

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2018



# EQUALITY Statement

Working with difference and promoting equality underpins our ambition and purpose. Our studio based learning, research and collaboration transforms thinking and our individual and collective contributions influence the day to day lives of people across local and global communities.

As a community we are committed to creating and sustaining learning and working environments where difference is respected and the widest possible range of cultural and social perspectives are valued. We treat each other fairly, according to need, and minimise barriers to participation for all. By fostering environments in which difference nourishes new questions and possibilities and where respect is a catalyst for the removal of barriers, we support the learning and development of individuals and our collective contribution to the common good.

[www.gsa.ac.uk](http://www.gsa.ac.uk)

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# ABOUT GSA TODAY

Founded in

# 1845

As the government school of design. Today one of the few remaining independent art schools in the UK

Mackintosh Building

## BEST BRITISH BUILDING

Voted RIBA 'Best British Building' of the past 175 years. A major restoration project now underway.

Mackintosh School of Architecture top architecture school in Scotland +

# TOP 5

in UK (Architects' Journal)

AJ



All GSA degree programmes are validated by the University of Glasgow

Strategic research partners include Historic Scotland, NHS, Institute of Directors, Highlands + Islands Enterprise, University of Edinburgh, Glasgow Housing Association and University of Glasgow

Population

# 1,900

Almost 33% from outside the UK representing 69 countries

A retention rate of

# 96%

one of the highest student retention rates in the UK (source: HESA statistics 2014)

International exchange programme with

# 75

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

# 61%

of research recognised as world-leading or internationally recognised (Source: REF 2014)

QS World University subject rankings

# TOP 10

in the world and 3rd UK

# 200+ STUDENTS

Singapore Campus

The School of Fine Art has produced

# 5 TURNER PRIZE WINNERS

30% of nominees since 2005, and virtually all the artists chosen to represent Scotland at the Venice Biennale

# HOT 50

Design Week lists the GSA in its 'Hot 50' – leaders in design education in the UK

SFC Funded and New York Architect Steven Holl and JM Architects' designed Reid Building named AJ100

# 2014

Building of the Year

AJ 100

# 92.3%

of graduates are in employment, self-employed or have gone on to further study six months after leaving the GSA (source: DLHE 2014)

Based in

# GLASGOW, FORRES, SINGAPORE, BEIJING

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is internationally recognised as one of Europe's leading university-level institutions for visual creative disciplines. A studio-based approach to research and teaching brings disciplines together to explore problems in new ways to find new, innovative solutions. The studio creates the environment for inter-disciplinarity, peer learning, critical inquiry, experimentation and prototyping, helping to address many of the grand challenges confronting society and contemporary business.

From its foundation in 1845 as one of the first Government Schools of Design supporting Glasgow's manufacturing industries, the GSA has continually adapted, embracing in the late 19th century fine art and architecture education and today, digital technology.

Then as now our purpose remains the same, developing creative approaches with new audiences to contribute to a better world.

The Glasgow School of Art holds a unique and enviable position within UK higher education. We are Scotland's specialist university-level institution for the visual creative disciplines and through the success of our graduates, the quality of our teaching and research and our heritage inextricably rooted in the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, we enjoy both global significance and influence as one of Europe's leading centres for studio-based learning and research. Alongside our global position is our place within Glasgow and Scotland and the role we have played in the economic and cultural renaissance of the City.

The focus provided by our previous strategic plans has helped us maintain this position and provides the foundation for the next stage of our growth. Our aim is to not only maintain but enhance our position, extending our reach and impact through collaboration and inter-disciplinarity which is rooted in specialism and studio. We will achieve this through three key strategic goals:

- Growth of at least 25% across our entire portfolio of activity
- Achieve a surplus of up to 5% to invest in our future
- Institutional sustainability as an independent, specialist, studio-based institution

Achieving these goals will require ambitious, integrated approaches and our strategy is premised on the belief that *Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together* – clear objectives and primary strategies delivered by a series of sub-strategies, plans and work-streams and underpinned by our commitment to equality and to creating and sustaining a learning and working environment where difference is respected and the widest possible range of cultural and social perspectives are valued.

