



Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

Strategic

2022-27

Plan

Vice-Chancellor's foreword	3
Executive summary	7
Royal Charter and purpose	8
What have we achieved?	10
Our strategic vision	15
Goals	15
Key enablers	24
Conclusion	28



Launching a new strategic plan brings with it ambition and optimism about the art of the possible – a chance to look back on achievements, and challenge ourselves about our next steps. The RCA is already a launchpad for the world's creative leaders. We attract the most talented students who come to us as the world's most influential postgraduate art and design school to have access to leading faculty and push the boundaries of their fields. The Strategic Plan 2022–27 is our roadmap to continue to do that – and much more

The RCA's Royal Charter is explicit about our contribution to the arts, design, industry, commerce and social development and it continues to underpin our purpose. By bringing together traditional and new disciplines, challenging social and cultural perspectives, and through interdisciplinary collaboration between faculty, students, researchers, industry and our communities, we create new knowledge, insights and innovations. Our graduates enter fields that are driven by innovation, technology and the power of personal creative expression. They go on to create social value, economic opportunity, enrich our visual culture and solve global challenges.

Throughout our 185-year history, we've continually evolved to meet the needs of the most talented artists and designers, creators and innovators. For the past decade, we have expanded the range of disciplines and choice of Master's programmes on offer, with new programmes in Environmental Architecture, Service Design, Writing, and Contemporary Art Practice, to name but a few. We're experiencing for ourselves the changing models of how people want to learn and the increasingly broad backgrounds of our graduates. Some 25% of students now come to the RCA with undergraduate degrees in subjects such as the sciences, history, law or social sciences – and this brings a richness of perspective to our community that we will continue to foster.

We've pioneered collaborative and interdisciplinary learning, integrating the arts and science as never before in an art-school setting. We've broken down silos and made faculty appointments in Robotics, Material Sciences and Computer Science. Through our award-winning incubator InnovationRCA, we've proved that technology and the creative arts are a powerful amalgam – "createch" – for successful new start-ups. We are proud to have seen 78 companies launched, 36% of them by women, with a combined valuation of almost £300m and a remarkable survival rate of 67% after five years. And we've demonstrated that design can be at the forefront of the research question, with the RCA as Principal Investigator leading UCL, Manchester, York and Leeds universities, in a major UKRI-funded research project in Materials Science and the Circular Economy.

RCA alumni, numbering more than 20,000 all over the world, are recognised as leaders in their disciplines, making national and international headlines as they shape the world in which we live. They are sought after and prominent in a wide range of industries, from the Apple design studio in Cupertino, California, to the automotive sector in Sweden and Germany, to fashion in India and Italy. The cultural and social benefits of their work were felt at the heart of the London 2012 Olympic Games, in the winning roster of artists in the Turner Prize, and in clinical settings, helping design out medical error in emergency paediatrics at St Mary's Hospital, London.

The RCA's pioneering research-led academic approach truly comes alive in our new building at Battersea, which opens as we launch this strategy for 2022–27. Designed by world-renowned architects Herzog & de Meuron, it is the largest addition ever to the RCA campus – representing the greatest capital investment we've made to date in our academic vision, supported by £54m from HM Treasury, as well as generous donations from private donors such as the Sigrid Rausing Trust, the Spiegel Family Foundation, The Clore Duffield Foundation, the Linbury Trust, the Helen Hamlyn Trust, Logitech, Apple, Sir Jony and Lady Ive, the Monday Charitable Trust, Manfred and Lydia Gorvy, the Wolfson Foundation, Fidelity UK, the Debbie Lo Creativity Foundation, Hyundai Motor Group, the Prosit Philosophiae Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation and the Estate of Monica Ford.

As well as providing expanded facilities for InnovationRCA, this new campus is equipped with a robotics hangar which sits side by side with the sculpture studios. The sophisticated Snap Visualisation Lab will provide extraordinary facilities for data visualisation in architecture, design, experimental media and city design. It provides a stunning home for our new and existing research centres: the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design; the Design Age Institute, Computer Science, Materials Science, the RCA Robotics Laboratory and the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre.

The fact that the RCA has been ranked as the top art and design university in the world for the last eight years is testament to the talent, flair and skill of our staff and students – especially given our scores of 100% for academic reputation, and 96% for our reputation with employers. So is the impressive expansion of our research income from £7m to £20m in the past investment cycle (2014–21). We also know that our academic vision really resonates with businesses, who call upon us to deliver corporate consultancy work and creative partnership activity, and the philanthropic community which has generously supported student scholarships, and academic positions such as a new Chair in Innovation by the Genesis Foundation, as well as the new Battersea campus.

