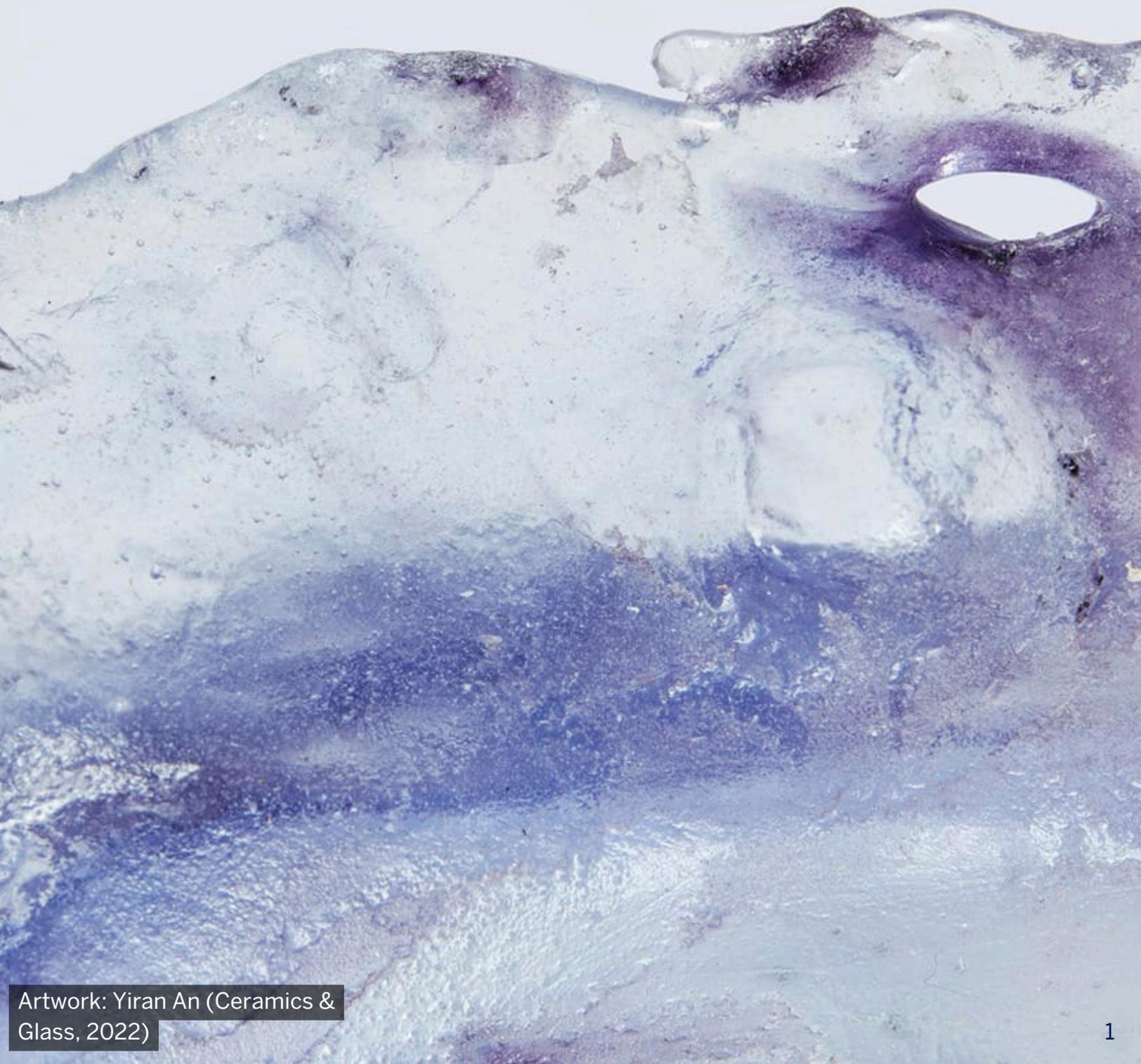


RCA

Project Officer: Robotics & AI 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.

