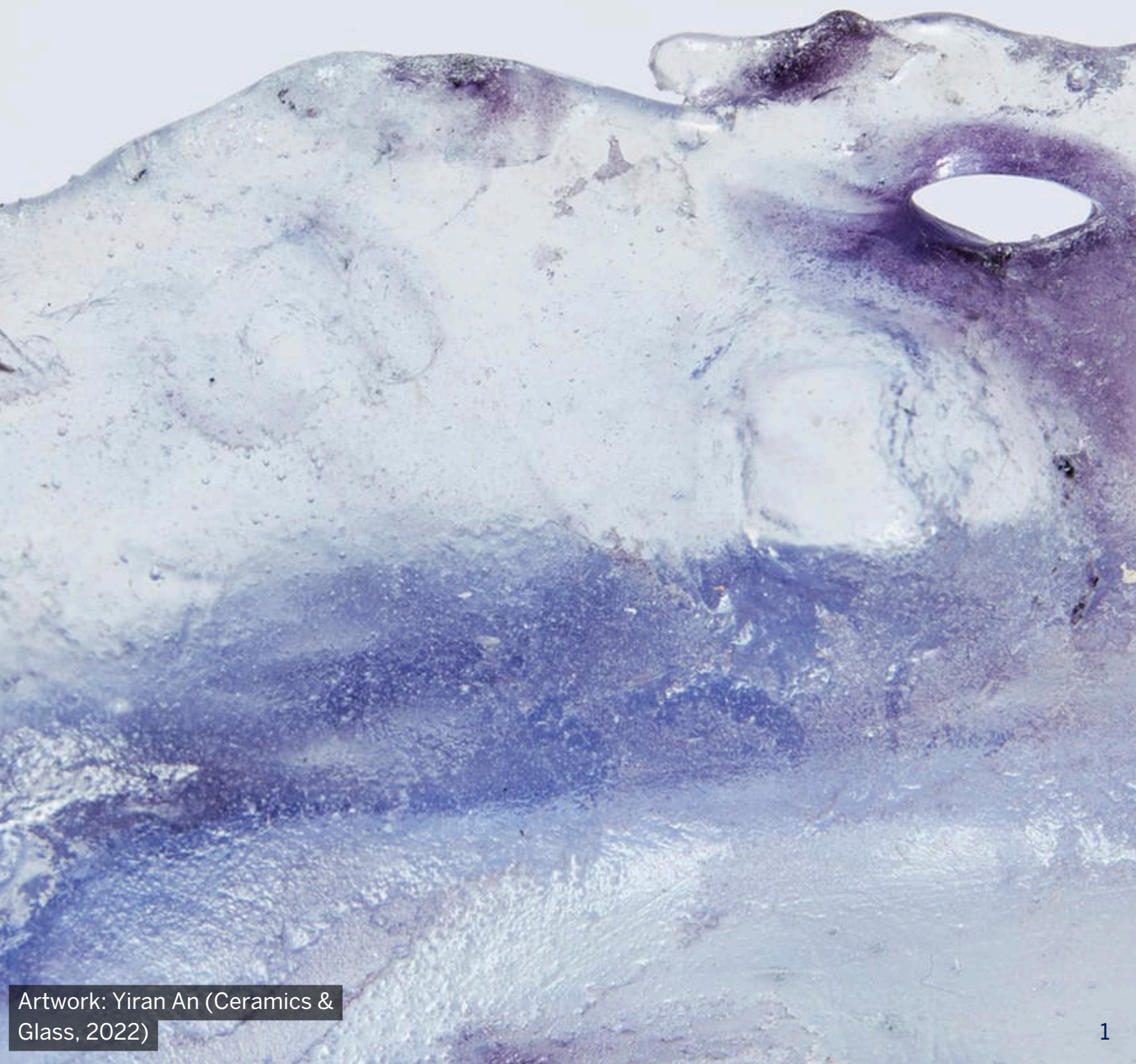


RCA

Senior Application Support Specialist (Research, Academic & Library) May 2024



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics & Glass, 2022)