It's clear that the world of post-18 education has changed permanently, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the backdrop of Government legislation and expectations of the sector. There's huge digital disruption in learning models, the urgent need to further equity and inclusion, and an appetite for flexibility in accessing education throughout our lives.

We're seeing shifts in the global demand for UK education. At a national level, the value of the creative arts and humanities – from school through to university and postgraduate research – is under scrutiny from Government and pressure from a user-funded higher education model. Yet we also know that the UK's future economy will be driven by innovative ideas and unconventional thinking. The UK has a strong and growing creative industries sector that, as stated in the Government's Innovation Strategy of 2021, will play an important part in the UK's post-Covid economic growth. There is huge and very special potential in the areas where the creative brilliance of that sector fuses with the technological innovation that is all around us. And we should never forget the cultural and social value that is always present at all levels of arts education.

In this Strategic Plan 2022–27 we're focused on three primary goals. Firstly, research and the application of new insights to diverse global challenges. Through research, knowledge exchange and innovation, the RCA will make tangible contributions to societal challenges such as mobility and urbanism, sustainability, design for ageing populations, and design for AI.

Secondly, we're redoubling our commitment to teaching excellence, flexible learning frameworks and putting student experience at the heart of the institution with a new enlarged Student Hub. We'll introduce new degrees such as a professional doctorate, an MBA in creative entrepreneurship and business, and degrees in Design Robotics and Gaming.

Thirdly, we'll go further and faster on our contribution to the economic, social and cultural fabric of the UK, not least through creative entrepreneurship, with a new £3m Design and Impact Fund to provide seed funding for RCA start-ups in InnovationRCA. We will also create new partnerships in the future of advanced manufacturing and modelling, data science and visualisation.

It was a very conscious decision on the part of the senior management and Council to place 'Research' as Goal 1. This does not suggest that research is of a higher priority than learning and teaching, but is designed to reflect that – in terms of sequence – research generates the new knowledge and insights that inform and contribute to advancing our teaching and curriculum, and which brings benefits to our postgraduate students in their programmes of study, as well as advancing disciplines.

We were delighted in REF2021 to have maintained a 100% research environment rating at 3*/4*. This reflects the strength of our research environment and our supportive and stimulating research culture, which has seen the number of doctoral degrees awarded during this REF period increase by 300% compared to REF2014, and our research income increase by 236%, with our four interdisciplinary research centres attracting over £10m of UKRI funding in recent years. The RCA prides itself on the creation of new knowledge and insights in art and design, and by choosing to signal Research followed by Teaching in our new Strategic Plan, we hope to underscore the special ecosystem of a postgraduate-only specialist institution.

Interwoven with these three primary goals, and true to our enthusiasm for embracing change, we have an appetite for taking calculated risks, making 'no regret' decisions and for entering into new transformative associations. This means making big decisions on internationalisation, a commitment to de-carbonise, on diversifying income streams while securing future Government funding, creating an estates strategy and masterplan, accelerating investment into digital systems and constantly improving our operating models.

This all will be facilitated by our values, people and culture, our advocacy, finance and investment, and our infrastructures. Information is therefore presented on these 'enablers'. We're committing to achieve Net Zero and will continue making progress towards becoming an anti-racist institution.

This plan rests on the foundation of attracting, supporting and retaining the best and most diverse student and staff talent, which makes our new, taught Master's framework even more important for its inclusive, affordable and flexible approach. Additionally, we'll commit 8% of our total expenditure annually to student support and scholarships to provide full- or part-fee support for c.250 to 350 students, representing

8–12% of the projected future student body.

Art and design education has never been more important as the world faces huge challenges around the environment, health and well-being, poverty and technology. There's the sustainability and ethical challenges of fast fashion; or the fact that the built environment continues to be responsible for up to 40% of carbon emissions. An ageing population is living longer and increasingly faces quality-of-life issues. The Covid-19 pandemic not only ravaged the health of global populations, it took 100 million people back into extreme poverty. Digital inclusion continues to be linked to income, age and geography, and half the world still doesn't have access to sanitation, formal housing settlements, water or the internet.

