



Royal College of Art

THE HELEN HAMLYN CENTRE FOR DESIGN

The Helen Hamlyn
Chair of Design



Royal College of Art

THE HELEN HAMLYN CENTRE FOR DESIGN

Society

Candidate Pack

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01. Welcome from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Helen Hamlyn Chair at the Royal College of Art.

The Royal College of Art (RCA) was founded in 1837 as the world's first publicly funded Government School of Design. Today we are the world's largest community of postgraduate art and design students. We are also the world's most influential postgraduate art and design school, ranked as 1st in the world for ten consecutive years by QS Rankings. The most talented students come to us to push the boundaries of their fields and learn from leading faculty. We are the only UK art and design university where all academics are research active – meaning everything we teach is informed by cutting-edge research. Our approach is founded on the premise that art, design, creative thinking, science, engineering, and technology must all collaborate to solve today's global challenges.

Research at the RCA is rooted in creative practice and focussed on addressing today's global challenges, from climate change and circular economy to a healthy ageing society and the future of AI. Our distinctive research culture interrogates the systems that integrate design into daily life, dealing with designed objects, services, and the ways in which they are produced and used. Established over 30 years ago, originally to explore designing for an ageing population, the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) is the RCA's longest-running research centre and increasingly relevant in this complex world. The HHCD's partners include national and international universities, businesses such as Tata Consulting Services, charities such as Dunhill Medical Trust, and government departments such as the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.

Inclusive design (ID), the central focus of HHCD, was defined by Roger Coleman, the founding Director, in 1994. The Centre supported a definition of ID by the UK Government in 2000 as 'including the needs of the widest number of customers', placing its ideology within a business context and signalling its potential impact, HHCD's projects have enabled ID to gain global recognition. The HHCD now works within the themes of Population Ageing; Prevalence of Disability; and Healthcare,

delivering positive impact for individuals and society, healthcare and wellbeing providers, third sector organisations and business, ranging from insurance companies to NHS trusts.

HHCD's staff design futures that include people across the age spectrum and all dimensions of diversity; they work with patients and medical professionals to tackle healthcare challenges; and they apply practice-led inclusive design thinking and research to industry and society to open up new commercial markets and address social issues.

The RCA is a welcoming, dynamic, and global art and design university based in one of the most exciting capital cities in the world. We are committed to creating an environment of mutual respect, where differences are valued and respected, and where innovation, creativity, and diversity can flourish.

This is a hugely exciting opportunity to join the world's most influential postgraduate institution of art and design to generate change now for a sustainable inclusive future everywhere.

We hope you share our excitement about the role, and we look forward to receiving your application.

Best wishes,

Dr Emma Wakelin

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation



02. Executive Summary

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design is a global leader in Inclusive Design. With a three-decade history, we are the longest-running centre for design research at the Royal College of Art.

Established over 30 years ago, the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) focuses on inclusive design for Population Ageing; Prevalence of Disability; and Healthcare delivering positive impacts for individuals and society, healthcare and wellbeing providers, third-sector institutions and business, ranging from insurance companies to NHS trusts.

The HHCD is seeking the Helen Hamlyn Chair to join the Centre. The role of Chair works in close collaboration with Dr Emma Wakelin, the RCA's Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation, and the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design's Director, Rama Gheerawo, and his team, to advance 'design that improves quality of life', to add strategic advice, new dimensions to existing world-class networks, a strong research profile, and a global perspective that will support and amplify the Centre's continued development.

The Helen Hamlyn Chair is an outward-facing strategic leadership role, leading the Centre to develop further wider-range and longer-term new research initiatives in the field of inclusive design, disseminating research findings internationally, and developing new opportunities for research impact and knowledge exchange.

The incoming Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design will be an academic leader at professorial level (or equivalent) in a discipline relevant to the Centre's inclusive design focus and have a successful track record as principal investigator on major research grant funding awarded by national research funders.

