



# Royal College of Art

Postgraduate Art & Design

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**Post:** Associate Director, Research, Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design  
1.0FTE, permanent

**Department:** Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

**Grade:** SM1

**Responsible to:** Director, Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

**Responsible for:** Researchers and Research Associates

#### **Background:**

The Royal College of Art (RCA) is an internationally renowned postgraduate art and design institution. Founded in 1837, it is the world's oldest art and design institution of university level in continuous operation, and the most research intensive. The RCA has been ranked by the highly regarded QS survey, as the number one art and design university in the world for six consecutive years (2015-20).

Generations of eminent graduates have created far-reaching impact and influence, including Barbara Hepworth, Bridget Riley, David Hockney, Sir Ridley Scott, Asif Kapadia, Thomas Heatherwick, Chris Ofili, Tracey Emin, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Christopher Bailey, Idris Khan, Margaret Calvert, Chantal Joffe, Sir David Adjaye, Erdem, Monster Chetwynd, Oscar Murillo and Lina Lapelyte, among others.

The student body is 2,400 and is set to rise to 3,000 by 2021/2, with some 65 different nationalities represented within its student population. The majority of postgraduate teaching and research supervision is delivered by the RCA's four Schools: Architecture, Arts & Humanities; Communication; and Design. In addition, the RCA has a number of interdisciplinary, industry-facing research centres: the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design; the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre; the Material Science Research Centre; the HELIX Centre (run jointly with Imperial College London), and most recently the Computer Science Research Centre and a Robotics Lab. The RCA is also home to one of the UK's most successful university incubators, InnovationRCA.

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 the research centres, knowledge exchange labs and InnovationRCA.

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), as well as leading university and business collaborations around the world.

### **The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design**

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) provides a dedicated focus for people-centred and inclusive design and innovation at the RCA. Established in 1999 and building on the success of the DesignAge programme initiated in 1991, the HHCD has built an impressive programme of research, knowledge exchange and international outreach to academic, voluntary sector and business communities. As the HHCD has grown in size and reputation, its work has focussed around two Research Groups: Age & Diversity, and Healthcare; and two Impact Areas: Inclusive Design for Social Impact, and Inclusive Design for Business Impact.

The HHCD has a portfolio of projects spanning academia, industry, government and the third sector. It recently won a £4.9 million grant from Research England to establish the Design Age Institute, complementing its existing programmes. The Centre defined the term 'Inclusive Design' in 1994 – now an internationally recognised category in the discipline – and continues to develop theory and deliver practical projects in the field. It is considered a global thought leader in Inclusive Design, celebrating its 30-year anniversary in 2021.

### **Purpose of the Post:**

This is an exciting time to be joining the RCA, building on our world-leading reputation for innovative research and teaching in art and design, and an outstanding track record of project delivery.

We are seeking an Associate Director, Research to play a significant role in developing the next phase of the HHCD's research activity. The successful candidate will have a background of research in Design, Engineering, Social Science or a related discipline and a successful track record of generating substantial research income. They will be a proven leader with the ability to manage the Centre's portfolio of research projects and other activities. Working closely with the Director of the HHCD, the Associate Director, Research will support their vision to work with a cross-disciplinary team, develop and lead research agendas in Inclusive Design, secure increased levels of research funding, and undertake collaborative projects with partners across academia, industry and local and national government.

This new post represents an opportunity to lead the growth of research at the HHCD. The successful candidate will bring an international research profile to an established RCA research centre with a global reach. Reporting to the Director of the HHCD, the post-holder will also work closely with the Design Age Institute and other RCA Research Centres including the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, the HELIX Centre, the Material

Science Research Centre, the Computer Science Research Centre, and the Robotics Lab, as well as across College with the RCA's other academic and professional services staff.

The successful candidate will demonstrate intellectual and academic leadership and have an outstanding track record of academic publication and research outputs in a relevant field. They will have proven ability in instigating, leading, winning and delivering major design-focused research grants and knowledge exchange projects with industry. They will work closely with the Director of the HHCD to contribute to building and leading the Centre's research and knowledge exchange agenda in line with the RCA's Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy, influencing research agendas, industry leaders and policymakers in the UK and internationally.

The post holder will also work closely with the Director of the HHCD in leading the work of the Centre's research staff and doctoral students, managing the day-to-day support of research career development. They will have proven experience in securing industry, philanthropic and public funding to support the Centre's ambitious research agenda, and will have a good understanding of the UK and global research landscape.

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

#### *Research Leadership*

- In conjunction with the HHCD Director, develop the research funding and academic strategy for the centre, identifying key research funding opportunities for the centre, delivering an increase in research income through successful proposals as part of a research funding strategy.
- Nurture the Centre's research culture and the academic talent within, supporting all members of the Centre to develop and showcase their research potential, through mechanisms such as seminar series, training opportunities, and presentations.
- Working with the RCA's Head of Research Programmes, develop a doctoral programme for the Centre, ensuring high-quality supervision, training and development are provided in accordance with College policies and best practice.
- Explore Inclusive Design education through the development of modules, workshops and potential undergraduate and graduate teaching programmes.
- Work closely with the RCA's Schools and other research centres, identifying and developing cross-disciplinary projects and funding opportunities.
- Ensure the research produced by the Centre is of a high standard, able to be submitted to future REF (or equivalent) exercises at 3\* quality or above, and compliant with the College's research ethics and other relevant policies, and with national open access requirements.
- Ensure the Centre's research engages productively with relevant academic, industry, government and policy networks, presenting the Centre's work in relevant forums, developing new partnership and sponsorship opportunities, influencing appropriate stakeholders and promoting the work of the Centre nationally and internationally.
- Act as a 'bridge' between academic enquiry and knowledge exchange with business, industry and other partners, ensuring that high-quality research is applied in practice, achieving impact, and tracking evidence of that impact, and, where appropriate, pursuing exploitable IP and commercial opportunities.
- Build on the Centre's existing avenues for academic publication, establishing dissemination protocols and processes that support the Centre and its staff.

