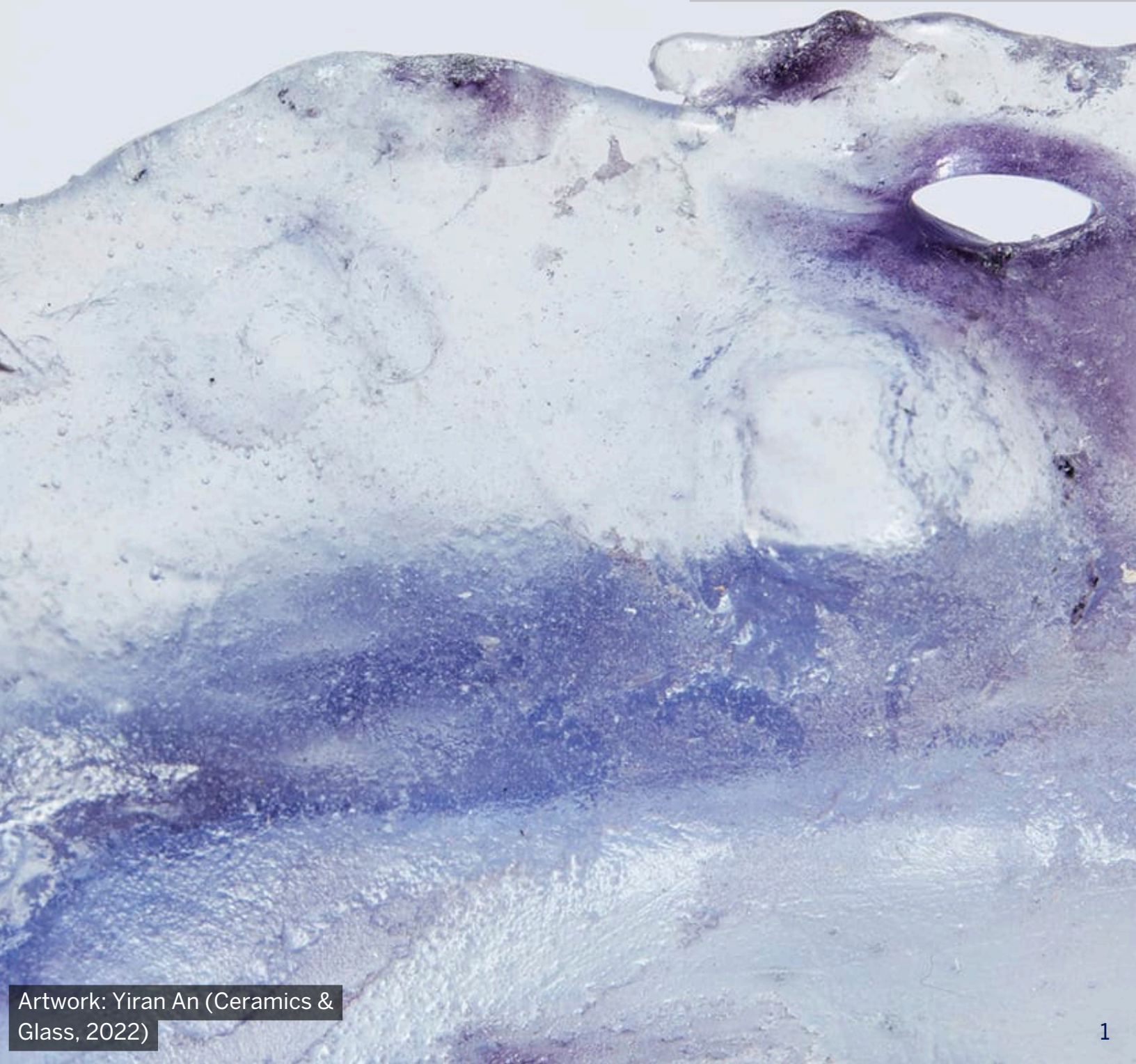


# RCA

# Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services

## December 2025



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics &  
Glass, 2022)



