



**Royal College of Art**

Postgraduate Art & Design

# EXECUTIVE EDUCATION COURSES



**Royal College of Art**  
**Executive Education**

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**Our experts can develop  
custom programmes  
for business, government,  
the public sector and  
universities globally.**

### **Areas of expertise**

Design thinking and innovation  
Creative and cultural leadership  
Service design  
Entrepreneurship  
Visual communication  
Fashion & Textiles

Intelligent mobility  
Healthcare and inclusive design  
Architecture and interior design  
Curating contemporary art & design  
Emerging technology

## Custom Courses for Universities and Training Academies

We deliver custom executive education programmes for universities and company leadership training academies globally. Clients include: Bertelsmann, Beijing Normal University, CHANEL, Donghua University, European Broadcasting Union, Fudan University, Google, Imperial College London, ITV, Lego Design Academy, Majid al Futtaim Leadership Institute, National University of Singapore, Northumbrian Water Group, PwC, Shanghai University and University of Europe.

## Joint Courses

We collaborate with business, government, not-for-profit organisations and the public sector to jointly develop courses. Clients include: British Council, Design for Good, Design Museum, Dentsu Japan, Estu Global Ltd, Hertfordshire Futures, Hong Kong Design Centre, Korean Institute of Design Promotion, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, London Business School, London & Partners and UK Government.

## Open Short Courses

Each year we offer an impressive portfolio of online and on-campus short courses, summer schools and executive masterclasses open to the public. Developed by leading academics and industry experts for those who wish to move their practice forward, either as a career change, professional development or skills refreshment.

RCA short courses attract a global mix of participants from over 60 countries and reflect the college's unique studio-based learning philosophy with small class sizes, practical group work, rich interaction between students and academics, enhanced peer-to-peer networking and a certificate of achievement on completion.

Notable guest speakers and visits include: Es Devlin, Refik Anadol, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Foster + Partners, Heatherwick Studio, Zaha Hadid Architects, Universal Design Studio, Antony Gormley Studio, Tate, V&A, Design Museum, Science Museum, London Business School.



**“We are in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterised by rapid changes that are transforming businesses and job descriptions across all sectors.”**

Sir Peter Bazalgette, Pro-Chancellor & Chair of Council, Royal College of Art.

**“Creativity needs to be part of all critical processes and all decision-making roles in a company from designing the vision to prioritisation and target setting.”**

Laura Rosich, Transformation Director, LEGO Group London.

Photo: Ezzidin Alwan

**“A fully immersive deep dive into the design thinking process giving me the tools and confidence to bring change to my organisation.”**

Innovator Communities Lead, World Economic Forum.

**“The expertise shared in the short course was awe inspiring, such brilliant speakers who graciously shared their creative process and their work.”**

Senior Lecturer, Arts University Bournemouth.

**“I now have a toolkit of ideas and techniques which I can apply to improve how we help our clients and our new product and service development to ensure what we develop meets real customer needs.”**

Managing Director, Indigo Tree Digital Limited.

**“Insightful, practical and fun. This course provided me with the basis to take design thinking into my everyday practices and bring new ideas to my clients. From the course leader to the other attendees everyone brought ideas to the table and worked together to build some amazing outputs.”**

Manager, PwC.

**“I enjoyed interacting with a wide variety of people united by a desire to make things better for customers.”**

Head of Customer Design, HSBC.

**“The resources made available are of such quality, we are already making plans to review these as a business to further strengthen and develop our service proposition for our valued clients.”**

Head of Coaching, Infusion Group Ltd.



# RCA x CHANEL Next Prize Winners: London Session

A two-day, custom course in London for the winners of the CHANEL Next Prize.

## Overview

The CHANEL Next Prize is an international award that provides multidisciplinary creative risk-takers with the resources they need to realise ambitious new projects. The 2022 winners hail from 11 countries and work across disciplines including design, film and the performing and visual arts. Members of the jury included the Chinese Artist Cao Fei and the British Actor Tilda Swinton. The partnership was overseen by Yana Peel, Global Head of Arts and Culture at Chanel.

