



Royal College of Art

Postgraduate Art & Design

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post: Research Associate x 2, Virtual Reality

Department: Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD)

Responsible to: Research Fellow, Leader, Healthcare Research Space, Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

Background:

The Royal College of Art is the UK's only entirely postgraduate university of art and design, dedicated to teaching, research and knowledge exchange with industry. The College's 1967 Royal Charter specifies that the College's purpose is "to advance learning, knowledge and professional competence particularly in the field of the fine arts... through teaching, research and collaboration with industry and commerce". Fifty years on, the College remains in the vanguard of creative enquiry, with around 2,000 students from 65 countries registered for MA, MRes, MPhil and PhD degrees. Applications are strong, and the College's strategy sets out an ambitious plan both to increase student places to 3,000 by 2020 and to launch new programmes underpinned by its world-class research.

The College is located on three sites in central London, in Kensington, Battersea and White City. In 2016 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced an unprecedented £54 million grant to support a major expansion at Battersea to create a flagship innovation campus, housing new research centres, knowledge exchange labs and additional space for the College's highly successful business incubator, InnovationRCA. With planning consent achieved in February 2018, enabling work on the new building is due to start in early 2018 with the completed building being handed over in late 2020.

As well as welcoming students from around the world, the College's global dimension is enhanced through extensive links with business and industry and its partnerships with leading art and design, cultural and educational institutions; including, among many others, its neighbours in Kensington (Imperial College London, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Royal College of Music, the Science Museum, and the Natural History Museum).

The College has 400 full- and part-time staff, including internationally renowned artists, designers, theorists and practitioners. These staff, together with innovative forms of teaching and learning, dedicated technical facilities and research centres, all contribute to create an exceptional creative and intellectual environment and a remarkable record of graduate employment. Numerous eminent graduates have created far-reaching impact and influence, and the College boasts such noteworthy alumni as Sir James Dyson, Thomas Heatherwick, David Hockney, Tracey Emin, Christopher Bailey, Julien McDonald, Alison Jackson, Idris Khan, Sir David Adjaye, Suzie Templeton and Sir Ridley Scott.

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) is the College's largest and longest running centre for design research, founded in 1991. It is endowed by the Helen Hamlyn Trust with a remit to advance the study and practice of design that contributes to improving quality of life for people of all ages and abilities. The centre employs around 30 staff and has an annual income in excess of £1.5 million. It derives funding from a variety of sources: the Helen Hamlyn Trust, other third sector organisations, business and industry, UK Research Councils and European funding programmes. The HHCD's work is organised into three research spaces: Age & Diversity, Healthcare and Social and Global.

HHCD is collaborating with Oxford University to research and design new Virtual Reality (VR) environments and scenarios to aid therapy for people with psychosis. The aim of the project is to produce engaging VR treatments that can be tested in full scale clinical trials, and optimised for rollout within and beyond the NHS.

Purpose of the role:

The Research Associate (RA) will be supervised and supported by a Research Fellow. The purpose is to lead on the research and design of the VR therapy, specifically by:

- Collaborating with the broader multidisciplinary research team
- Liaise with network of people with lived experience of psychosis, as well as the collaborative team of psychologists, developers and other stakeholders
- Design rapid and engaging research techniques
- Run interviews and workshops to determine design requirements, and co-design VR concepts
- Generate concepts and iteratively refine them in VR with developers and rapid stakeholder review
- Deliver final VR scenarios and environments for trial
- Communicating potential findings through reports, papers and presentations
- Assisting with initial trialling of the intervention(s)

Main duties and responsibilities:

- **Multidisciplinary working:** To be prompt and efficient in collaboration with the different disciplines involved in the project; to be sensitive to different approaches and standpoints, and to show a willingness to learn.
- **Research:** To conduct primary and secondary research in a variety of settings; to employ, tailor and develop new methodologies to gain insights from a range of different user groups and stakeholders.
- **Co-Design:** To involve a range of users and stakeholders in the creative process, both individually and in group settings, to generate and evaluate a breadth of design interventions
- **Prototype:** To detail and realise VR interventions to a testable level, and to establish criteria for valid assessment.
- **Research project management:** To manage the delivery of the research and design, ensuring milestones are met, budgets kept, and reporting and outputs delivered.
- **Ensure translational benefit:** To scope out necessary steps to implementation, and ensure the relevant stakeholders, funds and skills are present, post-project, to maximise translational benefit.
- **Dissemination:** to lead on promoting the project research and design at the relevant conferences and in the relevant press.

Person Specification:

- First degree and Masters in a relevant discipline
- Proven skills in VR design
- Proven interest in people-centred design research and methods
- Proven interest in healthcare and/or mental health
- Ability to work methodically and to identify, analyse and interpret data
- Strong data visualisation and presentation skills
- Self-starter with ability to work both in a team and autonomously
- Confidence working with a variety of disciplines and stakeholders, including people with lived experience of psychosis
- Excellent written communication and workshop facilitation skills

Additional Information:

- Salary working 35 hours per week: £30,682 per annum inclusive of London Allowance.
- Normal hours will total 35 hours per week over five days, with an hour each day for lunch.
- The appointment will be made on a fixed term contract for twelve months.

- For the fixed term contract of twelve months, there are 25 days of annual leave plus bank holidays and College closure days.
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest free season ticket loan are available.

April 2018

PAY & BENEFITS

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

5 weeks' (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 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.

Cycle to Work Scheme

The Royal College of Art has signed up to the Cycle to Work Scheme – part of the government's Green Transport Initiative – which allows employees to make significant savings on purchasing new bikes and safety equipment.

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.