# CONTENTS



Photo: Richard Haughton

3	<b><u>About RCA</u></b>
4	<b><u>Our Strategy</u></b>
5	<b><u>Our People</u></b>
6	<b><u>Our Values</u></b>
7	<b><u>About the Role</u></b>
<u>12</u>	<b><u>Person Specification</u></b>
13	<b><u>Pay and Benefits</u></b>

# WELCOME TO THE RCA



Photo: Iwan Baan

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art is the world's oldest art and design university in continuous operation and today hosts the largest postgraduate community of art and design students globally. The RCA has been ranked the world's number one art and design university for eleven consecutive years by the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025, reflecting the College's unrivalled reputation for excellence and influence.

The RCA is research-led, with REF 2021 recognising the College as the UK's most research-intensive art and design institution. A growing proportion of our outputs are judged 'world-leading' and 'internationally excellent', and our interdisciplinary research environment brings together artists, designers, architects, technologists and scientists to address global challenges and shape future creative practice.

With more than 25,000 alumni across the world, the RCA's graduates form a unique global network of creative leaders. Our students and alumni are internationally recognised for developing award-winning, sector-defining work — from fine art and architecture to robotics, mobility, material science and cutting-edge design innovation. InnovationRCA, our graduate start-up incubator, is one of the most successful in the UK, supporting high numbers of female-led ventures and delivering exceptional long-term commercial success.





Photo: Richard Haughton

More than 2,800 students study across four Schools and multiple research centres, taking programmes at Graduate Diploma, MA, MFA, MDes, MArch, MEd, MRes, MPhil and PhD levels. Our practice-based model blends academic rigour, creative experimentation and interdisciplinarity, supported by a highly skilled technical workforce and an academic community with deep links to industry, culture, science and the creative sector. The RCA is home to established and developing research hubs including the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, the Computer Science Research Centre, the Textiles Circularity Centre, the Materials Futures Research Group and a forthcoming Centre for Drawing.

The College champions a STEAM vision — integrating science, technology, engineering, art and design — with investment in specialist faculty across fields such as robotics, materials science and computer science. This approach enables our community to tackle urgent global issues including climate resilience, ageing societies, biodiversity loss, the ethics of emerging technologies and the transformative potential of AI.



# Our People



Photo: Richard Haughton

The strength of the RCA lies in its people: our students, academic community, researchers, technical specialists, professional services teams and our global network of alumni and partners.

The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, one of the world's most influential designers. The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette, and the President & Vice-Chancellor — the College's Chief Executive — is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the RCA in 2024.

Our academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry insight into a practice-led teaching model. A core academic and research workforce of around 196 FTE is supported by more than 215 Associate Lecturers and a broad network of guest lecturers from across global creative industries and cultural sectors. Distinguished practitioners including leaders from architecture, design, fashion, visual communication, materials science and digital innovation contribute directly to the curriculum.

Our 95 specialist technicians hold deep expertise in areas including digital fabrication, prototyping, film and sound, 3D modelling, metalwork, ceramics, textiles, and emerging technologies. Their knowledge underpins an exceptional hands-on learning environment and ensures students have access to world-class technical support.

Our people form a distinctive creative ecosystem: a collaborative, interdisciplinary community working across disciplines, generations and cultures to shape the future of art and design.





## OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION: TOWARDS THE RCA AT 200 (2026–2030)

The RCA's new Strategic Plan sets out a transformational five-year phase as we begin our journey towards our bicentenary in 2037. Our ambition is to become the world's most influential art and design community, with a global footprint and a renewed approach to research, education, partnerships and organisational culture.

### By 2030:

- The College will operate across two revitalised central London campuses, including a reimagined Darwin Building at Kensington.
- We will establish research and education hubs outside the UK for the first time.
- We will strengthen our global partnerships, increase access to scholarships and widen participation for students from all backgrounds.
- We will be recognised for leadership in emerging creative technologies, especially AI, and for our contribution to sustainability, regenerative practice and public good.

Our work is underpinned by the RCA's four values — Collaboration, Curiosity, Inclusion and Integrity — and by commitments to long-term resilience, financial sustainability, staff and student wellbeing, and a culture where creativity and innovation thrive.