## Course structure

Led by Professor Chantal Faust (Contemporary Art Practice MA), the course was designed to allow the winners to connect, inspire and learn from each other, reinforcing the power of creativity and authenticity.

Seven RCA Academics and five guests were invited to lead sessions, including The Business of Being an Artist or Designer with Dr Nadia Danhash (InnovationRCA); Choreographing Robotics with Florence Peake (Artist); and On Communication with Funmi Fetto (Vogue), Calum Sutton (Sutton PR) and Anna Meacham (Huxley).

## Outcomes

The 2022 CHANEL Next Prize winners received world-class professional and personal development from a programme focused on elevating impact by adapting communication skills for diverse, global audiences, developing business growth and sustainability insights and forging new connections and experiences.



“The Royal College of Art is a transformational partnership for the CHANEL Next Prize. The RCA is the oldest art and design university in the world – and the most progressive. Under the guidance of the RCA’s educators at the college’s new Herzog & de Meuron campus in London, the awardees engaged in a specialist programme designed to foster creative collaboration, dialogue and cultural exchange.”

Yana Peel, Global Head of Arts & Culture, Chanel.

Photo: Jason Schmidt, CHANEL Culture Fund



# Fudan University Design Thinking for Business Futures

A three-day intensive masterclass in London custom designed for senior-level business executives.

## Overview

Each year RCA Executive Education delivers an on-campus course for delegates of the Fudan University School of Management EMBA international study programme. The 2023 course 'Design Thinking for Business Futures' was led by Dr Delfina Fantini van Ditmar and Dr Ashley Hall from the School of Design, with a cohort of over 30 senior-level CEOs, General Managers and Business Leaders.

## Course structure

The course included guest talks from industry experts, practical interactive group workshops and an exclusive off-site field trip to the Battersea Power Station, with exclusive brand talks from Porsche and Petit Pli.

Sessions were delivered by leaders from a range of industry scale and sector, including Hongbin Zhuang (CEO, Emotech), Nick Hooten (Product Manager, Notpla), Simon Wells (Global Vice President Engineering, SharkNinja).

**“It broadened my perspective, enriched my thoughts and inspired me with more ways to lead the company.”**

**Dai Min, General Manager, Nantong Daishengjie Home Technology Co Ltd.**



*The 2019 course, Disruptive Global Innovation Masterclass (pictured), featured Esteban Palazzo, Principal Designer at McLaren Automotive, who shared his unique insights into design, innovation and technology.*

**“Our design thinking experience blends hands-on design led innovation methods with world expert innovator-entrepreneur insights from startups through to multi billion global businesses, in an open supportive creative environment.”**

## Course leaders

**Dr Delfina Fantini van Ditmar and Dr Ashley Hall.**

## Outcomes

Through this masterclass, participants explored cutting edge examples of material innovation, product design, sustainable packaging, disruptive technology, the role of AI and future brand provocations.

Participants came away with a set of design thinking tools and methodologies to leverage design thinking for innovative future businesses.

Photo: Adam Hollingworth



# Bertelsmann Creative Leadership Masterclass

Three-day workshop for the multinational media corporation.

## Overview

Bertelsmann is one of the world's largest media companies, whose major divisions include the RTL Group (entertainment), Penguin Random House (books), BMG (music), Arvato Group (services), Bertelsmann Marketing Services (direct marketing and print activities), Bertelsmann Education Group (education) and Bertelsmann Investments (venture capital activities).

Identifying a need to upskill emerging talent transitioning into more senior roles, Bertelsmann reached out to the RCA to deliver the second module of the companies Creative Leadership Curriculum.

## Course structure

The 'Create and Sell' workshop was delivered over three days by Rama Gheerawo, Director of The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design at the RCA.

The 15 selected participants represented emerging creative talent from across the organisation, both from 'front of house' (including customer care, supply chain and finance services) and 'backstage' (books and magazine editors, broadcast producers and more) departments.

The course covered core topics of innovation, design thinking and pitching and communication. Participants were shown how to build a vision for their organisation and create a strategy for their own personal development.

## Outcomes

Participants walked away with a more creative mindset, an ability to communicate this to others and a pathway to develop their own leadership.

