



**Royal College of Art**

Postgraduate Art & Design

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**Role:** Post-Doctoral Research Associate - Vocal Accessibility

**Department:** The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

**Grade:** 7

**FTE:** 0.6 FTE, fixed term for 12 months

**Responsible to:** Rama Gheerawo

### Background:

The Royal College of Art is the UK's only entirely postgraduate institution of art and design, dedicated to teaching, research and knowledge exchange with industry. The RCA has been ranked the number one university-level institution for art and design, internationally, for the eighth consecutive year according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject, 2022.

The College currently has some 2,700 students registered for Graduate Diploma, MA, MRes, MPhil and PhD degrees, and this is set to rise to 3,300 in coming years with the introduction of the new campus at Battersea during 2022. The majority of postgraduate teaching and research supervision is delivered by the RCA's four Schools: Architecture, Arts and Humanities; Communication; Design, with each School led by a Dean of international standing, and a recognised leader in their field.

In addition, the RCA has a number of established and planned research centres: the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design; the Material Science Research Centre (which includes the Burberry Materials Futures Research Group and the Textiles Circularity Centre); the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, Computer Science Research Centre, and a future centre in Drawing. The RCA is also home to one of the UK's most successful university incubators, InnovationRCA.

### Our People

The RCA's Royal Visitor (Patron) is HRH Prince of Wales; its Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette. The RCA's Vice-Chancellor - the CEO of the institution - is Dr Paul Thompson. The RCA has more than 450 permanent staff, including internationally renowned artists, designers, architects, theorists and curators. These staff, together with an innovative pedagogy, world-class technical facilities and research centres, all contribute to an exceptional environment and a remarkable record of graduate employment. Generations of eminent graduates have created far-reaching impact and influence, such as Barbara Hepworth, Bridget



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Riley, David Hockney, Sir Ridley Scott, Sir James Dyson OM, Asif Kapadia, Thomas Heatherwick, Chris Ofili, Tracey Emin, Jake and Dinos Chapman, Christopher Bailey, Idris Khan, Chantal Joffe, Sir David Adjaye, Erdem, Philip Treacey, Monster Chetwynd, Oscar Murillo and Lina Lapelyte.

### **Strategic Plan 2022–2027**

The RCA has developed a new strategic plan, involving all staff in a process that was concluded in March 2022, with the publication of a new Strategic Vision and Plan for the next five years, and the appointment of our new Chair of Council, Sir Peter Bazalgette.

This plan will embrace the roll out of a new model of delivery for our taught postgraduate programmes to support access and flexibility; it will underscore our commitment to being the world's most research-intensive art and design university; and it will commit to a number of Equity and Diversity goals which will lead towards the RCA becoming an anti-racist institution.

In line with an ambitious strategy for growth and significant expansion at the College's campus at Battersea, the RCA has reviewed its provision of technical services college-wide. Following this review and an initial technical services development plan, we seek to appoint a Head of Technical Services, to be responsible for all technical facilities and staff across the College. These include a range of general workshops, together with specialist facilities, for example in robotics, additive manufacturing, moving image, mechatronics; along with with industry-facing knowledge exchange labs in visualisation and material futures to contribute towards revenue diversification and engagement with industry and commerce.

The aim is to achieve a more strategic approach to investment in, and development of, the technical facilities, equipment and staff of the College, improved utilisation and life-cycle planning and investment in technical equipment, and enhanced alignment with the academic timetable of student facing technologies and facilities. This change of approach will be implemented during an exciting and challenging period for the College, with the planned expansion of student numbers, the introduction of new areas of specialist study and practice, and the expansion of the College's activities on our largest and newest campus in Battersea.

### **About 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 January 1999, 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 £4.9million 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



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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 this year.

### **Purpose of the post:**

This post involves making a significant contribution to industry and third sector projects addressing the challenges of inclusive design in the 21st century. The key design research focus is on 'Vocal Accessibility' in the context of existing and emerging digital technologies.

The post will deliver design and research activities, engaging across different disabilities, to develop new knowledge and design ideas. They will work with an existing industry partner and liaise with the British Standards Institute to support creation of a new standard in Vocal Accessibility, that can be adopted by designers and businesses during new product innovation. They will work with partners across industry, government, public sector and community organisations and policy makers. Working with an HHCD Senior Research Fellow and the HHCD Director, they will play a role in future development of inclusive design research to build the Age & Diversity Research Area's portfolio and deliver a successful, impactful project using the tools and practices of Inclusive Design.

### **Duties and responsibilities:**

#### **Project Development & Management**

- To coordinate and deliver project activities for the Vocal Accessibility project within the Age & Diversity Research Space, developing a day-to-day plans for project activity within the framework of the agreed programme, coordinating with the project lead/team to ensure alignment with overall goals and avoid project conflict or duplication of effort.
- To undertake research and/or design on the project: this may include preparing, setting up, and conducting field work or user research, running workshops, stakeholder analysis, user journey mapping or other activities as appropriate to the project methods.
- To record and document the outcomes of the project, providing specific outputs as agreed with the project partner. These may include providing design exemplars, reports, presentations, or academic outputs.
- To coordinate (with the project lead/team) the management of the project, ensuring execution of the proposed project, efficient management of resources, and effective delivery of project outcomes and impacts.
- To support engagement with the project partner, contributing to working relationships to maintain a productive partnership.
- Where appropriate and relevant, to assist the project lead in supervision of junior project workers: ensure they are equipped to deliver outputs within agreed timescales and are undertaking work at an appropriate level.
- To coordinate casual workers on a project under direction from the project lead.

#### **Communication and Dissemination**

- To coordinate and communicate and/or disseminate the project outputs as agreed with the project partner, tailoring the content to different audiences. These could include written, verbal, visual or other agreed output modes.



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- To present information on project progress and outcomes to internal colleagues and external parties as agreed with the project lead. This may include at Centre events or partner meetings.
- To support and participate in project and Centre team meetings and activities, events and workshops, contributing ideas for development, delivery and promotion of projects.
- To communicate with project partners and other external contacts (which may include academic, industry, government and policy networks) in a professional manner, developing relationships for future collaboration.

### Developmental Activities

- To use and develop local (HHCD) research techniques and methods and contribute ideas from the project into the Centre's portfolio of methods and projects.
- Where appropriate, to prepare and submit project proposals in collaboration with Centre team members: analysing partner needs, identifying project delivery methods, writing/editing proposal text, and identifying project resource requirements.

### Personal specification:

#### Essential

- Masters degree level qualification in design or equivalent experience.
- Experience of inclusive design methods and techniques.
- Evidenced experience of coordinating and delivering design projects, either within an academic or commercial/industrial setting.
- Evidence of producing high-quality design outputs.
- Evidenced experience of contributing to and reporting on projects.
- Demonstrable ability to be a collaborative member of a broader team, working constructively with senior staff and supporting the work of less experienced staff or students involved in projects.
- Evidenced flexibility and confidence to tackle a wide range of tasks, with an open, proactive, creative and problem-solving approach.
- Strong interpersonal and team-working skills
- Genuine commitment to the aims of the Centre

#### Desirable

- Understanding of research projects and the role of standards.
- Excellent writing, communication and presentation skills, able to adopt an appropriate style for a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrable understanding of good practice in research conduct (including in research ethics, research integrity and handling research data).

#### Additional information

- **Location:** Battersea
- Salary working five days per week, £37,910 - £41,171 p.a. inclusive of London Allowance.
- 25 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter.
- Normal hours will total 35 per week over five days, 9.30am to 5.30pm with an hour each day for lunch.



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- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest free season ticket loan are available.



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### **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 19% 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.



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### **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.