The School of Design at the RCA offers programmes that engage with a broad spectrum of design, ranging from industry-focused projects and collaborations with engineering and science to experimental and theoretical explorations. With a strong culture of innovation, experimentation, and debate, the School also offers research degrees at MPhil and PhD levels, enabling researchers to undertake deep exploration and develop a comprehensive understanding of topics such as industrial design, service design, systems thinking, sustainable production, and robotics. Through these programmes, researchers and students are equipped to address complex technological and societal issues with innovative, industry-relevant solutions. The School also offers a range of renowned MA programmes, including the MA/MSc in Innovation Design Engineering, delivered in partnership with Imperial College London. These programmes attract students from diverse academic and professional backgrounds, fostering a collaborative environment for tackling complex global challenges through design and engineering.

RCA Robotics Laboratory: Established in 2017, the RCA Robotics Laboratory is a leading research hub at the Royal College of Art, dedicated to advancing robotics through interdisciplinary collaboration across design, engineering, and experimental sciences. Led by the College's Academic Leader in Robotics, the lab's mission is to develop advanced robotic systems that enhance human safety, accessibility, and efficiency in industrial and challenging environments while promoting environmental sustainability. Located on the Battersea campus in central London, the lab features state-of-the-art facilities for designing, prototyping, and testing a diverse portfolio of robotic systems, from aerial robots and ground-based platforms to underwater robots.



Drawing inspiration from both natural and artistic realms, the lab adopts a unique, design-led approach to robotics, integrating creative insights with cutting-edge scientific methodologies. This approach not only drives technological sophistication but also ensures that robotic solutions are environmentally friendly and human-centric, addressing complex operational needs in diverse settings.

The lab has secured substantial funding for several high-impact projects as PI or Co-I, including the £4 million Innovate UK-funded MIMRee project, which developed intelligent robotic systems for offshore wind turbine blade maintenance; the EPSRC-funded Getting a Grip, focusing on advanced anchoring system for robot mobility and manipulation; and the Interoperability in Robotics and Autonomous Systems Proving Ground, aimed at advancing robotics standards and system integration. Other notable initiatives include Haptic Illusion and Topographies of Pain, supported by Medtech SuperConnector, and Artificial Intelligence in Design Lab, in collaboration with Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

A new initiative is the Circular Robot 5.0 project, an EPSRC-funded project that leverages AI-driven predictive maintenance, blockchain traceability, and comprehensive life-cycle assessments to promote a circular economy in industrial robotics.

Through these projects, the RCA Robotics Laboratory continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in design-led robotics, shaping the future of intelligent systems and contributing to a safer, more accessible, and sustainable world.

Project Description: Circular Robot 5.0: Circular Robot 5.0: Industry-Wide Data-Driven Circular Economy of Industrial Robots is a £1.9 million EPSRC-funded research project led by the RCA Robotics Laboratory in collaboration with co-investigators from Loughborough University, King's College London, UCL, and the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC), and industry partners such as NVIDIA, OMRON, ASTM International, Katlas Technology, Wootzano, and Inovo Robotics. The project aims to extend the lifespan of industrial robots through the integration of AI, blockchain, and intelligent lifecycle management.

The UK is set to dramatically increase the deployment of industrial robots (IRs), with a projected 40% annual growth in the sector from 2020 to 2030. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge as the rapid scaling of robotic systems could result in substantial waste and resource depletion, due to frequent decommissioning. Circular Robot 5.0 addresses these challenges by:

1. Prolonging the operational life of IRs, thereby reducing the need for repairs or replacements.
2. Facilitating remanufacturing and circular use of critical raw materials.
3. Developing a digitally-enabled end-of-life management system for IRs. This system aims to predict future IR failure scenarios, promote industry-wide collaboration, and enhance operational efficiency and resilience.
4. Implementing a proactive, data-driven lifecycle maintenance approach that is cost-efficient, optimizes equipment performance, and ensures environmental sustainability.
5. Ensuring early intervention and informed decisions regarding IR recovery processes using real-time metrics and Life Cycle data.

Project Officer: Robotics and AI



A highly talented and experienced professional is sought for a Project Officer position on the project to closely work with the Academic Leader, projects researchers and other members of Circular Robot 5.0 consortium, as well as RCA Robotics Lab's existing and new PhD students and staff. The lab provides a design-led disruptive research environment for the development of new approaches to innovation in robotics. The Project officer will form a key research role within the Circular Robot 5.0 consortium and the RCA Robotics Laboratory, supporting timely delivery of project milestones and the overall outcomes.