**“Companies and their employees need to be more responsive and flexible. Bertelsmann is striving to establish sustainable change in the company's learning culture.”**

Steven Moran, Group EVP & Chief Learning Officer at Bertelsmann.

**“The presentations were international, focused, clear and full of impact in their delivery and design. What a privilege to study here at the RCA!”**

Bertelsmann delegate.

Photo: Ezzidin Alwan







# A Systemic Design Approach to Low Carbon Homes

Global Design Workshop in London for the Korea Institute of Design Promotion.



*RCA Executive Education has worked with KIDP since 2017 to deliver custom short courses in both London and South Korea.*

## Overview

In partnership with the Korea Institute of Design Promotion, this five-day short course in London was designed for 20 graduating students from universities across South Korea, delivered by the Royal College of Art Innovation Design Engineering (IDE) MA/MSc course team in February 2024. With content based on the teaching material from the IDE programme, participants were given the unparalleled opportunity to experience what it is like to study at the College.

Photo: Adam Hollingworth

## Course structure

Professor Gareth Loudon (Head of Programme, IDE) designed the course using a practical and experiential approach, with the course team encouraging free exploration and discussion throughout.

Students were introduced to the key principles and frameworks of IDE teachings including disruptive idea generation, concept development, prototyping and evaluating techniques through a mixture of lectures and keynote talks from industry figures. An external trip to the Design Museum for the How to Build a Low-Carbon Home

“This was my very first time designing through making in a short space of time. I was so inspired by the way RCA students think. Their different approaches have been astonishing, it was really helpful. Thank you for giving me this priceless opportunity!”

Participant feedback.

exhibition allowed students to position these concepts within the real-world. Team-based work in the IDE studios enabled students to get hands-on with their final projects.

## Outcomes

The course structure encouraged creativity through physical play, making and storytelling. Tasked with developing new ways of reducing carbon footprints at home, in groups students presented a project concept and physical prototype, demonstrating their ability to apply systemic design strategies and systems thinking, gather and analyse research insights and show leadership and interdisciplinary collaboration.



# London & Partners Innovation Fellowship

Empowering world-leading corporations to harness the full potential of open innovation.

## Overview

Delivered in collaboration with London & Partners, the Innovation Fellowship is a cross-sector network of senior innovation leaders. Since the programme started in 2020 the network has grown to over 100 Fellows from global corporations.

The three-month executive education programme runs twice per year in London, designed by RCA academic Dr Nick de Leon with Grow London to help Fellows develop their strategic approach to open innovation, sharing best practice, building their peer network and deepening their understanding of London's ecosystem.

## Course structure

Each cohort of 20 Fellows receives access to online content and attends hybrid sessions delivered in person in London and live-streamed online. Core modules range from open innovation strategy, operating models, culture and more, highlighting the importance of combining creative thinking, science and technology to tackle today's global challenges.

## Outcomes

During the course, Fellows overcome barriers to successful open innovation, benefitting from the RCA's academic expertise and guidance, through group tutorials. Following the programme, they join the wider Fellowship network, benefiting from ongoing fellowship meetings, access to startup connections and opportunities to raise the profile of their innovation activity.

**“The Fellowship helped me understand how to maximise my role and its potential to influence the direction of my organisation... as a result I am working to cultivate the innovative culture throughout the organisation, scoping partnerships within our ecosystem that go beyond transactional, and fostering more symbiotic relationships by outlining roadmaps that incorporate both my organisation's and our partners' evolutions.”**

**Adam Weir, Senior Director of Innovation and Materials at New Balance.**

Companies who have taken part include Google, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft, Unilever, HSBC, BP, AstraZeneca, Shell, Salesforce, Diageo, National Grid, Chanel, Lloyd's, Fidelity Investments, Thales, PayPal, Schneider Electric, Reuters and Hitachi.