So, the world needs open, collaborative teams of artists, designers, scientists and tech innovators who can imagine a better world and then set about building it. We need the potent results that emerge from combining the rigour of scientists and the creativity of artists – and welcome the Government embedding creativity, design, enterprise and innovation into its Innovation Strategy. Our new MA will now include the hugely popular 'Across RCA' grand challenge as a formal credit bearing unit in the curriculum to address these global themes. And we will make the Terra Carta Design Lab, initiated by our Royal Visitor HRH The Prince of Wales and Chancellor Sir Jony Ive, a permanent fixture in the RCA calendar as we demonstrate the impact of design on the climate crisis and the collapse in biodiversity. We've been pleased to include case studies of our students' work, and others, within this Strategic Plan.

Achieving our goals and ambitions will be a whole College effort. I want to thank our Council, our Chancellor Sir Jony Ive, our past Pro-Chancellor Baroness Rebuck and her successor Sir Peter Bazalgette, our hugely dedicated staff, students, researchers, innovators, alumni, partners and supporters for their contribution in recent years – especially over the past two years of growth, transformation, and of course, pandemic.

Founded in 1837 as the world's first publicly-funded Government School of Design, the RCA is now the world's largest community of postgraduate art and design students.

A national asset, the RCA attracts talent from all of Britain's communities and is an important fountainhead for UK creative industries. For eight consecutive years we have been ranked as the world's leading art and design university by the respected QS ranking.

The Strategic Plan 2022–27 sees the RCA introduce a number of bold academic initiatives, in particular a new framework for the Master's programmes and the introduction of MDes and MFA degrees. These developments are some of the most significant for the RCA in 30 years and will dramatically widen access and participation, focusing yet more on talent rather than ability to pay.

Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan focuses on research and the value of new knowledge and insights created by the RCA to address diverse global challenges ranging from mobility and urbanism, the circular economy, the climate crisis and de-carbonisation to ageing populations and inclusivity. And how, in turn, these new research findings will rapidly become translated into new units of study in our taught programmes.

Goal 2 puts teaching excellence and student experience at the heart of the institution, with a new MA framework which will broaden access and align with the world of lifelong learnings.

Goal 3 outlines how the RCA works in partnership with industry and how we contribute as a civic university to the social, economic, and cultural fabric of society, in particular our role in UK innovation strategy and creative entrepreneurship.

A number of 'enablers' will help the RCA deliver these goals:

- Our Values
- Our People & Culture, including our anti-racism action plan
- Our Advocacy
- Our Finance & Investment
- Our Infrastructures

Student numbers are forecast to grow from 2,300 to 3,000 on London-based degree programmes, with additional growth through online courses.

By 2027, we will have transformed what we teach, through the acceleration of our new research outputs into credit-based taught units within our MAs. We will have transformed whom we teach, through our widening participation programme and student support, and anti-racism initiatives; and we will have transformed how we teach, through the new flexible postgraduate taught models of delivery. Throughout all of this, we will have continued to work to make sure we attract, develop and retain the most talented people to work at the RCA.

We will have brought new purpose and meaning to our 1967 Charter through Goal 3, including our industry-based professional doctorate programme, and demonstrated that we work not only with industry, but also create and lead new industries and start-ups.

Royal Charter

“The objects of the College shall be to advance learning, knowledge and professional competence particularly in the field of fine arts, in the principles and practice of art and design in their relation to industrial and commercial processes and social developments and other subjects relating thereto through teaching, research and collaboration with industry and commerce.”