The College's ambitions will be delivered through three Strategic Pillars:

Strategic Pillar One

Creating and delivering the best art and design education, dialogue and research.

Strategic Pillar Two

Championing a community with outstanding potential who are diverse, inclusive and connected.

Strategic Pillar Three

Convening transformational exchanges of art and design expertise and ideas.



# Our Values



Photo: Shaun James

The RCA community operates in line with four agreed values:



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.



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.



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.



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.



# Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services



## Purpose of role

The Royal College of Art (RCA) values external engagement by its staff beyond the institution, for the benefits this brings to the College, the professional development opportunities it provides for staff at all career stages, and the valuable contributions we can make by sharing our expertise and experience with partners in the academic sector and beyond.

We are seeking to appoint an experienced, professional, energetic and collegiate Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services to develop and scale up our existing academic, research and innovation consultancy, executive education and other commercial activities and services, and to generate substantial new business. This new role will be part of the Research & Innovation senior team, and will be expected to deliver a significant contribution to the College's income diversification strategy. The post holder will also be formally appointed as company director for RCA Consultancy Limited, the wholly-owned subsidiary through which all RCA consultancy, executive education and related financial and contractual transactions and contracts will be conducted.



### Key responsibilities

- Set the vision and strategy for the RCA Consultancy & Commercial Services Unit in consultation with the College leadership team, establishing a clear plan to scale up consultancy, executive education and other commercial services, to meet ambitious income targets within the RCA's strategic plan 2025-30 period.
- Lead the rapid identification and development of new and existing consultancy, executive education and other commercial opportunities in the UK and internationally, working with senior colleagues, including the Director of InnovationRCA, the RCA's centre for entrepreneurship and commercialisation, which provides incubation, IP and business support to the College's student's, alumni and staff, to pool contacts and networks.
- Demonstrate pro-active leadership of the RCA's Consultancy & Commercial Services Unit, establishing credibility and authority in the role, and providing an efficient, high-quality service to clients and to RCA staff involved in these activities, ensuring that projects are expertly managed, revenue and profit are maximised, and annual targets are met.
- As the company director for RCA Consultancy Limited, develop and implement a business plan that significantly contributes to the College's strategic plan ambitions and financial targets.
- Lead and oversee the effective management of all aspects of the full lifecycle of consultancy and executive education projects, from identifying and evaluating new opportunities, to negotiating fees and contracts, developing marketing and concluding commercial deals, managing project delivery and risks, as well as invoicing, distribution of funds received and final reporting, providing advice to colleagues on issues that arise at each stage, and working with other College functions as required.
- Work in a collaborative, inclusive and professional manner with RCA academic and professional services staff, ensuring they feel well supported and fully equipped to undertake consultancy, executive education and other commercial activities in a safe, ethical, financially rewarding and legally protected manner, respecting the College's policies, regulations, strategic priorities and values.





Photo: Richard Haughton

- Deliver agreed services on time and on budget, managing the competing demands of concurrent complex activities, and always acting with professionalism, diplomacy, integrity and sound commercial judgement.
- Ensure the continuous development of the RCA Consultancy & Commercial Services Unit so that it provides a high performance, professional and innovative service, stimulating growth in interest from RCA staff and from potential new clients, as well as securing repeat business.
- Provide regular reporting and other relevant information to the PVC Research & Innovation, the Chief Financial Officer and the wider RCA Executive Board on the financial performance of RCA Consultancy Limited and the progress of activities and income generation, to support financial, audit, Office for Students, HEBCI, HEIF and other formal reporting requirements.
- Ensure that all contracts are costed, priced, negotiated and completed in accordance with the College's policies, processes and legal, governance and regulatory requirements, providing appropriate protection to the institution and the individuals involved.
- Take responsibility for assessing and mitigating the risks associated with each project, including financial, reputational, ethical, national security and IP risks.
- Contribute in a collegiate, professional and pro-active manner as a member of the Research & Innovation senior leadership team, working effectively with colleagues to ensure a coherent institutional approach across research, knowledge exchange, executive education, innovation and consultancy strategy and activities.
- Undertake other duties as reasonably required by the PVC Research & Innovation.