Purpose of the Post:

The Project Officer will be an enthusiastic professional with experience in supporting and managing consortium research project in HEI's or industry; ideally with background and experience in robotics and artificial intelligence.

The postholder will work closely with the Project Lead (Dr Sina Sareh) and assist him to lead and manage the project. This will require coordinating and managing the project consortium to ensure delivery of the overall project outcomes within the budget and schedule. The postholder will contribute to research activities to support the project in creating impact. The postholder will support the lead in promoting and disseminating the project and developing new partnerships and preparing new funding proposals.

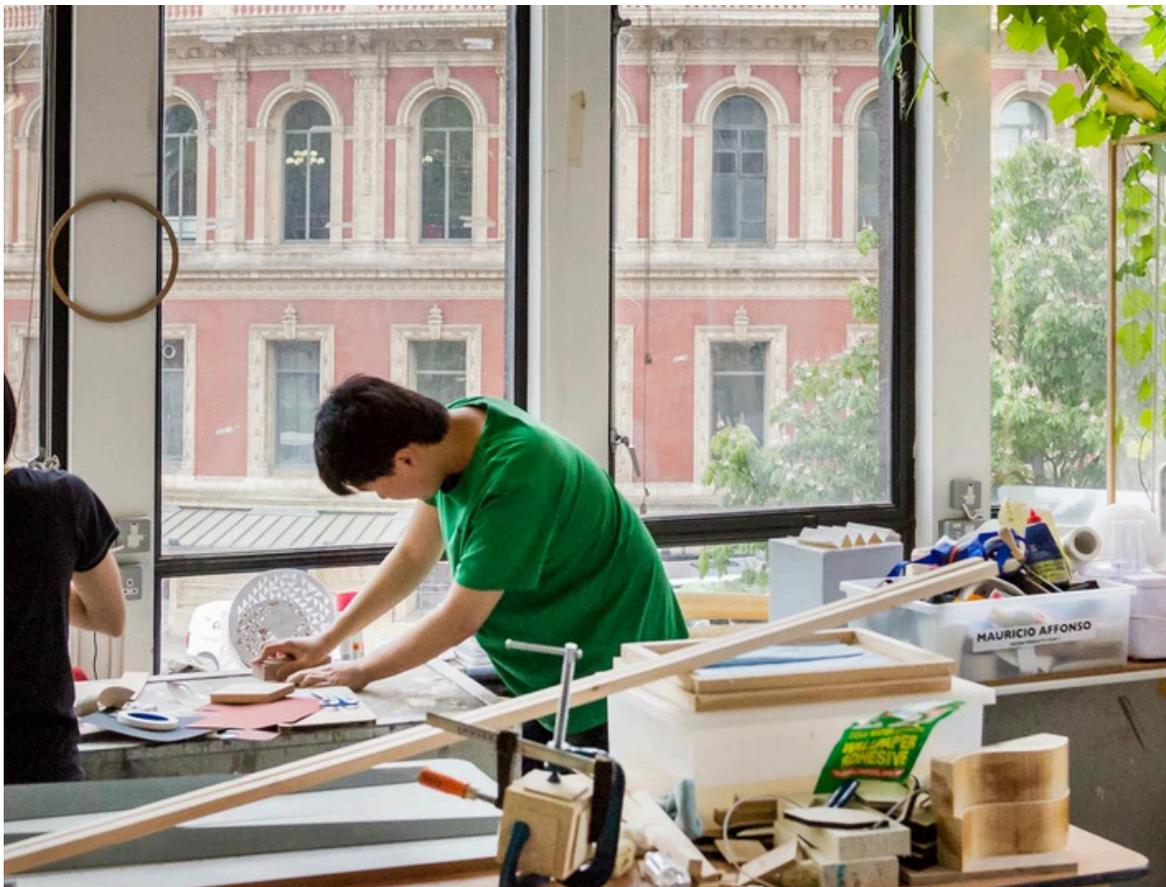
Main Duties & Responsibilities

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- The postholder will support the Project Lead in managing the project by developing detailed activity plans, project schedules (e.g., Gantt charts), and monitoring progress to ensure that all project outcomes are delivered on time and within budget, with a clear focus on maximizing research impact.
- Use project management tools, processes and procedures, to ensure that project decisions made are well-informed and justified.
- Provide proactive and efficient project support and coordination to all members of the consortium.
- Perform administrative tasks and co-ordination amongst the project consortium and with RCA's supporting team (finance, admin, research office etc.).
- Organise, coordinate and facilitate meetings and events for the consortium, including consortium and regular team meetings. This may include venue and catering arrangements, speaker and attendee liaison, preparation and distribution of papers, and reproduction of materials.
- Monitor project progress against the requirements of the award.
- Liaise with project partners to ensure effective communication.
- Report on project progress, status and issues on a regular basis to the project consortium.
- Manage and co-ordinate outsourced activities to ensure compliance with award requirements.
- Assist the Project Lead to prepare project reports, grant applications and presentations.
- Coordinate marketing communication, project promotion and dissemination.
- Actively promote the project at events and contribute to project visibility through engaging updates on social media in consultation with the Project lead.
- Support research activities, e.g. the facilitation of workshops, interviews, user research, prototyping and community engagement.



- Ensure appropriate College procedures and protocols are in place and followed. Conduct all financial matters associated with the role in accordance with the RCA's policies and procedures, as laid down in the financial regulations.
- Providing support and tutorials to relevant student projects that contribute to the delivery of the overall project outcomes.
- Communicate effectively with and develop strong professional relationships with relevant staff across the College and with external stakeholders.
- Assist with overseeing and mentoring staff engaged in the project, ensuring they are equipped to contribute effectively to the project and deliver agreed outputs within agreed timescales, and are undertaking work at an appropriate level.
- Monitor project evaluation and risks with the PI to ensure outcomes are being met and risks managed.
- Work closely with project partners which may require traveling to partner locations.