Applications are now invited for the prestigious position of Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design, one of only three named chairs in the RCA. The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design is located in Battersea, London, with this role being a part-time and hybrid role.

The HHCD is being assisted in this appointment process by the executive search firm [Society](#). Applications should consist of a cover letter and an up-to-date CV. These can be uploaded [here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is **Monday, 11 November 2024**.



03. About the Royal College of Art

The Royal College of Art has been ranked as the world's number one art and design university for a remarkable ten consecutive years, according to the QS Working University Rankings by Subject 2024.

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art (RCA) is the world's largest community of postgraduate art and design students and it is the oldest art and design university in continuous operation. The RCA is research-led and recognised in the UK-wide Research Excellence Framework (REF) as the UK's most research-intensive institution – with an increased proportion of the College's outputs classed as 'internationally excellent' and 'world-leading' in the most recent REF assessment of 2021.

More than 2,800 students are spread across four schools and research and academic departments, studying at Graduate Diploma, MA, MFA, MDes, MArch, MEd, MRes, MPhil and PhD levels. The College's mix of professionalism and creative freedom, together with its renowned academic community and rigorous academic framework provides the ecosystem in which students flourish and achieve their highest potential. In addition, the RCA has a number of established research centres:

- [The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design](#);
- [Intelligent Mobility Design Centre](#);
- [Materials Science Research Centre](#) (which includes the *Textiles Circularity Centre*);
- [Computer Science Research Centre](#).

The RCA espouses a hybrid approach, supporting 'traditional' making and technical skills in fine and applied art and design alongside the foundational sciences, engineering and technology which underpin designers' ability to solve today's global challenges. The RCA champions the value of interdisciplinary learning with investment in new faculty posts in materials science, computer science and robotics alongside art and design disciplines. By applying creative insights to evidence-based science, its staff, students, researchers, and start-ups are addressing major global challenges such as rapid urbanisation and transport; loss of biodiversity; ageing populations; unsustainable consumption and production; and the rise of AI.



04. Our People

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for the world's creative leaders. With more than 25,000 RCA alumni across the globe, the RCA's graduates form a unique international network of artists, designers, creators, and innovators. Every year, RCA alumni are recognised as leaders in their discipline, making national and international headlines for their work, which shapes the world we live in. It's graduate start-up incubator, [InnovationRCA](#), is one of the most successful in the country with a high proportion of female start-up founders and a high 'survival' percentage after five years of trading.

The role of Royal Visitor to the RCA was taken on by The former Prince of Wales – now His Majesty The King – in 2018. The announcement of HM The King's retained Patronage of the RCA marks the first anniversary of Their Majesties' Coronation. As part of the official Coronation Concert in May 2023, the Royal College of Art along with The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and the Royal College of Music came together for the first time ever to create a spectacular one-off performance, with a striking visual backdrop of specially designed artworks contributed by students from the Royal College of Art.

The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette. The RCA's President & Vice-Chancellor is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the College in April 2024.

The RCA's academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry knowledge to the practice-based model of teaching. There is a core academic and research workforce of 196 FTE, supported by around 215 Associate Lecturers and a wide range of Guest Lecturers who bring 'live' industry experience into the taught curriculum – for example, Amin Taha of GrantOn design, whose work was twice shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize, in 2017 and 2021, teaches in the School of Architecture; and Yao Yingjia, who is Vice President and Chief Designer at Lenovo teaches in the School of Design.

The RCA combines contemporary and industry-focused teaching perspectives. It also employs a team of 95 highly skilled technicians, many of whom themselves have postgraduate qualifications in their fields of specialism, which range from rapid prototyping and subtractive manufacturing to film and sound engineering, and from digital modelling to metal fabrication and jewellery making.



05. Strategic Plan 2022–2027

The RCA’s [Strategic Plan 2022–27](#) has a vision to increase the RCA’s influence on the world stage of globally ranked universities, punching significantly above its weight, and attracting, supporting, and convening the world’s most talented faculty, students, artists, designers and creative leaders.