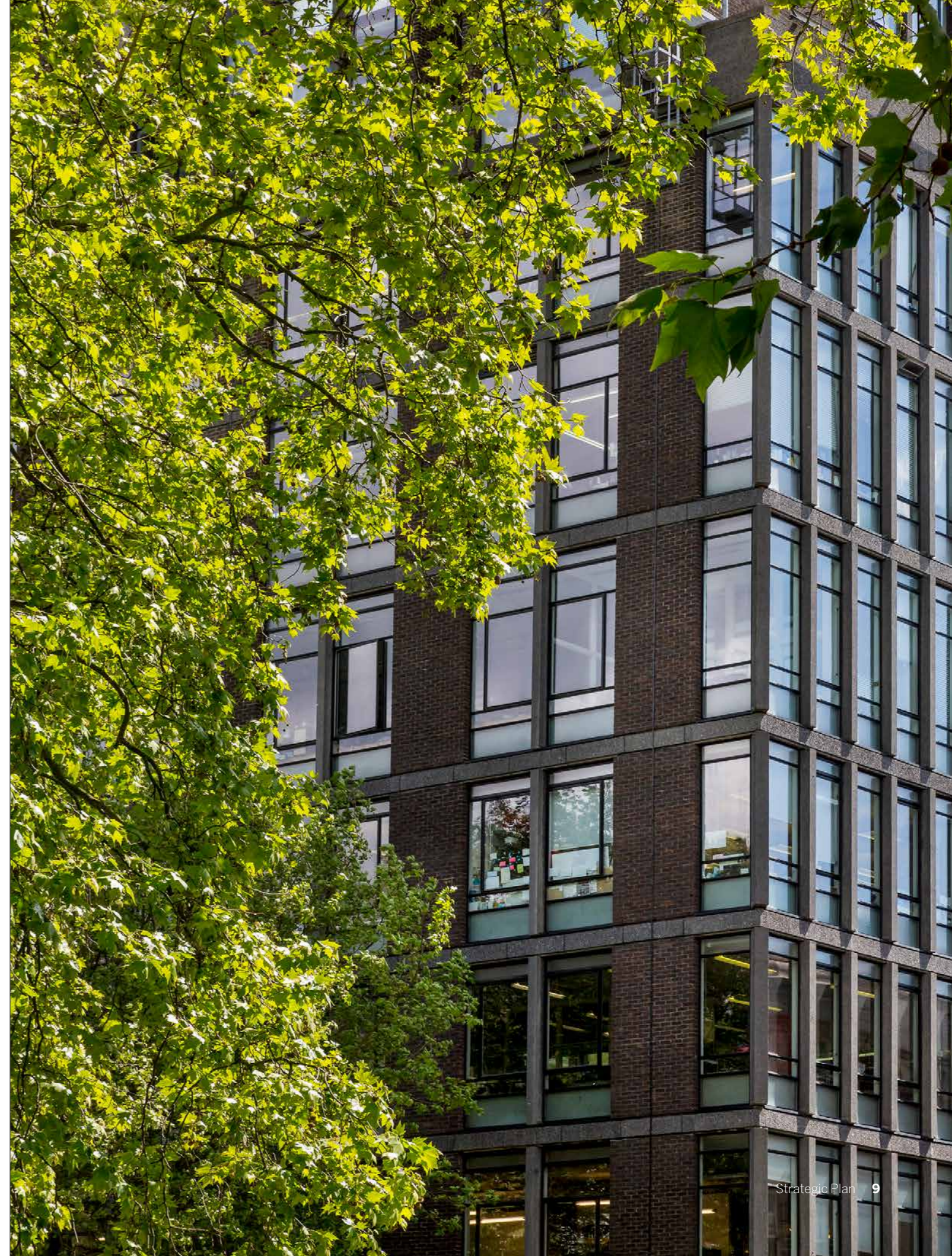
Royal Charter, 1967

Strategic Vision 2022–27

Our strategic vision is to increase our influence on the world stage of globally ranked universities, punching significantly above our weight, and attracting, supporting and convening the world’s most talented faculty, students, artists, designers and creative leaders.

We will remain an independent, postgraduate institution with a sharply distinctive and fresh research agenda and a research-driven approach towards our taught programmes that keeps us always one step ahead. We’ll focus on areas of expertise that only the RCA can offer – including some big-bet propositions where we have the appetite for well-managed risk and we are prepared to enter new ventures with new associates. We’ll lead in new fields of creative practice and intellectual inquiry where we believe creative insights and a uniquely RCA perspective will catalyse new solutions to global challenges.

We recognise that the winning formula must be built upon a diversity of student talent with a taught Master’s model that is more inclusive, affordable and better suited to twenty-first century lifestyles and careers.



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

80

Proved that technology and the creative arts are a potent amalgam for successful new start-ups, launching almost 80 start-ups through InnovationRCA.



Helped global corporations develop their skills and insights through our expanded knowledge exchange and executive education programmes.



#1

Ranked as the number one university for art and design by QS for eight consecutive years, with employers' favourable rating of our graduates rising to 96% in 2021 and staying there.

£54m

Secured £54m of HM Treasury funding to create a new model of creative entrepreneurship and postgraduate education at Battersea.



Demonstrated that design can be at the forefront of the research question: with the RCA as Principal Investigator leading UCL, Manchester, York and Leeds universities, among others.