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Photo: Richard Haughton

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WELCOME TO THE RCA

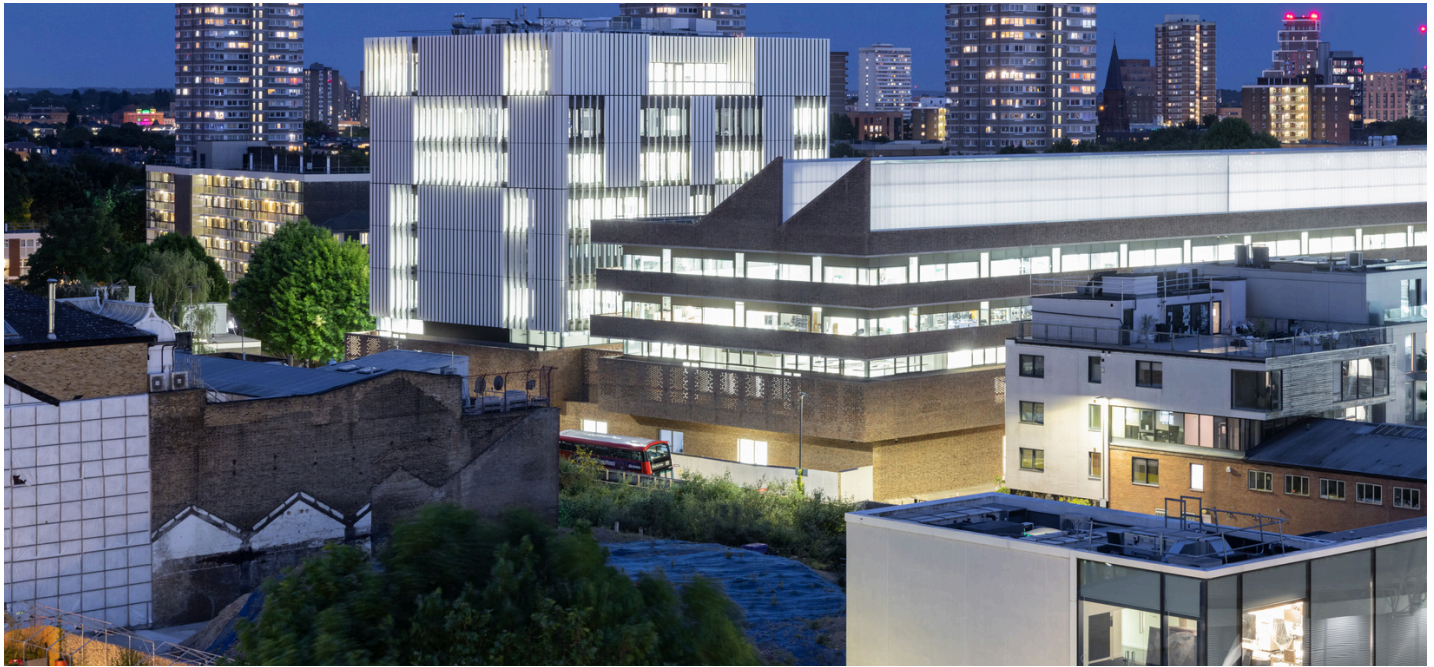


Photo: Iwan Baan

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 ten consecutive years, according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024 – 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

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 President and Vice-Chancellor – the CEO of the institution – is Dr Paul Thompson, who joined the College in 2009, but will be leaving in May 2024. The incoming President and Vice-Chancellor is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the RCA in April 2024.

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 196 FTE, supported by around 215 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.

ILTS - Digital Delivery



Photo: Richard Haughton

ILTS (Information, Learning, and Technical Services) is a cross-College directorate that supports staff and students to meet their academic objectives through a broad range of services. We provide leadership and expertise in implementing digital systems to enable more efficient working practices across the College. We have skilled and specialist staff on all three RCA sites.

IT:
IT Services (ITS) provide all technology infrastructure, software and services for users.

Senior Application Support Specialist



Photo: Richard Haughton

Operating within the Digital Delivery team, the Senior Application Support Specialist will:

- Take an active role in supporting and developing a suite of the college's business systems (iTrent, Stonefish, Dashboard, Unit4 ERP, donations CRM, ThesisSM, Elsevier Pure) taking operational ownership of the product roadmap and business system enhancement requests through from technical design to delivery. This is a unique opportunity to contribute to and shape the College's offering in these spaces.
- Support the day-to-day operation of business systems within the College as the go-to expert in first and second line support issues across a range of business systems
- Maintain and develop operational reporting within systems to aid operational decision making and support data analysis working with business teams to design and deploy these
- Take a lead role in Functional Testing of system changes and developments following agreed testing approach in line with the agreed specification
- Support handover to the business team so they can undertake User Acceptance Testing on any changes signed off within the Functional Testing phase
- Support delivery of a number of key college Digital projects in support of the College's Strategy
- Develop documentation for business users in relation to the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the College's business systems and put together a knowledge base of common issues and their fixes