### *Research Portfolio*

- Undertake high-quality, rigorous, and (where relevant) collaborative research projects which lead to robust research outcomes.
- Develop personal research agendas and objectives, working with the HHCD Director to ensure these are in line with the strategic direction of the Centre and of the College as a whole.
- Prepare and submit substantial Centre-level funding proposals to major UK and international research funders, industry partners and other funding sources, to support the Centre's research agenda alongside the post-holder's own research career development plans and deliver an increase on the Centre's current research funding levels.
- Manage live research awards, ensuring funded research projects are efficiently managed and monitored, and research outcomes and impacts are effectively delivered, working with the Research Office staff as required.
- Oversee engagement with any sponsor companies, undertaking collaborative research projects and contributing to working relationships to maintain a productive partnership.
- Produce and disseminate research outputs that are effectively shared through appropriate channels (for example books, peer-reviewed journals, conferences).
- Ensure the Centres' research outcomes are communicated to a wide variety of audiences, including through public engagement, tailoring content and style to a broad range of specialist and non-specialist audiences; and act as an ambassador for Inclusive Design.
- Contribute to and actively participate in the RCA's academic community through presentations or teaching in appropriate forums and participation in RCA-wide activities, including Committees and boards as requested.
- Work with the HHCD Director to identify and develop opportunities to translate the Centre's research into executive short courses and consultancy opportunities.
- Act as supervisor (or co-supervisor) to an appropriate number of doctoral research students, including those undertaking industry-facing doctorates, ensuring a high-quality research student experience, timely submission and completion of high-quality doctoral theses, adherence to best practice in research training and research career development, and compliance with College and funding body processes and reporting requirements.

### *Management Activities*

- *Deputise for the HHCD Director as required at meetings, events, or other strategic occasions.*
- Participate in (and lead where required) project and Centre team meetings and activities, events and workshops, leading where relevant on proposals for developing, delivering and promoting research and KE projects.
- Manage and mentor staff, including postdoctoral researchers, research associates or other project workers, ensuring effective management of staff performance, research career development, formal annual appraisal processes, and enabling staff to become more effective in their roles through personal and professional development.
- Conduct all research in accordance best practice in ethics, integrity, research data management, and research governance, ensuring compliance with RCA policies and external funding terms and conditions and sector standards; and ensure these high standards and best practice are embedded across all the Centre's research.

- Ensure compliance with RCA processes and policies for the procurement and use of equipment and facilities, including health and safety policies, working with relevant colleagues across RCA.
- Ensure confidentiality of sensitive project information is maintained, through appropriate project data management and protection.
- Build constructive working relationships with the College's professional services teams, ensuring appropriate planning and reporting is delivered in accordance with relevant College policies and processes, and as required by the Director of Research & Innovation.
- Support the RCA's relationship with its primary sponsor, the Helen Hamlyn Trust, including preparing reports, other materials, attending meetings and delivering events as required.
- Undertake general administrative and other tasks relevant to the team's and the Centre's work, as required by the HHCD Director.

**Person Specification:**

- Evidence of academic and research leadership in a relevant field, including an international reputation and a track record of high-quality peer reviewed research publications ideally at professorial level;
- Track record as a Principal Investigator of winning research and knowledge exchange funding, successfully leading major grant-funded research projects as Principal Investigator, managing a research team, and of attracting sponsor and donor investment;
- Evidence of ability to set and lead academic agendas, and to initiate research and innovative practice at the interface of design and intelligent mobility disciplines;
- An entrepreneurial spirit, able to achieve a reliable and diverse income stream, from research grants, knowledge exchange projects and industry collaborations, executive education programmes, gifts and philanthropy, to support the Centre's operational budget and strategic investment and growth;
- Experience of establishing or leading programmes of doctoral and postdoctoral research, and of setting high standards in quality assurance and enhancement, in supervision, and in research student experience expectations;
- Proven track record in working with business, industry, public sector and other partners beyond HE to initiate and deliver collaborative projects, and experience of successfully negotiating contracts;
- Experience of leading programmes of research and knowledge exchange in a university, and/or comparable experience of leadership and management in a relevant industry or business environment, including managing staff and budgets; experience of HE teaching is also desirable
- Experience of acting as a research advisor to government, industry and policy-makers (or similar), and evidence of ability to network with and influence senior partners in government, industry and policy-making;
- Ability to think strategically, provide a clear business focus and develop creative solutions to deliver the Centre's objectives;
- Ability to represent the HHCD and the RCA at external events and conferences, including evidence of effective presentation skills;
- Well-developed interpersonal skills with the ability to establish professional credibility with a range of stakeholder, external advisers and senior academic colleagues;
- Resilient and self-motivated with the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, and a strong understanding of key issues in addressing research ethics;

- A thorough understanding of the UK and international research-funding environment (e.g. including UKRI, and European and international systems for research funding and assessment);
- Experience as an academic or expert reviewer for research funders, conferences, projects;
- Willingness to contribute to RCA committees, panels and working groups as required.

**Additional Information:**

Salary: Competitive

Normal working hours are 35 per week, Monday to Friday with an hour each day for lunch break. Actual working hours may vary according to College work patterns and at the request of the Director of the HHCD and will take place across the College campuses.

30 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter.

Contributory defined benefit pension scheme and a season ticket loan are available.