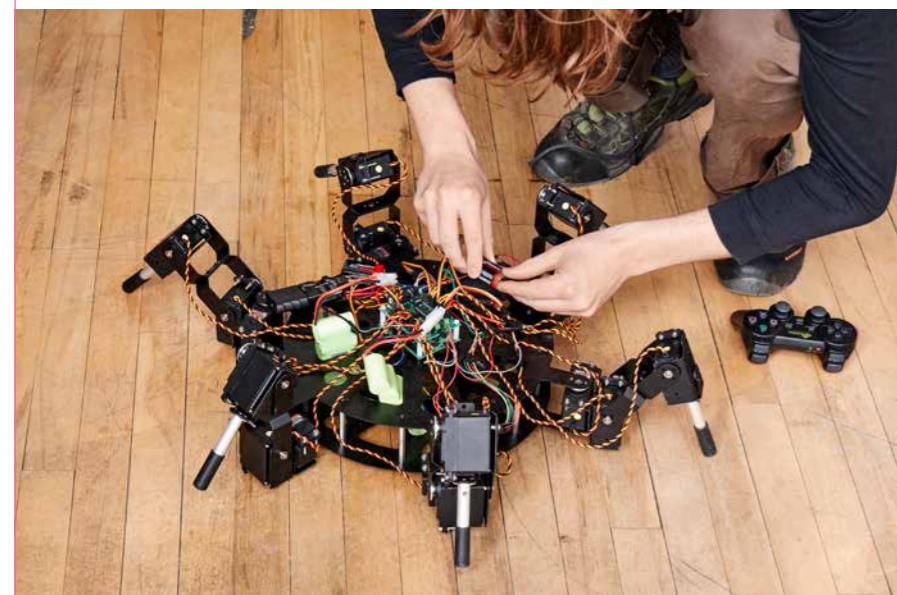


Attracted leading businesses and the philanthropic community, resulting in £43m of donations for our new campus and £25m donations for 'People & Projects'.

£43m



Championed the value of collaborative and interdisciplinary learning as the first art and design university in the world to implement a STEAM vision: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Design and Maths.



Broken the silos and made new faculty appointments in Robotics, Materials Science and Computer Science within a traditional art and design college.

Contributed to the global challenges of ageing populations, sustainability, and design and artificial intelligence, through the launch of the Design Age Institute, Textiles Circularity Centre and AiDlab.



Generated new knowledge and insights on the global challenges of rapid urbanisation, transport and sustainability, through the launch of new taught programmes in Environmental Architecture, City Design and Global Innovation Design.



5

Generated annual surpluses for the past five years, which compare very favourably to much bigger universities, and allows the RCA to invest in its future.



Addressing the explosion of experimental ways of storytelling and expanded the discourse in contemporary art through our courses in Digital Direction and Contemporary Art Practice.



How will we achieve our new strategic vision?

The following three goals will help us deliver our strategic vision:

1. **We will generate new knowledge and insights from research.**
2. **Our teaching excellence will be continuously informed by new research knowledge and insights.**
3. **We will translate new knowledge, skills and insights to bring about economic, societal and cultural benefit through UK and international partnerships and collaborations.**

Goal 1: Research

Across our four Schools, we will generate new knowledge and answers, aligned to the RCA's strategic research priorities, by delivering substantive research programmes.

Provide new insights and leadership to four twenty-first challenges:

- Mobility and urbanism (through the Intelligent – Mobility Design Centre, Computer Science Research Centre, and City Design)
- Climate crisis and the circular economy (through Architecture, City Design, Environmental Architecture, and the Textiles Circularity Centre)
- Ageing populations and inclusivity (Helen Hamlyn Centre and Design Age Institute)
- Design & AI (AiDlab, Computer Science Research Centre, and Robotics)

Across our Research Centres, deliver planned research and knowledge exchange activity and income by 2027, generating excellent interdisciplinary research in:

- Future mobility
- Material science and the circular economy
- Inclusive design and ageing
- Computer science and AI

Design Age Institute project with Centaur Robotics and ExtraCare Charitable Trust

Deliver three major cross-College and interdisciplinary research and knowledge exchange collaborations, including AiDlab, and scope a new research-led, interdisciplinary initiative addressing the climate crisis by 2024.

Contribute to the challenge of climate change through a bold new initiative with a national or global partner by 2027.