Our aim is to create the conditions in which we can continue to achieve great things through what we will do, with whom we do it and through creative approaches articulated within this strategic plan that build on our existing strengths and distinctive assets to achieve:

- Excellence and leadership in student-centred studio-based learning
- Engaging with new audiences through creativity and research which is inter-disciplinary, internationally excellent and globally relevant
- Global reach and creative engagement
- A robust and efficient institution – maximising our resources and our potential



**Professor Tom Inns**  
Director, The Glasgow School of Art

# OUR AMBITION & VALUES

A global leader in studio-based learning and research, collaborating locally, nationally and internationally, transforming thinking by developing creative approaches with new audiences

## Disruption

encouraging critical thinking and experimentation

## Diversity

in our students and staff, thought and outlook

## Responsibility

to our planet, each other and those we work with

## Place

our heritage, traditions and our locations

## Collaboration

with our students, colleagues and external partners

Extended our academic reach

**GLASGOW  
FORRES  
SINGAPORE  
BEIJING**

Achieved a financial surplus up to

**5%**

**60+**

Grown our doctoral community by 25%

**25%**

Growth of student community

**5** NEW STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS  
in key priority countries

Have pathways to Creative Learning - Open Studio - from

**AGES 8+**

Sustained and planned investment in our campus

**£65+**  
**MILLION**

**MAXIMISING  
RESEARCH  
INTENSITY +  
IMPACT**

New programmes + student growth

**↑ GSFA  
SINGAPORE**

Increased research income by

**25%**

New programme areas

**FILM  
IMMERSIVE  
SYSTEMS  
DESIGN  
INTERACTION**

Student satisfaction

85%

Graduates in work or further study

95%

ECOCAMPUS  
SILVER  
ACCREDITATION

Student exchange increased by

25%

Income from non SFC sources

50%

BUILT ON OUR  
GLOBAL  
BRAND

↑ 33%

Students from MD20/40 postcodes

95%  
STUDENT RETENTION

↑ 8

new FORMAL  
ARTICULATIONS

5 international 3 Scottish

Increased visitor numbers –  
tours, exhibitions  
and cultural  
engagement

↑ 25%

International staff mobility increased by

25%

# OUR STRATEGIES

Great things are not done by  
impulse but by a series of small  
things brought together

Vincent Van Gogh

## Achieving excellence and leadership in student-centred, studio-based learning

### Why?

The specialist programme structure of The Glasgow School of Art produces graduates able to make a significant contribution to cultural and creative production and the wider knowledge economy. Moving forward our specialist programme structure needs to expand and adapt to reflect the changing economic role of creativity and innovation in the knowledge economy and the skilled graduates it demands.

The contribution of our graduates needs to be matched by our civic responsibility to ensure that we provide equality of opportunity to students to study at The Glasgow School of Art. As an international art school that civic responsibility is as important locally as it is internationally and our aim must be to admit aspiring applicants based on ability and potential, provide the learning environments, physical and virtual, that allows them to achieve great things.

Studio provides this learning environment. It is the environment for inter-disciplinarity, peer learning, critical enquiry, experimentation and prototyping, has particular relevance in the 21st century and is the foundation of our student experience.

### How?

#### **Academic programmes responsive to future needs of the creative and knowledge economy**

Our commitment to our academic specialism and research strengths will be further developed through a new academic School - the School of Visualisation and Simulation.

Together our four academic schools will build on existing research and scholarship strengths and through a review of existing programmes and the development of new programmes for example in service design, data visualisation, environmental architecture, architectural conservation, veterinary visualisation, film and visual culture, ensure our curriculum meets the needs of students and the creative and knowledge economy.

#### **Studio+**

Across our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes we will harmonise our academic structures to provide opportunities through specialist study to share knowledge and engage in inter-disciplinarity, employability, exhibitions, enterprise and internationalisation activity including increased student mobility.

### Open Studio

Through enhanced professional, progression and leisure provision we will create pathways for students age eight onwards, to study creative education, supporting our commitment to widening participation and great engagement across our disciplines.

### Articulation and Progression

Engaging with Glasgow Regional Colleges and selected colleges across Scotland, the UK and internationally we will streamline the learner journey facilitate articulation from the further education sector in creative and key STEM disciplines.

### Contextualised Admissions

Ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants we will introduce contextualised admissions and redesign our admission processes.

### Measuring our performance by 2018

#### Student satisfaction

To achieve the Scottish sector average for overall satisfaction in the National Student Survey and an equivalent overall satisfaction in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

**85%**

#### Widening participation

To have exceeded our Outcome Agreement target for recruiting students from MD20/MD40 postcodes and have significantly increased the numbers of students progressing through articulation routes

**↑33%**

#### Positive graduate destinations

Have at least 85% of graduates in work or further study six months after graduation (Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey)

**95%**

#### Retention and progression

As we diversify our student body we will maintain our high retention rates

**↑95%**

Engaging with new audiences through creativity and research which is inter-disciplinary, internationally excellent and globally relevant

## Why?

We are one of the UK's largest research communities for the visual creative disciplines and our portfolio spans specialisms in Fine Art, Architecture, Design and Digital Visualisation and Simulation.