**“Open innovation is the fuel for smaller businesses to grow and creates competitive advantage for larger businesses. London is a natural leader in open innovation – it has a booming tech scene, diversity of talent and ideas and a culture of openness. We’ve launched the Open Innovation Fellowship to build on those strengths. I want London to be a city where the best ideas can scale, regardless of where they come from.”**

**Laura Citron OBE, CEO, London & Partners.**

Photo: Adam Hollingworth



# Hertfordshire Futures and Estu Global Ltd

TV and Film production supply chain innovation programme.

## Overview

Hertfordshire's TV and Film industry in the UK continues to grow and attract further investment. Most recently the Barbie, Wonka and Wicked movies were made in the county.

Leading academics from the Service Design MA programme at the RCA worked with business growth experts at Estu Ltd to develop an eight-week programme aimed at local business leaders from all sectors wishing to grow within the TV and Film production ecosystem, helping them make connections and develop their proposition to establish and enhance their role in the sectors supply chain. 100 businesses across five cohorts will participate in this flagship regional programme between 2023-25.

Photo courtesy Estu Global

## Course structure

Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Innovate UK as part of the Create Growth Programme, the course was developed in association with Hertfordshire's major TV and Film studios.

Delivered face-to-face and online via live talks, interactive workshops, applied tasks and small group exercises, each module is guided by highly experienced experts and provides a series of practical frameworks and templates that are transferable across all aspects of their organisation. Topics include: New Models of Innovation, Transforming Customer Value, Exploiting Technology and Creating a Compelling Value Proposition and Business Plan.

**“The course provides the opportunity to finely hone your business offer, building confidence whilst developing pitching and public speaking skills in a supportive learning environment.”**

**Kerry Lanigan, 2024 participant.**

## Outcomes

The programme culminates in a final presentation event at Sky Studios Elstree where each business has the opportunity to pitch their value proposition, create new connections, network and learn with other businesses who share the same goals. They receive valuable insights on sector procurement and trends from a panel of key figures in the industry.

Many of the businesses that have completed the programme have since applied the practical methods to areas of their business to enhance services, build new collaborations and win new contracts. Within six months of completing the programme the companies attributed the creation of 30 new jobs and £1m of increased turnover to their participation.



# RCA x Design for Good Academy

Empowering designers to address  
UN Sustainable Development Goals.

## Overview

The RCA x Design for Good Academy launched in 2024 to empower designers to address UN Sustainable Development Goals. Bringing together the creative expertise of the RCA and the impactful vision of Design for Good, the Academy aims to deliver an annual online short course for Design for Good alliance members, development organisations and RCA students.

The Design for Good alliance comprises a growing list of the world's largest companies and organisations that includes Airbus Commercial, BP, DBS Bank, General Mills, LIXIL, Logitech, Lloyds Banking Group, Nedbank, Nestlé, McKinsey & Company, Microsoft, PepsiCo, Philips and the Royal College of Art.

## Course structure

The course modules were designed to explore an end to end approach, from scoping a project with research methods and life-humanity centred design, through to systems and stakeholder analysis, value-proposition development, ideation, prototyping and implementation.

The first course was led by Dr Nick de Leon and Dr Delfina Fantini van Ditmar from the School of Design, delivered with expert RCA academics and invited industry practitioners including Damien Lutz (Founder, The life-centred Design Lab), Dr. Carmen Hijosa (Founder and Chief Creative & Innovation Officer, Ananas Anam Ltd) and Virginia Gardiner (inventor of the Loowatt toilet system).

## Outcomes

Delving into the intersection of design and social responsibility, participants explored avenues to create meaningful change in their communities and professional spheres by applying learnings to a real life project or activity. They described the course as a transformative experience that expanded their understanding of design's potential. 275 designers participated in the inaugural course, with 94% rating their overall satisfaction as good or excellent. Certificates were awarded at Foundation and Practitioner Level.

Alongside the short course, in 2024 RCA Executive Education hosted three free public Masterclass Talks with prestigious invited speakers including Don Norman (Researcher, Professor, and Author), Daniel Christian Wahl (Consultant, Educator and Activist), Sandy Speicher (Design and Innovation Leader) and Terry Behan (Head of Design, Nedbank South Africa).



**“This course is a testament to the core motivation of designers who want to contribute positive changes to society and the planet. I was inspired by the large number of designers from around the world who were genuinely interested in creating goodness.”**

Product and Service Design (Expert Consultant), McKinsey & Company.