The RCA 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 it always one step ahead. It will focus on areas of expertise that only the RCA can offer – including some big-bet

propositions where there is an appetite for well-managed risk and preparedness to enter new ventures with new associates. The RCA will 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.

The RCA recognises 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. Please click [here](#) for the full Strategic Plan.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In July 2020, the College committed to becoming an anti-racist institution, building a community which is diverse, multicultural and inclusive for all students and staff, where everyone can teach, learn, work and practise in a shared spirit of cultural exchange.

In May 2021, the publication of the Becoming Anti-racist Action Plan was drafted as the next step of this vital process. The Plan was informed by recommendations from independent consultants Nous Group and followed listening sessions with staff, students and alumni across the RCA. The College seeks to address all aspects of the EDI agenda and, initially, concentrated on the recommendations of the independent report. This work will continue to inform other interventions that will seek to address questions of under-representation in alignment with the RCA strategy 2022–2027. In July 2021 the RCA appointed to a new role of Head of Equity and Inclusion.

The RCA community operates in line with four agreed values:

Curiosity	Inclusion	Collaboration	Integrity
<i>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.</i>	<i>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.</i>	<i>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.</i>	<i>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.</i>



06. The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

Established over 30 years ago, the [Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design](#) is the RCA's longest-running research centre. It is one of four discrete research centres at the RCA and is housed in the purpose-built Rausing building designed by Herzog de Meuron, which opened in 2022.

Originally established to explore designing for an ageing population, its focus today is on inclusive design for Population Ageing; Prevalence of Disability; and Healthcare delivering positive impacts for individuals and society, healthcare and wellbeing providers, third-sector institutions and business, ranging from insurance companies to NHS trusts.

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design's budget and staffing fluctuates with project delivery: recent years have seen annual budgets of between £1m and £3m, and staff numbers ranging from 13 and 30, with a small number of PhD students.

The Centre is supported with a generous annual grant from the Helen Hamlyn Trust. In 2008, to coincide with the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) being written into the College's ordinances for the first time, the Trust endowed the Chair of Design with a permanent endowment, the first academic Chair in the history of the RCA.

The Helen Hamlyn Trust, established in 2001 by Lady Helen Hamlyn CBE, initiates major projects with leading organisations and individuals to nurture innovation. The Trust's grant-making focuses on medicine, arts and culture, education, welfare, healthy ageing, humanitarian affairs, and heritage conservation in India. Major projects include The Hamlyn Centre & Chair of Surgery at Imperial College London, The Panufnik Composition Scheme with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Pedagogy at UCL, and the ARCHiOx and EPIC Networks at Oxford University.

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design asks questions such as:

- *How can designers shape a future that includes people across the age spectrum and all dimensions of diversity?*
- *How can designers work with patients and medical professionals to meet healthcare challenges for the 21st century?*
- *How can Inclusive Design thinking, research and practice impact and open up new pathways for business, industry and global markets?*
- *How can Inclusive Design be used to work with individuals and communities addressing social issues?*

07. Our Research

Specialising in Inclusive Design, the Centre undertakes research and knowledge exchange projects in collaboration with business, industry, government and community partners, and delivers a programme of executive education, supervises PhD candidates, and offers short courses to clients around the world.

Rama Gheerawo, the Centre Director, has a background in design engineering from Imperial College and the RCA. Rama has worked in collaboration with the College's Intelligent Mobility Design Centre staff on inclusive mobility transport projects, in particular projects to redesign the emergency ambulance and to develop a new inclusively designed London Taxi. Rama regularly delivers executive education workshops to business and civil service partners around the world.

Most recently, Rama, together with Professor Jeremy Myerson, former HHCD Director and the former Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design, led the creation of the Design Age Institute, securing £5m Research England funding to create a subsidiary unit within the HHCD.