Our researchers lead developments in theory, practice and application in these areas, often working with researchers in other disciplines across academia and industry as partners in interdisciplinary teams. Through a collaborative, studio-based approach to our research involving critical inquiry, experimentation and prototyping, we aim for our research to contribute positively to the global questions facing society today.

Our research and knowledge exchange contributes to Glasgow's role as an economic powerhouse, its position as one of the largest cultural and creative sectors in the UK and to the growing creative economy of Scotland's Highlands and Islands.

## How?

### Focusing on our staff

Through targeted investment, recruitment, development and support of our academic community we will significantly increase the number and proportion of staff who are engaged in research at 3\* and 4\* level, those qualified to doctoral level and experienced in PhD supervision and staff who are able to deliver research teaching linkages.

### Focusing on our themes of excellence and supporting our research centres

Our submission to REF2014 identified eight Research Themes of Excellence. Through sustained investment and support we will continue to build our research activity around these themes focusing on inter-disciplinary opportunities and collaborative research projects with national, European and international partners. We will also continue to invest in our research centres and groups, thereby achieving critical mass in our specialist areas.

### Growing our Doctoral Community

We will increase our doctoral student community through securing new funding opportunities, providing progression routes from our Masters of Research programmes and identifying new areas of inter-disciplinary enquiry to engage and recruit from a wider-pool of doctoral applicants.

### Placing Creativity at the centre of policy

Working with the Scottish and UK Governments and their agencies, we will work to raise the profile, impact and reach of culture and creativity as catalysts for positive societal change in many areas of public policy including the City of Glasgow's economic agenda through the Glasgow Economic Leadership and with Highlands and Islands Enterprise through the Creative Futures Partnership.

### Ensuring our research findings reach and influence their intended audiences

Our research findings often hold implications for audiences including businesses, policy makers, public sector organisations, artists, charities and the public. We will work to communicate and disseminate our research findings effectively with these wide-ranging audiences, to maximise their impact on society.

### Measuring our performance

by 2018

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#### Research quality

To improve the quality of our research outputs ensuring

**76% OF OUR STAFF**

are judged world-leading or internationally excellent by internal peer review in preparation for REF 2020

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**↑25%**

#### Research and KE income

To increase overall research income by 25%, through growth in research grant and contract income

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#### No. of Research Students

To increase the number of doctoral students by

**25%**

# S3 WORLD-WIDE IMPACT

## Extending our global reach and creative engagement

### Why?

We believe our ability to collaborate with external partners across discipline and geographical boundaries will be a distinctive feature of our success as a specialist-studio institution.

Globally creativity is increasingly being seen as both an economic driver and agent for social change. Our shared visual language transcends national boundaries and we need to ensure that our graduates are equipped to engage and contribute globally, maximising the opportunities the global economy presents them.

Our staff and students should be rooted in Glasgow and global in outlook and through our work with Glasgow Economic Leadership our graduates should be able to see Glasgow as the base for their future careers as Global creative leaders.

As an international art school the networks our students develop during their time here will allow them to operate in a global environment. Through our campuses in Glasgow, the Highlands and Singapore, the GSA values both the local and global communities of which it is part and values each equally as platforms for our graduates' future success.

### How?

#### Global partnership

We will expand our academic activity in Singapore through new programme development and engaging in research and knowledge exchange.

Through our existing international partners we will engage tactically with a small number across the world to facilitate shared teaching and research, intensive staff and student exchange and strategic collaborations including joint academic posts, doctoral studentships and explore the potential for further in-country provision along the lines of our successful model of GSofA Singapore.

### Staff and Student mobility

We will increase student mobility through our existing international and student exchange activity and through formal international experiences within the curriculum across all years of study through **Studio+**.

Through strategic investment, effective activity planning and reward, recognition and progression, we will encourage our staff to engage in European and international exchange, providing the framework and funding to enable this.

### International articulation

We want to extend opportunities for international students to study at the GSA and achieve success. We will provide the routes to studying at both undergraduate and postgraduate level through articulation with high-quality institutions in selected countries across the world.