- Maintain confidentiality of all data during and after the project end date and adhere to data protection regulations throughout the research process; respect the confidentiality of data in accordance with the Data Protection Act and RCA policies.
- Ensure that all research activities comply with health and safety regulations and guidelines.
- Foster a research culture that upholds best practices in research ethics, integrity, and data management, ensuring compliance with funding body processes and RCA guidelines.



Essential:

- A good first degree (or equivalent) in a relevant subject area to the project, or have equivalent experience in a relevant subject area, with evidence of strong intellectual and analytical skills.
- Experience working at a relevant level in project management or officer or coordinator capacity, or similar, using project management principles.
- Knowledge of Robotics and Artificial Intelligence.
- Experience working with funded research projects (or similar), preferably involving HE/industry collaborations in a relevant field, including understanding award requirements and ensuring compliance with funding terms and conditions.
- Proven interpersonal and communication skills with a high degree of tact and diplomacy, able to deal with internal and external contacts, as well as senior academic staff, appropriately.
- Be aware of the risks in the work environment and the relevant Health & Safety issues.
- Willingness to travel to partner locations for joint workshops or meetings or other events within the UK
- Experience of working across different disciplines and knowledge of broad practice of research and innovation.
- Experience with marketing planning for print, website, social media and internal systems.
- High level of digital literacy and IT skills including productivity suites (Microsoft Office, Google for work), Web/Internet use and project management systems.
- Detailed understanding of standards around managing, protecting and reusing information, including information security best practice and data protection principles.
- Ability to be creative and innovative, using initiative and work as part of a team.
- Ability to deal positively and constructively with change and to juggle conflicting priorities.
- Demonstrable commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity with the ability to work harmoniously with colleagues and students of all cultures and backgrounds.
- Experience of influencing and collaborating constructively with colleagues at all levels.



Desirable experience and skills:

- PhD or an equivalent industrial experience in robotics, artificial intelligence, or a relevant area
- Experience and relevant subject knowledge in intelligent sensing, cloud computing, hardware and software integration, testing and validation of results.
- Experience of publishing research outputs in credible journals of engineering, or within high impact interdisciplinary journals.



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Full time salary: Grade 7 £44,693 to £48,269 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
- Department: School of Design, Robotics
- Responsible to: Academic Leader in Robotics
- 0.2fte, 7 hours per week, fixed term maternity cover for up to 6 months
- Starting mid March or as soon as possible thereafter

Application Process:

To apply, please submit a CV, covering letter and 2 recent publications through the RCA recruitment portal. For informal enquiries, please contact the Academic Leader in Robotics, Dr Sina Sareh at sina.sareh@rca.ac.uk.



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.