Enhance our doctoral research culture by attracting PhD candidates in fields directly aligned to the RCA's strategic research priorities. We will increase the funding available to support our doctoral students, securing studentships from industry and philanthropic sources alongside our existing UKRI studentships by 2027.

Establish a public-facing forum for building and showcasing evidence of the impact of arts and humanities research on enhancing and humanising our understanding of complex social, cultural, and technological problems.



The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design uses design to address societies' most challenging social issues, working with a range of organisations to create impactful projects and solutions. Led by Director Rama Gheerawo, the Centre's work is focussed across two research spaces (Age & Diversity and Healthcare) and two impact areas (Inclusive Design for Business Impact and Inclusive Design for Social Impact). The Centre has worked with Government, business and the third sector on over 300 projects to date.

AiDLab

AiDLab is the world's first research platform focused on the integration of Artificial Intelligence with design. The Lab was jointly established by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the RCA. With funding from Hong Kong's Government's Innovation and Technology Bureau, AiDLab has established a new creative cluster of AI in design and conducts interdisciplinary research that drives innovation and sustainability, making a positive impact on both industry and society. AiDLab brings together a diverse mix of leading researchers and practitioners from its founding institutions to conduct research in three thematic programmes: Ergonomic and Inclusive Design, Innovation in Product and Service Design, and Intelligent Fashion Design and Quality Control.



Textiles Circularity Centre

The Textiles Circularity Centre sits within the Material Science Research Centre and turns textiles, crop residues and household waste into renewable materials for use in textiles, new supply chains, design and consumer experiences. The Centre will stimulate innovation and economic growth in the UK textile manufacturing, apparel and creative technology sectors, whilst reducing reliance on imported and environmentally and ethically impactful materials, and diversifying supply chains. The Centre is the result of a four-year award of £5.4m and is one of five circular economy centres funded by the National Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Centres Research programme. It is led by the RCA's Professor Sharon Baurley, with Professor Phil Purnell (University of Leeds) as co-director, working in collaboration with Cranfield University, University of Cambridge, University College London, University of Manchester and University of York.



Bio-manufacturing Textiles from Waste, project by researcher Miriam Ribul



Goal 2: Teaching Excellence

Increase the number of Master's and Postgraduate students to 3,000, with a focus on attracting talent from diverse and differing academic, social and ethnic backgrounds.

Enhance the quality and outcomes of taught programmes with new insights and knowledge harvested from research outputs and built into MA pathways.

Adapt and evolve our teaching to provide:

- A new delivery framework for our MA as an accelerator to widen access and opportunity.
- A suite of new credit-rated flexible learning models which differentiate RCA taught programmes internationally.
- New MFA, MDes, MBA/MBus, and revalidated MRes programmes as standalone or a sequential second-year of study at the RCA starting from 2023/24.
- MA units in Design Robotics and Gaming, ensuring that our students graduate and eventually lead growing industries.
- A redesigned AcrossRCA – a perennial student favourite – as a formal credit-bearing unit of study.

As a result of this plan, more than double the percentage of Black British, People of Colour and postgraduate taught students and postgraduate researchers from underrepresented backgrounds.

Ensure that the RCA student experience is at the heart of what we do, through evaluation responses to student feedback, particularly in relation to community, campus and inclusive practice – with the aim of constant improvement.

Ensure that the RCA continues to nurture a disproportionately high percentage of critically-acclaimed artists, curators, writers and design historians.





The Terra Carta Design Lab

The Terra Carta Design Lab was launched in 2021 by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and Sir Jony Ive in partnership with the RCA, as part of the Sustainable Markets Initiative. It invites RCA students and recent alumni to develop credible and sustainable solutions to the climate crisis through creative collaboration between art, science, design and engineering. Young and emerging architects, designers, scientists, engineers, historians, writers and artists are tasked with addressing the damage being done to our planet and creating solutions that draw inspiration from and give back to nature.

New Economic Model for the Ocean (NEMO)

The RCA Grand Challenge is an annual initiative through which interdisciplinary teams of students from across the School of Design combine science with design to address some of the world's most intractable problems. The RCA partnered with Extreme E for the Grand Challenge 2021/22 alongside Logitech and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. The theme of 'a New Economic Model for the Ocean (NEMO)' investigates environmental sustainability, plastic pollution, loss of marine habitat and new ocean economies. Academics from the RCA's School of Design travelled to Kangerlussuaq in Greenland to install data-gathering equipment on Extreme E's floating operations hub, the St Helena ship. The equipment will monitor and collect vast amounts of data about the world's oceans as the ship travels to the forthcoming Extreme E race locations. This will provide students and research staff with real world scenarios and vital data to inform workable solutions.