### Measuring our performance by 2018

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#### Internationalised academic community

To increase the number  
GSA staff participating in  
international teaching and  
research exchange by at least

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#### Internationalised student community

To increase the already high  
number of students engaged  
in European and international  
student exchange by

**25% 25%**

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#### Internationally accessible

To have developed a minimum

**5 INTERNATIONAL  
ARTICULATION ROUTES**

from international partners

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# STRATEGIC EnABLERS

**A robust and efficient institution –  
maximising resources and potential.**

Engaging our staff in the GSA's strategic priorities we will realise their inherent potential, maximise the effectiveness of our estates and IT infrastructure and diversify our income streams allowing us to focus our investment in areas of strategic priority and maintain our standing locally and internationally through effective management of our brand.

# E1 VALUING OUR PEOPLE

We will simplify our organisational structure to create a more effective leadership model that motivates, empowers and rewards our staff and directs resource and people towards discipline leadership, research impact, the highest levels of student experience and responsibility for managing risk and health and safety. Through new ways of working across academic and professional support departments we will be an inclusive and sustainable institution providing the highest levels of staff development and an excellent working environment.

## Measuring our performance by 2018

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### Quality people

To have increased the size (maintaining staff/student ratios), diversity (increasing the number of international academics and meeting benchmarks within our Equality Outcomes) and quality of our academic community (based on research excellence) in line with growth in student numbers and research output

**SIZE, DIVERSITY  
+ QUALITY**

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### Inclusive

To embed our approach to  
**MAINSTREAMING  
EQUALITY**

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# E2 21st CENTURY STUDIO

Studio is diverse. It can be physical, virtual, digital, fixed, temporary, permanent or remote.

Our infrastructure will adapt to accommodate the requirements of a 21st century studio-led pedagogy through the implementation of the GSA Campus Masterplan. This includes the restoration of the Mackintosh Building, refurbishment of existing and acquired buildings, selective disposal of assets and the development of new academic buildings that are fit for purpose.

Our information technology will focus on maintaining and extending a secure and robust digital infrastructure and communications network supporting both the business needs of the GSA and importantly the digital learning and research needs of our academic staff and students in Glasgow, the Highlands and Islands and internationally.

## Measuring our performance by 2018

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### Investment in our estate

To maintain the percentage of buildings in Category A & B (56%) and have commenced estates developments to increase this to 70%

# 56%-70%

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### Digitally enabled

The introduction of new business processes, management information systems and learning and research environments supported by a robust and secure IT environment

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### Sustainability

To have achieved  
EcoCampus scheme  
Silver accreditation



# E3 STABILITY and INVESTMENT

The financial sustainability of the GSA is as important as its academic sustainability and between 2015/16 and 2017/18 we will move towards an annual surplus of 5%.

This will be achieved through growth across our entire portfolio including student numbers, diversification of research income, efficiencies through harmonisation of academic programme and academic school structures, more efficient use of our estates, improved environmental sustainability, procurement and where appropriate shared services, and the highest levels of Governance.

We will systematically reduce our reliance on the state as funder and increase income from GSA Enterprises and our philanthropic support to increase our endowment and allow transformational projects to happen.

## Measuring our performance by 2018

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### Diversifying our income

To increase to at least 50% our income from non SFC sources through increased student fee income, research grants and contracts, philanthropic donations and commercially generated income through GSA Enterprises

**INCREASE TO 50%**

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### Our capacity to invest

To deliver year-on-year growth in financial surplus, achieving up to 5% by the end of the 3 year period of the plan

**5%**  
**SURPLUS**

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### Achieving growth

To increase in our total student population by 25%

**TO 2350**

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# E4 OUR BRAND

The Glasgow School of Art has an enviable international brand position as one of Europe's leading university level institutions for the visual creative disciplines. In a highly competitive, global and marketised higher education environment, managing our brand, building effective stakeholder relationships and recruiting the highest quality staff and students will be central to achieving our ambitions.

## Measuring our performance by 2018

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### An institution of choice for students

To maintain the quality of our student intake with our UCAS Tariff remaining with the upper quartile in our subject areas and our postgraduate entry requirements being maintained at 2.1 or 1st equivalent

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### A positive reputation

To maintain our positive external coverage in traditional and social media

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### A civic role engaging with a wider public

To increase the number of tour and exhibition visitors and cultural engagement by

# 25%

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**THE GLASGOW  
SCHOOL OF ART**

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