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- Maintain system configuration options, set-up parameters and user permissions and roles within the college's business systems, communicating effectively with users with respect to their roles and responsibilities within the college's information technology policy and procedure framework
- Working to the Business Systems Lead, work with Digital Delivery's key customers to support the design, testing, implementation and review of process improvements to continually improve the efficiency of college business systems and user experience.
- Lead on the design and implementation of user experience enhancements as relates to the college's business systems
- Document and review current access rights to simplify and rationalise current access and approval structures to ensure greater consistency and alignment with defined role based access model, working with business teams to define these
- Document and review workflow process definitions as relates to each college business system along with associated task distribution rules to ensure consistency and error free workflow distributions.
- Deliver, alongside customer super users in the business areas, training and support across the College. Work closely with IT Digital Trainer to revise training documentation and classes as system changes are rolled out. Support development of e-learning modules for self-service learning.
- Support and work with all business system users in the College to troubleshoot issues arising in the system or in related processes to deliver first and second line support. Ensure all requests for assistance and system changes are logged on the college's Service Support Desk
- Escalate unresolvable issues to the Business Systems Lead
- Monitor and resolve issues with data transfers from the College's other systems (e.g. student records system, HR system, etc.) between business systems where direct data feeds are established
- Support college business system upgrade processes - user testing, resilience testing and any other related support activities.
- Undertake the conversion of legacy business system components where relevant to ensure the most up to date workings of business system modules
- Ensure any business system changes are documented and deployed in line with college RFC procedures
- Undertake any other duties requested by the Application Support Lead or Head of Digital Delivery



Photo: Richard Haughton

Person Specification

Essential characteristics of the postholder:

- A strong systems support background with knowledge of standard software and web-based applications in several contexts
- Knowledge of writing, running and developing business system reports as relevant to the context
- Advanced Microsoft Office / Google Suite skills
- Knowledge of implementing, supporting and/or upgrading business systems, such as Itrent, Stonefish, Dashboard, Unit4 ERP, Unit4 Student Management, Elsevier Pure and Raiser's Edge or similar
- Team player, able to work with colleagues across the organisation of differing levels of understanding of business systems and processes
- A focus on systems improvement and efficiency, able to prioritise appropriately
- A focus on excellent customer service and a desire to surpass customer expectations in all aspects of business engagement
- Excellent communication skills in writing, in person and via conferencing
- A proactive self starter able to work independently and with minimal supervision
- A proven ability to solve complex problems where solutions are not readily available nor is the problem well defined



Photo: Iwan Baan

Person Specification

Essential (cont).

- A demonstrable ability to write structured documentation in a format understandable to all levels of the userbase
- A proven ability to piece together technical process diagrams from multiple sources of information, working with suppliers as necessary to obtain this information using innovative business analysis approaches
- Tenacity and patience when dealing with colleagues who may be experiencing difficulty with business systems, guiding them to a successful resolution
- A strong working knowledge of software testing methodologies and how to best apply the most appropriate method to the context presented
- Comfortable working with multiple online platform for project delivery and design including tools such as Smartsheet, Miro, Basecamp and Slack
- Willingness to work during non-standard business hours to undertake upgrade and deployment work as needed

Desirable characteristics of the postholder:

- Experience of working within a Higher Education institution or related sectors
- Working understanding of database structures and Structured Query Language
- An interest in fully utilising modern design and collaboration tools to enable cross service teams to work together effectively



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Business Systems Lead
- Full time salary: Grade 8 £46,978 to £50,974 per annum including London Allowance.
- FTE: 1 (35 hours per week), 9.30 - 17.30 with an hour for lunch.
- Fixed term contract to start asap for up to 1 year to cover maternity cover (the role could end sooner if the substantive post holder returns earlier than expected).
- 25 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter, at the discretion of the College.
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest-free season ticket loan are available
- Location: Kensington/Battersea/White City/Hybrid
- Department: ILTS (Digital Delivery)



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. Increasing to 27 days a year from October 2024.

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 three 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.



10 YEARS

as the world's N°1
University for Art & Design

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-24