**“This course is educational, empowering, equipping and uplifting. As a designer I’ve previously struggled to articulate the type of design I’ve always felt called and purposed to do – the RCA x Design For Good Academy is IT!”**

Principal Design Researcher, Lloyds Banking Group.

Photo: Irina Zakharova

# Dentsu Japan

Custom Innovation Workshop  
exploring design thinking  
for an ageing society.

## Overview

The RCA delivered a two-day innovation workshop in Japan for the international advertising company Dentsu Inc. exploring how design thinking can be applied to innovation for an ageing society. Working in collaboration with Dentsu Inc. the workshop was led by Professor Jeremy Myerson from the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD). Companies like Dentsu value the RCA's practical approach to problem solving, using techniques usually taught to design and engineering students.

Photo: Fusako Yabuki



## Course structure

Through talks and group activities, participants explored what design thinking is, how it can be applied to the challenges of an ageing society and its benefits as a creative framework for innovation in business.

Alongside Professor Myerson, the workshop was led by RCA staff Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad (Tutor, Design Products MA), Professor Julia Cassim (KYOTO Design Lab and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the HHCD) and Peter Christian (Head, Executive Education), as well as RCA graduates from the Information Experience Design MA.

**“As a result of the workshop, the Japanese companies used the design thinking framework to add a new dimension to process of solving problems by negotiating the relationship between the real world (concrete) and the world of ideas (abstract), thus freeing up innovation potential.”**

Yoshihiro Kudo, Dentsu Inc.  
Kansai Japan.

## Outcomes

Over 300 of Dentsu's major clients attended the keynote lecture by Professor Myerson at Kyoto University of Art and Design, which was followed by a panel discussion with guest speakers Mr Shu Yamaguchi (researcher and author), Mr Osamu Ogasawara (CEO of nomad and ABBA lab) and Mr Yoshiki Ishikawa (public health researcher, entrepreneur and science journalist).

Professor Myerson's presentation introduced the concept of inclusive design and the need for human centred innovation, and discussed the relationships between creativity, innovation and design.

The innovation workshop was designed for 60 participants working in 10 teams on themed challenges: identity, home, connectivity, mobility and working.

The participants came from diverse backgrounds including business, government, start-up founders, traditional craftspeople, Buddhist monks and design-major university students. Drawing from experience and expertise across these diverse backgrounds, participants considered ways to apply design thinking to the particular challenges and opportunities offered by an ageing society within their industry.



# Challenges for the Future of Interior Design

A three-day programme in London for senior-level interior design professionals, developed by the RCA School of Architecture.

## Overview

This short course was designed by RCA academics to stimulate a diverse understanding of the material, programmatic, economic and social implications of current interior design and architectural practice for 22 senior-level executives working in the Chinese interior design industry.

## Course structure

The programme involved a rich mixture of lectures and talks from RCA Architecture and Interior Design MA Academics Professor Graeme Brooker, Dr Ruth Lang and Malgorzata Starzynska, plus guest sessions by industry-leading practitioners. The course was delivered at the RCA Battersea Campus, with exclusive visits to leading architecture practice offices and exhibitions.

Invited guest contributors included Martha Tsigkari and Sherif Tarabishy (Foster + Partners), Tim Fu (Studio Tim Fu), Ian Hunter (Materials Council), Robert Storey (StoreyStudio), Duncan Baker-Brown (BakerBrown) and Mat Barnes (CAN).

## Outcomes

Participants were exposed to emerging debates and discourses structured around three themes: Creative Reuse in Architecture and Interior Design; Challenges to the Future of Retail Interior Design; and AI and Machine Learning in Architecture. They finished the course with a broader understanding of challenges and opportunities in interior design, with a specific focus on sustainability, retail design, materials innovation and AI to take back to their own practice.



**“It’s an impressive course which combined cutting-edge views, academic knowledge and practical examples.”**

Guan Tianqi, Founder & Design Director of Beijing Evolution Space Architectural Design Co. Ltd.

