impacts.
- To work with academic, industry and third sector partners in the UK and in Hong Kong as appropriate on collaborative research and knowledge exchange projects.
- To represent and promote the RCA , and engage with any sponsor companies, undertaking collaborative research projects and contributing to working relationships to maintain a productive partnership as relevant to AiDLab.
- To produce and disseminate research outputs that are effectively shared with the world through appropriate channels (for example books, peer-reviewed journals, conferences, exhibitions) to the AiDLab.
- To produce research outputs that are suitable for submission to the national Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise, with a quality of at least 3* as per the REF definition.
- To communicate AiDLab research outcomes to a wide variety of audiences, showcasing both individual projects and the wider programme, including through public engagement, tailoring content and style to a broad range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- To engage with relevant academic, industry, government and policy networks as appropriate, presenting the work of AiDLab, and representing the RCA, enhancing AiDLab's profile, and seeking new partnership and sponsorship opportunities in HK & the UK.
- To participate in project and AiDLab team meetings and activities, events and workshops, contributing ideas for development, delivery and promotion of projects ensuring the effective relationship management of a major international research programme.
- To contribute to the AiDLab academic community through presentations or teaching in appropriate forums and participation in AiDLab activities such as Ideation Meetings, AiDConsortium, Technical Committee, Advisory Board, Research & Innovation Committee and RCA senior committees as requested, and AiDLab .
- To contribute to work with the project teams and the RCA Executive Education team to contribute to identifying opportunities for translating AiDLab research into Executive Education and short course opportunities.
- To act as supervisor (or co-supervisor) to an appropriate number of doctoral research students in the Centre, including those undertaking industry-facing doctorates, ensuring a high-quality research student experience, timely submission and completion of high-quality doctoral theses, adherence to best practice in research training and research career development, and compliance with College and funding body processes and reporting requirements.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- To oversee and mentor staff, including interns, project researchers, research associates or other project workers engaged in projects, ensure they are equipped to contribute effectively to the project and deliver agreed outputs within agreed timescales, and are undertaking work at an appropriate level. To line manage staff and support the career development of these staff as appropriate.
- To conduct all research reflecting best practice in research ethics, integrity, data management and research governance, ensuring compliance with RCA policies, external funding terms and conditions, and sector standards; and to ensure all staff for whom you are responsible are informed of and compliant with best practice standards.
- To support, enact and comply with RCA HR processes and its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- To ensure compliance with RCA processes and procedures in relation to financial regulations and procurement and use of equipment and facilities, including health and safety policies, working with relevant departments across RCA.
- To ensure confidentiality of sensitive project information is maintained, through appropriate project data protection and non-disclosure agreements as required.
- To undertake general administrative and other tasks relevant as part of the team's and the AiDlab's work, as required by senior staff.
- To live and work in Hong Kong for 90 days in each AiDlab annual reporting period (1st July - 30th June)



Photo: Richard Haughton

Person Specification

Essential characteristics of the postholder:

- PhD in a discipline relevant to the AiDLab's interdisciplinary focus combining Art and Design with AI & Technology
- Evidenced experience of working at post-doctoral level in a research centre, either academic or commercial/industrial. Evidence of working as an independent researcher for part of the experience.
- Evidenced experience of carrying out research projects and publishing high quality research outputs in highly ranked academic journals or other relevant formats.
- Evidenced experience of collaborative projects, preferably involving HE / industry collaborations in a relevant field.
- Evidenced experience of project management and reporting, including working with project budgets.
- Demonstrable understanding of good practice in research conduct (including in research ethics, research integrity and handling research data).
- Demonstrable ability to be an effective and collaborative member of a border team, working constructively with senior staff and supporting the work of less experienced staff or students involved in projects.
- Evidenced flexibility and confidence to tackle a wide range of tasks, with an open, proactive, creative and problem-solving approach
- Evidenced excellent writing, communication and presentation skills, and ability to adopt an appropriate style for a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Evidenced strong interpersonal, team-working (with the potential to develop mentoring skills).
- Evidence of willingness and ability to work effectively in an international research environment.
- Genuine commitment to the aims of AiDLab and the RCA.
- Be committed to the College objectives for Equality and Diversity and participate in mandatory College training, including Unconscious Bias training and Diversity Awareness development.

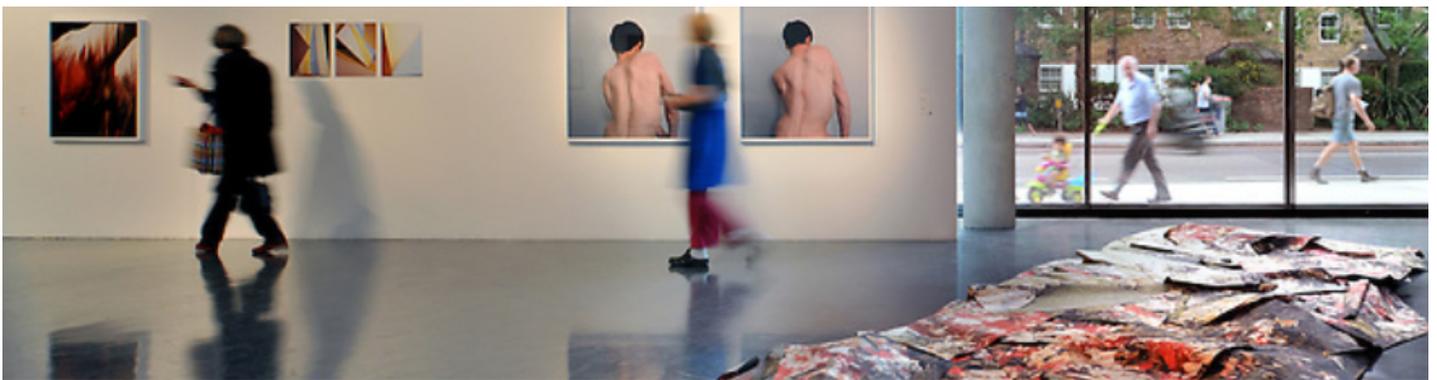


Photo: Philip Vale

Person Specification

Desirable characteristics of the postholder:

- Experience of supervising doctoral students to a successful completion (in-house training is available through the RCA's PG Certificate in HE teaching and supervision).
- HK experience and/or Cantonese language skills or a willingness to develop these
- Experience of commercialising research eg securing licences or patents



Photo: Richard Haughton

Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Location: This is a hybrid/international post, spending 90 working days in Hong Kong working from the Hong Kong Science Park each year, and the remainder of the year working from the RCA Battersea campus
- Salary: Grade 9: £51,992 - £58,037 per annum inclusive of London Allowance.
- Normal hours total 35, 1 FTE per week: between 9.30am - 5.30pm, Monday to Friday with an hour each day for lunch.
- The appointment will be made on a fixed term basis for the length of the AiDLab research grant.
- The Research Fellow will live in Hong Kong for 90 days a year.
- 25 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter at the discretion of the college.
- Contributory defined benefit pension scheme and a season ticket loan are available.



Photo: Philip Vale

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 16% of your salary while you pay 6%.

Holiday

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 on either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year. 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.

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.