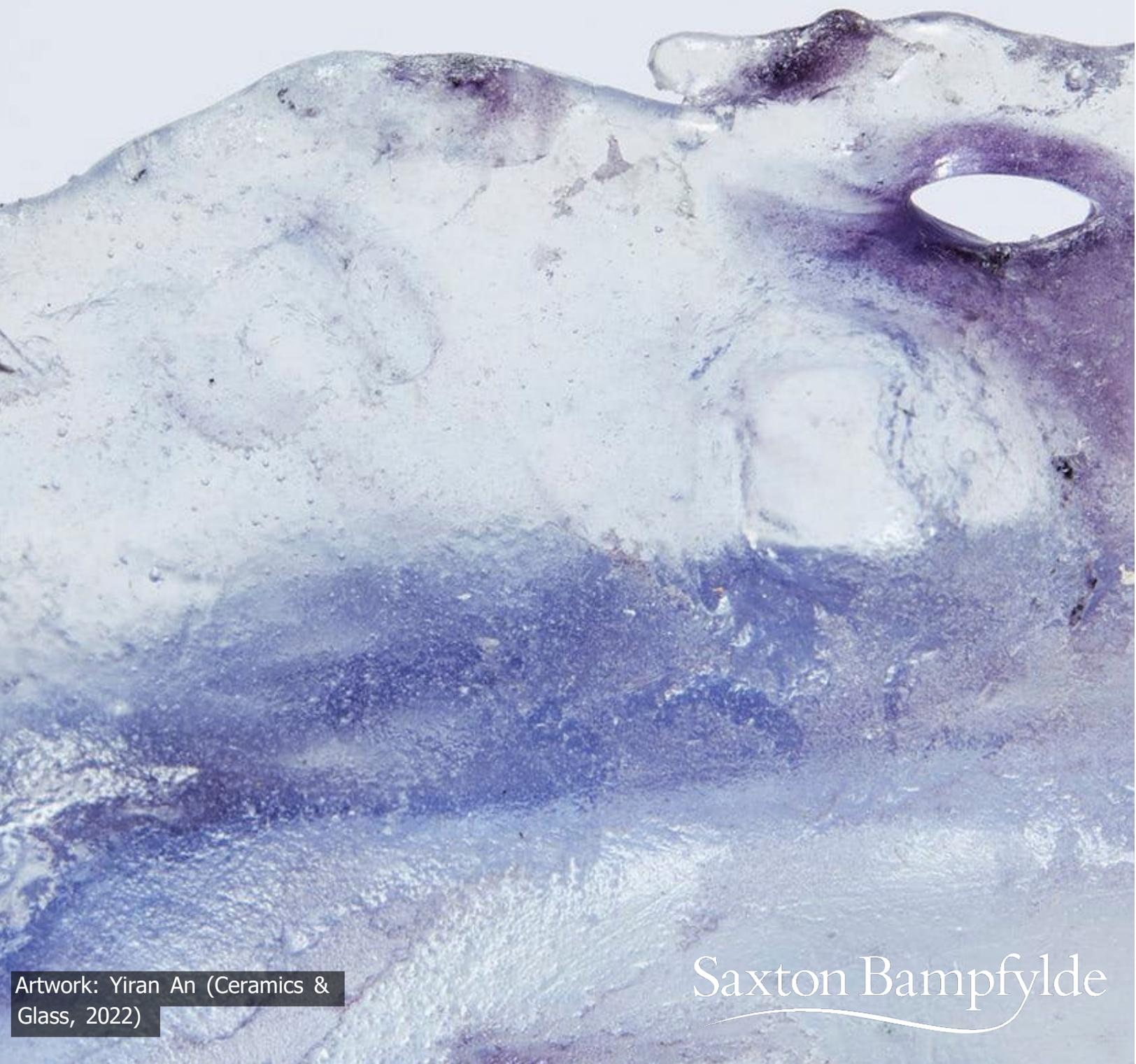


RCA

Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services

March 2026



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics &
Glass, 2022)

Saxton Bampfylde

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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 Houghton

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.



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.