**“The course expanded my horizons of design practice, and I really enjoyed this international study experience.”**

Gao Ming, Chairman of Jiangsu Aimu Qiqi Technology Co. Ltd.

Photo courtesy Beijing ADMD Culture Co. Ltd

# Northumbrian Water Group

Five month hybrid Creative Leadership and Inclusive Design programme for Innovation Leads.

## Overview

Creative Leadership for Inclusive Innovation was a 21-week programme based on Inclusive Design and Creative Leadership from the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD). The course was delivered both in person and online via zoom for 34 Innovation Leads working in departments across the Northumbrian Water Group (NWG).

The course was led by Dr Ninela Ivanova (Innovation Fellow) and Rama Gheerawo (Director, HHCD) and facilitated by Ivelina Gadzehva (Inclusive Design Researcher). Guest speaker Dr Melanie Flory (HHCD Research Director and Founder of neuroscience-based consultancy MindRheo) contributed content on the neuroscience of Empathy, Clarity and Creativity.

## Course structure

The course offered a flexible format, supported by a virtual learning environment with online resources for self-practice and further learning. Five live sessions introduced the pillars of inclusive design and creative leadership through lectures and facilitated group exercises.

For 12 weeks of the course, participants were given an “inclusive innovation brief” to tackle six self-defined “innovation challenges” relating to their work at NWG. Participants used design thinking approaches to take their proposed solutions from concept to prototypes, with a particular focus on considering the people and stakeholders involved.

## Outcomes

The six innovation briefs spanned ideas and solutions that would enhance NWG’s impact both internally and externally. Topics included hybrid working transitions; enhancing employee experience and advancing career progression; a platform for knowledge transfer between existing and new managers; workforce diversity and inclusive recruitment; customer data gathering; and increasing registration to NWG Priority Services.

Through working in cross-organisational teams, participants were able to meet and collaborate with members of staff across organisational functions who they wouldn’t have met or worked with previously.

**“The impact has been significant; colleagues were able to develop their creativity and learn about inclusive design and innovation in a supportive and challenging environment using real business issues as stimulus. The projects that were scoped as part of the programme are progressing well within the business and will make a real difference to our customers and employees.”**

Jennie Collingwood,  
Head of Marketing and  
External Communications  
at NWG.

Photo: Ezzidin Alwan





# Curating contemporary art and design

Open summer courses, short courses or professional development.

## Overview

This short course led by the School of Arts & Humanities has run annually since 2016 (both in person and online). It offers critical perspectives from the viewpoint of academic tutors and invited experts who curate, research and write in the cultural sector, with opportunities for participants to engage with cutting-edge curatorial approaches. Each year a new theme addresses key issues for the profession.

Guest talks from established institutions include the Museum of Modern Art, Tate, V&A museum and Somerset House as well as influential contemporary galleries and commissioners like Art on the Underground, Eastside Projects, Open School East, Cubitt Gallery and UP Projects; and digital and and culture organisations like Rhizome and Meta Reality Labs.

## Course structure

The course combines workshops, group activities and practice-led approaches to provide a rigorous introduction to contemporary curatorial thinking and practice in a collaborative, highly dynamic and participatory atmosphere.

## Outcomes

Participants gain a critical awareness of curating in a global context with behind-the-scenes exposure to how curatorial projects are conceived, researched and delivered.

Over 200 global early and mid-career professionals had completed the short course from organisations including the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal), Qatar Museums, the Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore), Museum of Applied Arts (Budapest), Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Warwick Arts Centre (UK) and many more.

## RCA Short Courses

Many of our existing open executive education programmes, short courses and summer schools can be adapted, combined or customised for the particular needs of an organisation. Our courses are ideally suited for groups of 15 to 30 or more participants.



“The depth of discussion in such a short period of time has left me with a wealth of knowledge that I am eager to continue unpacking and learning from, far into the future.”

Adele D’Souza, National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne)

“The RCA course has completely changed the way I approach curation... The different case studies and discussions offered a lot of different perspectives and views, questioning the role of curation, reflecting on my own practice and the different potentials of curation.”

Joyce Li, Design Trust (Hong Kong)

# For further information and events

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