The Centre's Associate Director for Research, Dr Melanie Flory, explores the intersections of neuroscience, design, and systems thinking. With a background in psychology and neuroscience, Dr Flory

joined the Centre in 2021 having undertaken senior research roles for the UK Government's Trauma Response Unit and the Ministry of Defence on brain plasticity and the interplay of emotion and cognition.

In 2016, Professor Myerson worked with Professor Lord Ara Darzi OM of Imperial College to submit a proposal to the Higher Education Funding Council for England to establish [The Helix Centre](#) at St Mary's Hospital, in partnership with Imperial College. The Centre brings clinicians, designers, healthcare professionals, patients and their families together to develop design-led solutions in medical and health settings.

Gianpaolo Fusari and Matt Harrison of the HHCD were the first of several designers to work at Helix and the incoming Helen Hamlyn Chair will be expected to maintain close links with Helix and provide leadership as required in research bid submissions and advice to the Helix team.



Research and Impact Spotlight

The Centre excels in translational and applied research focused on real-world application and impact. A recently completed PhD candidate, Dr Laura Salisbury, researched and devised a smart knitted textile which stimulates nerve endings in stroke patients in order to enhance recovery. Dr Salisbury won a £1.2m UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship in 2021 to support the further development of her patented textile and to establish a Wearable MedTech Lab within the Centre. She is also developing her ideas as a start-up founder of the company Knitregen based in InnovationRCA, the RCA's commercialisation and business incubator.

Over the years, the Centre has excelled in a number of areas with landmark research projects. Click on the images below to explore some recent examples:



[Designing out Medical Error](#)



[The Great British Toilet Map](#)



[Redesigning the Emergency Ambulance](#)



[Advanced Taxi for London](#)



[Driverless Futures](#)



[Our Future Foyle](#)



[SloMo: Digital support to improve wellbeing and thinking habits](#)



[Pioneering Architecture for Later Life Sector \(PALLS\)](#)



[Design Age Institute](#)

To visit the HHCD's research repository, please click [here](#).

08. Role Description

The role of Chair involves working in close collaboration with the RCA's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dr Emma Wakelin, and with the Director of the HHCD, Rama Gheerawo, and his team, to add strategic advice, unparalleled networking, a strong research profile, and a global perspective that will support and amplify the Centre's continued development.

The role of the Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design is an outward-facing, strategic leadership role, supporting the Centre to develop new research, to disseminate research findings internationally, and to develop new opportunities for research impact and knowledge exchange, through connections with universities and businesses international as well as with government think tanks and Whitehall departments. Applications are welcomed on a part-time basis.

Dr Emma Wakelin is responsible for each of the four RCA Research Centres, including The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design. The Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design reports to Dr Wakelin, as does the Centre's Director.

Main responsibilities include:

- To lead on 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;
- To review and refresh the Centre's strategy for developing research partnerships and collaborations in order to increase research outputs and grant and consultancy income;
- To work in collaboration with the HHCD Director and the HHCD team to deliver the agreed vision and strategic objectives for the Centre;
- To identify opportunities for innovation in the Centre's inclusive design remit and across the broader institutional context of the RCA;
- To actively seek collaboration and joint research and Knowledge Exchange projects with the RCA's Schools and Research Centres;
- To produce, and support the Centre's researchers to produce, high-quality research outputs (at least 3* quality), appropriately and promptly disseminated, and material for impact case studies, that meet the College's expectations for submission to the REF;
- To be actively engaged in the development of the Centre's Knowledge Exchange plans, including developing funded and income-generating partnerships with industry, third sector, and government or NGO bodies;
- To contribute to the HHCD's strategies and plans for translating knowledge and insights into credit-rated executive education and fresh content and curriculum for the RCA's taught provision;
- To leverage technologies to drive a culture of smart research and innovation;
- To represent the RCA and the HHCD internationally, enriching and amplifying its external profile and leveraging opportunities to broaden its networks;
- To develop and sustain positive relationships with the Helen Hamlyn Trust, pro-actively fulfilling all reporting requirements on the Chair's activities and achievements, and ensuring the Trust's values are upheld and its expectations met;
- To build constructive working relationships with the College's Research & Knowledge Exchange team to support appropriate horizon scanning and planning for Centre proposals;
- To uphold the highest standards of research ethics and research integrity, and embed a culture of research excellence, rigour and integrity throughout the Centre.

