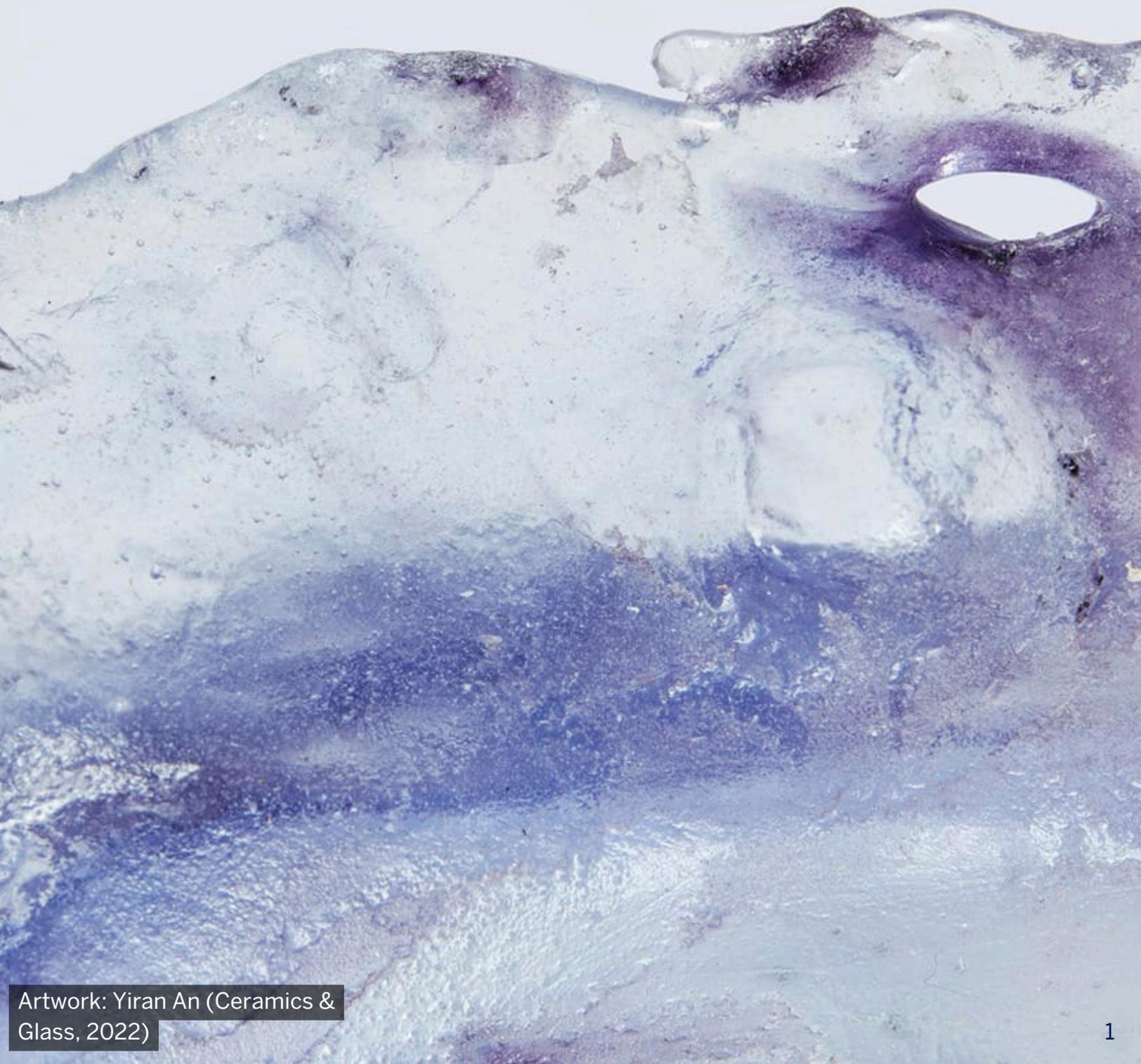


RCA

Interim Head of Executive Education March 2026



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 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:

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.

Executive Education & Short Courses

The post-holder will lead the business facing and commercially driven RCA Executive Education and Short Courses team, that works with Schools and the College's wider academic, research and technical Services community to deliver a programme of online, in-person and hybrid executive programmes, short courses and events.

Executive Education at the RCA is built on the belief that human-centred, creative skills are core competencies for tomorrow's workforce. Over the past decade, RCA Executive Education have delivered over 200 customised executive level professional programmes for leadership teams, institutions, education providers and global partners, many returning year on year. We offer custom and open courses and each year 1500+ participants join us from over 60 nationalities. They can range from a half-day workshop, to a 5 day course, to a 6 month modular programme.

- For individuals: we offer a portfolio of open executive masterclasses, short courses and summer schools that reflect the College's unique studio-based learning philosophy, delivered online, on-campus or hybrid.
- For organisations: we offer senior-level custom executive education programmes for business, government, the public sector and universities globally; providing senior-level professionals with critical business skills, through our portfolio of innovation masterclasses and workshops.

In addition, Executive Education delivers a series of free online IN SESSION talks throughout the year on topics related to new course areas of knowledge to build engagement with our audiences.

The Interim Head of Executive Education will work closely with the Senior Executive Education Manager, two Executive Education Coordinators and the Events and Communications Administrator.