Lexus 2040 Student Project

In September 2021, Lexus launched 'Lexus 2040: The Soul of Future Premium' in partnership with the RCA's Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, which leads on research at the intersection of people, mobility and technology. The design project for the RCA's Intelligent Mobility MA students was established to explore how luxury transport might evolve towards the middle of the 21st century. The programme ran for four months, during which time students researched future scenarios to produce informed design perspectives about how and where the Lexus brand might evolve. The winner was Richard Newman with his 'ALTO' concept, a personal flying machine which encapsulated the company's forward-looking spirit.



Wayne Binitie & Polar Zero

Wayne Binitie is an RCA PhD student and the artist behind Polar Zero, an immersive exhibition on display at the Glasgow Science Centre during COP26, which injected an artistic and cultural dimension to the climate negotiations at the event. The centrepieces of the exhibition were a cylindrical glass sculpture encasing Antarctic air from the year 1765 – the date that scientists say predates the Industrial Revolution – and an Antarctic ice core containing trapped air bubbles that reveal a unique record of our past climate. Polar Zero was a collaboration between the British Antarctic Survey, global engineering and consulting firm Arup and the RCA, and was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.



Sir Frank Bowling Scholarships

The RCA's new Sir Frank Bowling Scholarship will support 24 UK MA and MRes students and one PhD student every year from Black African and Caribbean diaspora heritage, or mixed Black African and Caribbean diaspora heritage, across MA, MRes and PhD study, from 2022.

The scholarships will be worth £21,000 each, covering tuition fees and contributing to living expenses, and are supported by a donation from the RCA's own funds. Scholarships will be awarded each year, to support an increasing number of students, and will apply to all areas of the RCA's postgraduate study – arts and humanities, design, architecture and communication. These scholarships form part of our commitment to spend 8% of our total expenditure annually on student support and scholarships.





Goal 3: Enhance Knowledge Exchange & Innovation

Contribute to the creative and other industrial and research sectors internationally through dissemination and translation of our postgraduate taught/research and faculty research findings into real-world impact in industry, the third sector, society and culture.

Scale up knowledge-exchange engagements from predominantly short-term, student-led projects to larger-scale and longer-term research-led collaborations with major external partners that build on our unique creative and innovative approaches.

Establish College-wide facilities for knowledge exchange with external partners, including the Snap Visualisation Lab, with an operating plan to achieve financial self-sustainability within five years.

Deliver a pipeline of new start-ups into the UK economy, supporting an additional 20 start-ups per year through InnovationRCA's incubation and acceleration programmes, backed by a new £3m Design and Impact seed fund.

Build recognition, value and investment in the creative industries through research and knowledge exchange.

Contribute to the Government's Innovation Strategy and encourage support for the creative industries.

The Tyre Collective

InnovationRCA spinout The Tyre Collective is a pioneering clean-tech start-up leading in the capture and monitoring of tyre wear pollution to improve air quality. They aim to develop the first on-vehicle device to capture tyre wear, at the source, to prevent harmful particles being released into the environment. The Tyre Collective's technology uses electrostatics and airflow to attract tyre particles, which can then be reused in new tyre production and inks. Founders Hanson Cheng, Siobhan Anderson, Hugo Richardson and Deepak Mallya graduated from the RCA's MA/MSc Innovation Design Engineering programme in 2020. They were awarded the Environment Award at the 2020 Mayor's Entrepreneur Competition and are 2022 winners of the Terra Carta Design Lab.



Ananas Anam

Ananas Anam is the company behind Piñatex, a new alternative to leather using natural fibres extracted from the waste leaves of pineapple plants. Ananas Anam was incubated as a start-up venture in InnovationRCA. This material represents the first sustainable attractive alternative to leather and can be used for fashion bags, footwear and furnishings amongst other future applications. The innovative venture was founded by social entrepreneur and designer Dr Carmen Hijosa, who has a strong track record in design and manufacture of luxury leather goods as co-founder and designer of Irish-based Chesneau Leather Goods. The development of Piñatex marks the culmination of five year's research undertaken by Carmen for her PhD in Textiles from the RCA.