09. Person Specification

The qualities and experience we are seeking for the incoming Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design:

- An academic leader at professorial level (or with equivalent experience) in a discipline relevant to the Centre's inclusive design focus;
- A successful track record as principal investigator on major research grant funding awarded by national research funders (e.g. UKRI, EU and others), and substantial experience of leading collaborative research projects with business, industry, public sector and third sector partners, applying inclusive design principles to address societal challenges such as healthy ageing;
- Demonstrable experience of engaging with and influencing business, industry, government and policy leaders internationally and of persuasive communication of research findings, and the value of research, beyond the academy;
- Experience of interdisciplinary research, working across academic fields such as design; data science and AI; healthcare, social care, and ageing populations; and med tech, as well as the leadership skills to lead projects in collaboration with academic partners within and with universities across the UK and internationally;
- Academic leadership experience to provide a long-term vision for the Centre, working with the Director to shape and deliver the Centre's future strategic direction and priorities;
- A strong understanding of good practice in research governance, research integrity and research culture and environment, and the standards required to ensure the Centre's staff are able to contribute strong research outputs and impact case studies to the College's REF submissions;
- The ability and passion to mentor early career and mid-career researchers, and to develop and support the Centre's research culture in line with the RCA's Research and Innovation strategy;
- Leadership experience to balance the needs of the Centre, the RCA, the Helen Hamlyn Trust, national research funding agendas, and relevant business and industry partners.



10. Pay and Benefits

- The RCA is a participating institution of the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL). As such the College can offer all new starts joining on or after 1 April 2023 membership of SAUL START, a new contributory, defined contribution, pension scheme. The College will contribute a sum equal to 16% of your salary while you pay 6%. SAUL is not able to enrol any new Members in its defined contribution scheme (SAUL CARE), however, if you are currently a member of SAUL CARE scheme or believe you have historical entitlement to join SAUL CARE, please inform the HR team on accepting an offer of employment.
- Six weeks (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 either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year, at the discretion of the College. Part-time staff will be entitled to the pro rata equivalent.
- 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 six weeks followed by Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay for 33 weeks.
- Qualifying employees are entitled to six weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay. This compares to the statutory provision of two weeks' pay at the statutory rate.
- Interest-free loans are available for staff to purchase annual season tickets.
- Occupational sick pay after six months' service is three months' full pay/three months' half pay.
- 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 support for the College is provided by Imperial College's occupational health service at their South Kensington Campus.
- The RCA 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.
- 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.
- All staff are welcome to join the College library.
- All staff are welcome to attend exhibitions, lectures and private views held by academic schools and programmes.



11. Appointment Details and How to Apply

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design is being assisted in this appointment process by the executive search firm Society (www.society-search.com). Applications are welcomed on a part-time basis.

Applications should consist of:

1. a concise covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification;
2. an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
3. names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a [strong CV](#) and [strong covering letter](#) can be found on our website.

To upload your documents via Society's website, click [here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday on **Monday, 11 November 2024**.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview in London on **Tuesday, 14 January 2025**.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary that is commensurate with their experience and the seniority of their new role.

The Royal College of Art aims to foster an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students and stakeholders are respected. We recognise the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings and how this strengthens our research and enhances our teaching. In order for RCA to remain a world-leading institution we are committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles throughout all of our processes, from application through to appointment.

Society is committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at inclusion@society-search.com. We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.





Society

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Society is a global executive search firm and a certified B Corporation. 10% of our profits go to charitable causes through The Society Foundation. With colleagues in the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand, we solve senior hiring challenges for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations around the world.

We believe that the right candidate, placed in the right organisation at the right time, can initiate a chain reaction of transformative change that will help to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable future.

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