Interim Head of Executive Education



Purpose of role

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced professional to lead and build on our existing achievements.

We are seeking to appoint a dynamic and strategic Interim Head of Executive Education to lead the operational delivery of our Open and Custom Executive Education and Short Courses portfolio, supporting the RCA's ambitions for growth, innovation, and impact in lifelong learning.

Working closely with academic leads, commercial partners, and a range of other stakeholders, the post-holder will be responsible for overseeing end-to-end delivery, including liaison with clients, development of high-quality proposals, costing and pricing, contract negotiation, the deployment of resources and delivery of courses (in-person and online).

The main focus of this business-facing role will be:

- Build on existing achievements to embed Executive Education within the College's portfolio of revenue-generating activities.
- Ensure all open and custom courses are appropriately costed to generate surplus, and draw on and enhance the College's reputation for creative innovation.
- Responsibility for the recruitment, sales and strategic marketing of the open courses.
- Develop proposals, working with clients based in the UK and internationally, that secures increased income from repeat business and existing clients and identifies new market opportunities.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Programme Oversight

- Lead the operational delivery of all Open and Custom Executive Education programmes, overseeing end-to-end delivery, including liaison with clients, development of high-quality proposals, costing and pricing, contract negotiation, the deployment of resources and delivery of courses (in-person and online).
- Maintain oversight for recruitment, sales and strategic marketing of the open courses.
- Maintain oversight of programme delivery, ensuring excellence of experience, and consistency of process and standards.
- Monitor KPIs including client and participant satisfaction, and financial performance.

Business development & Marketing

- Collaborate with the PVCs, Deans of Schools and the College's wider academic research and technical community, to identify and progress new market opportunities and strategic partnerships, ensuring proactive pipeline management for the current and following academic year.
- Lead the development of high-quality client proposals and bids, ensuring these are delivered in a timely manner to ensure maximum impact, working closely with the Senior Executive Education Manager.
- Contribute to income growth targets through client engagement and relationship management.
- Oversee costing, pricing and contract development, ensuring all programmes are costed and charged in line with the College's Costing & Pricing policy, in order to cover the full economic costs of delivery and to generate an operating margin for reinvestment.
- Identify and cultivate opportunities to enhance programme visibility, financial sustainability and client value.
- Contribute expert insights and review content for the RCA website and marketing campaigns, events, and outreach to promote the Executive Education portfolio, including commissioning case studies and impact stories to share with potential customers and business partners.
- Proactively pursue opportunities for engagement with Executive Education through research and direct marketing activities.



Stakeholder Engagement & Client Experience

- Act as the key liaison with Schools, internal academic, research and technical staff, and external partners.
- Collaborate with academic leads, external clients and professional service teams, particularly Research & Knowledge Exchange and InnovationRCA, Engagement, Brand and Marketing, Estates, Technology, Finance and People & Culture, to ensure effective collaboration and seamless delivery.
- Represent the “voice of the customer” within the College, demonstrating commercial awareness to inform business decisions and ensure participant satisfaction.
- Ensure a client-facing and business partnering approach, taking an account management approach that aims to build relationships to secure increased income from repeat business and existing clients.
- Represent the RCA at external networks as required.

Line Management

- Line manage key members of the Executive Education team, ensuring continual development of the team.
- Foster a culture of inclusion, innovation, continuous improvement and service excellence.
- Resource planning for the Executive Education team, to effectively plan ahead and ensure continuity of resources to manage the delivery pipeline.
- Work closely with the Senior Executive Education Manager, offering guidance and support on the development and delivery of new proposals and programmes.



Essential:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Executive Education marketplace and current trends.
- Experience in a comparable Executive Education role either in the higher education sector or in another relevant sector, responsible for leading business engagement.
- Strong interpersonal skills, able to establish immediate credibility with senior stakeholders within and outside of academia.
- Experience of successfully navigating the differences between the expectations, working practices and resources of business clients, ideally with experience in the university sector.
- Commercially astute with experience of managing the financial and legal aspects of the role, including the ability to draft high-quality business proposals and negotiate contracts, and the ability to undertake financial and budget planning and reporting with support from the finance team and other professional services.
- Aptitude for finding solutions to issues with a creative, entrepreneurial and proactive mind-set, with strong analytical skills and sound legal and commercial judgement.
- 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.
- Exceptional leadership and people management skills, with a proven track record of leading high-performing teams.
- 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
- Subject knowledge of creative education and innovation and an interest and enthusiasm for contemporary art, design and culture



Desirable

- Wider policy awareness, abreast of the executive education offers of other HEIs, in the UK and internationally, to ensure the RCA's offer remains competitive and well regarded.
- Understanding the current challenges faced by HE institutions, particularly within short course and Executive Education markets.



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Full time salary: Grade 10 £64,753 to £72,255 per annum including London Allowance
- 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, London/Hybrid - 3 days on site (2 days if part time)
- Department: Research & Innovation, Executive Education
- Responsible to: Chief Financial Officer (until new Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services is appointed)
- 1fte fixed term for 6-9 months (part time will be considered at minimum 0.6fte)
- Responsible for: Senior Executive Education Manager (x1) and Executive Education Coordinators (x2)



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.