# Person Specification

- Experience in a comparable leadership role either in the higher education sector or in another relevant sector, responsible for leading business engagement
- Evidence of leading growth in new business, delivery of organisational priorities and financial targets, and responsibility for leading delivery across the full lifecycle of a project
- Experience of leading strategic change, establishing relationships internally and externally and embedding new ways of working
- Evidence of understanding of the UK academic environment, the UK's research and innovation policy and funding landscape and the RCA's unique role in these
- Experience of successfully navigating the differences between the expectations, working practices and resources of business clients, ideally with experience in the university sector.
- Knowledge of the regulatory, compliance and intellectual property issues related to provision of knowledge-based services in the UK and internationally
- Experience of managing the legal and financial aspects of the role, including the ability to draft and negotiate contracts in accordance with compliance and governance requirements, and the ability to undertake financial and budget planning and reporting
- Aptitude for finding solutions to issues with a creative, entrepreneurial and proactive mind-set, with strong analytical skills and sound legal and commercial judgement.
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills, able to establish immediate credibility with academics, the university's senior management and senior or high-profile clients, and to bring diverse parties together across professional disciplines and sectors, with professionalism, patience and diplomacy
- Ability to prioritise workload and to manage a number of competing complex projects simultaneously, navigating time pressures and conflicting deadlines while maintaining attention to detail and productive communication with colleagues and clients
- Evidence of commitment to professional development and updating skills and knowledge
- Commitment to the RCA's values of integrity, inclusion, collaboration and curiosity, and to the College's equity, inclusion and diversity principles.
- An undergraduate (essential) or postgraduate (desirable) degree in a relevant discipline, plus relevant legal and financial qualifications or experience.



Photo: Iwan Baan



# Person Specification

## Essential Criteria

- Strategic Leadership & Business Growth
  - Demonstrated experience in setting vision and strategy for consultancy/commercial services.
  - Proven track record of scaling up business units, delivering income diversification, and meeting ambitious financial targets.
- Commercial & Financial Acumen
  - Strong ability to manage the full lifecycle of consultancy/executive education projects: from opportunity identification to contract negotiation, delivery, and reporting.
  - Evidence of financial planning, budget management, and risk mitigation, including legal and compliance oversight.
- Stakeholder Engagement & Relationship Building
  - Ability to establish credibility with senior academics, management, and external clients.
  - Experience in building collaborative partnerships across higher education, industry, and international networks.
- Knowledge of Higher Education & Innovation Landscape
  - Understanding of the UK academic environment, research and innovation policy, and funding landscape.
  - Awareness of regulatory, compliance, and intellectual property issues in knowledge-based services.
- Entrepreneurial & Solution-Oriented Mindset
  - Evidence of creativity, proactivity, and entrepreneurial thinking in developing new commercial opportunities.
  - Strong analytical skills combined with sound legal and commercial judgement to deliver innovative solutions.

# Pay & Benefits

## Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation
- Responsible for: Head of Executive Education and fixed-term Project Managers (as required)
- Full time salary: Competitive
- Full time and permanent role.
- 30 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter, at the discretion of the College. Pro rata for part time employees
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest-free season ticket loan are available alongside many other benefits
- Location: Battersea/Kensington/hybrid (3 days on site per week)
- Department: Research & Innovation





### 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

30 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 six weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay.

### 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.



## Equality, diversity and inclusion - Disability and neurodiversity

### Disability Confident

RCA is a Disability Confident Committed employer. You may recognise the logo from our job adverts.

Disability Confident is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit, retain, and develop disabled people. RCA was originally awarded the Disability Confident certificate in October 2022, which broadens and deepens our existing commitment as an employer.

As a Disability Confident Committed employer, we commit to the below core activities:

- ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
- communicating and promoting vacancies
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required
- supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work
- at least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people







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

QS World University Rankings  
by Subject 2015-25

Together, the RCA community can generate change now for a sustainable future everywhere.