About the Role



Purpose of role

The Royal College of Art (RCA) is committed to engaging beyond the boundaries of the institution, sharing its expertise with partners across academia, industry and the public sector. These collaborations enrich the College, create valuable opportunities for staff development at every career stage, and enable RCA to make meaningful contributions to organisations and communities worldwide.

We are seeking to appoint an experienced, professional, energetic and collegiate Director of Consultancy and Commercial Services to develop and scale up our existing academic, research and innovation consultancy, executive education and other commercial activities and services, and to generate substantial new business. This new role will be part of the Research & Innovation senior team, and will be expected to deliver a significant contribution to the College's income diversification strategy. The post holder will also be formally appointed as company director for RCA Consultancy Limited, the wholly-owned subsidiary through which all RCA consultancy, executive education and related financial and contractual transactions and contracts will be conducted.



Key responsibilities

- Set the vision and strategy for the RCA Consultancy & Commercial Services Unit in consultation with the College leadership team, establishing a clear plan to scale up consultancy, executive education and other commercial services, to meet ambitious income targets within the RCA's strategic plan 2025-30 period.
- Develop a sustainable pipeline of existing consultancy, executive education and other commercial opportunities in the UK and internationally, positioning the RCA as a partner of choice for institutions seeking expertise in creative education, design and innovation.
- Demonstrate pro-active leadership of the RCA's Consultancy & Commercial Services Unit, establishing credibility and authority in the role, and providing an efficient, high-quality service to clients and to RCA staff involved in these activities, ensuring that projects are expertly managed, revenue and profit are maximised, and annual targets are met.
- As the company director for RCA Consultancy Limited, develop and implement a business plan that significantly contributes to the College's strategic plan ambitions and financial targets.
- Establish effective processes and support structures for the development, contracting and delivery of consultancy and executive education projects, working closely with professional services teams across the College.
- Provide regular reporting and other relevant information to the PVC Research & Innovation, the Chief Financial Officer and the wider RCA Executive Board on the financial performance of RCA Consultancy Limited and the progress of activities and income generation, to support financial, audit, Office for Students, HEBCI, HEIF and other formal reporting requirements.
- Contribute in a collegiate, professional and pro-active manner as a member of the Research & Innovation senior leadership team, working effectively with colleagues to ensure a coherent institutional approach across research, knowledge exchange, executive education, innovation and consultancy strategy and activities.
- Undertake other duties as reasonably required by the PVC Research & Innovation.

Person Specification



Photo: Richard Haughton

Essential Criteria

Strategic Leadership & Business Growth

- Demonstrated experience in setting vision and strategy for consultancy/commercial services.
- Proven track record of developing and growing consultancy or commercial activity, delivering income diversification, and meeting ambitious financial targets.

Commercial & Financial Acumen

- Strong ability to manage the full lifecycle of consultancy/executive education projects: from opportunity identification to contract negotiation, delivery, and reporting.
- Evidence of financial planning, budget management, and risk mitigation, including legal and compliance oversight.

Stakeholder Engagement & Relationship Building

- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to establish credibility with senior academics, management, and external clients. Experience in building collaborative partnerships across higher education, industry, and international networks.

Knowledge of Higher Education & Innovation Landscape

- Understanding of the UK academic environment, research and innovation policy, and funding landscape.
- Awareness of regulatory, compliance, and intellectual property issues in knowledge-based services.

Entrepreneurial & Solution-Oriented Mindset

- Evidence of creativity, proactivity, and entrepreneurial thinking in developing new commercial opportunities.
- Strong analytical skills combined with sound legal and commercial judgement to deliver innovative solutions.

Qualifications

- An undergraduate (essential) or postgraduate (desirable) degree in a relevant discipline, plus relevant legal and financial qualifications or experience.



Photo: Iwan Baan

Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation
- Responsible for: Head of Executive Education and fixed-term Project Managers (as required)
- Full time salary: Competitive
- Full time and permanent role.
- 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/Kensington/hybrid (3 days on site per week)
- Department: Research & Innovation



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.

How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the RCA on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at roles.saxbam.com using code **IAJDC**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Tuesday 7 April 2026**.

Final interviews will take place **w/c 11 May 2026** in Kensington (subject to change).

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



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



RCA



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.

Saxton Bampfylde