These key enablers will help us in the journey:

1. Our Values
2. Our People & Culture
3. Our Advocacy
4. Our Finance & Investment
5. Our Infrastructures



Key Enabler 1: Values

The RCA firmly believes in the cultural, social and economic values of the creative arts, humanities and design because we can demonstrate that these disciplines build social cohesion, unlock individual talent and potential, drive economic growth and bring a sense of community, fulfilment and pleasure that has been recognised and proven over centuries.

We are committed to widening student access and participation to – and improving attainment in – postgraduate education, both for individual enrichment and the public good. We wish to support and enable artists and designers to have meaningful, rewarding and sustainable careers in their chosen fields.

These convictions demand that the RCA becomes an anti-racist institution and an institution that commits to equity, diversity and inclusion goals, including reaching net zero in recognition of the disproportionate impact climate crisis has upon vulnerable communities and biodiversity.

Our commitments are underlined through our values. These values provide a framework for the way we will work and operate together to deliver our vision and strategy; they will help shape our strategic choices, our activities and our culture.

Curiosity: We have a tenacious commitment to innovation, and are open 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 we embrace difference as a source of strength. We strive for an inclusive RCA community, removing barriers and challenging exclusionary and discriminatory practice.

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 and organisations 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.

Key Enabler 2: Our People

Our faculty, students and alumni generate powerful networks internationally and exert a formidable ability to convene diverse communities of scientists, artists, entrepreneurs and leading thinkers. We want to be able to recruit and retain the world-leading faculty; and to continue to attract the world's most talented students.

We're advancing our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, supporting a College community which is diverse, multicultural and inclusive, as we enact our action plan to become an anti-racist institution.

Once our students join us, we want them to have the best possible experience of the RCA. We will continue to invest in our talent by increasing student support, creating a new Student Hub and role of Head of Student Experience, and working in a positive way with our Students' Union.

With our staff, we will embed the RCA's beliefs and values to enable a high-performance culture with effective leadership and management, in which staff can develop, be supported and appropriately rewarded. We're increasing the proportion of our permanent academic faculty members as a percentage of the workforce, supporting the student learning experience and world-leading research.



Key Enabler 3: Advocacy

The RCA is proud to have been voted the leading art and design university for eight years in a row, and we believe we hold responsibilities to lead, convene and advocate on behalf of both the education sector and creative industries at a national and international level, working with the UK Government, Creative UK, Universities UK and their partners.

Our alumni make a global impact and we're proud of their achievements. We'll also celebrate, champion and support our alumni throughout their careers.

Key Enabler 4: Finance & Investment

The responsible management of our finances and investments will underpin our success in all other areas of this plan. To achieve our goals, we will make important strategic investments in the short term, leading to greater annual surpluses after 2024. We'll advocate for and secure ISTA funding for another five years from the Office for Students, achieve our philanthropy target of raising a total of £100m for our comprehensive capital campaign, establish more support for scholarships, and create a new investment fund for InnovationRCA start-ups.

RCA Logitech Scholarship Programme

In October 2021, the RCA and Logitech announced a donation of £1m to establish new scholarships that will tackle student hardship and ensure the diversity of the College community. The RCA Logitech Scholarship Programme will create a viable pathway into the design industry for young people from underrepresented communities. Logitech has previously invested in the goals and ambitions of the RCA and its students through its support of the RCA Grand Challenge initiative. This scholarship programme feeds directly into Logitech's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and its belief that bringing together people with different perspectives, skills and ideas drives innovation.



Key Enabler 5: Infrastructures

The quality of our physical and digital infrastructures has a direct impact on the successful delivery of this plan. We will create an estates masterplan which balances excellence with affordability and looks to consolidate our estate. We'll accelerate investment in digital management information systems in order to contain costs and make processes more efficient for everyone.



Conclusion

By 2027:

We will have transformed what we teach, through the intensity and acceleration of our research outputs, whilst maintaining our academic excellence and reputation.

We will have transformed whom we teach, through our widening participation programme and student support, and anti-racism initiatives.

We will have transformed how we teach, through the new flexible postgraduate taught models of delivery.

Through research, knowledge exchange and innovation, we will have made global contributions to:

- mobility and urbanism
- sustainability, climate change and the circular economy
- ageing populations and inclusivity
- design and AI

We will have demonstrated we work effectively with industry as well as create the next generation of new industries and start-ups.



Design

Scott Doran and Ian Vickers – Eureka! Design Consultants
(MA Graphic Design & Art Direction, 1992)

Typeface

Benton Sans

