

NEXT
RISD
2020-
2027



RISD IS THRIVING.

After more than 140 years as a leader in art and design education, we approach our 150th anniversary from a position of strength and renewed commitment to expanding our excellence, relevance and impact. As RISD continues to gain national and global recognition, our model of education has never had more potential to be consequential. The ambitious initiatives outlined in this plan build on our exceptional history, our varied identities and our belief in process and experimentation.

WE'RE IN A GOOD POSITION TO ENVISION AN EXCITING FUTURE.

Our shared future—as citizens of the world and as an institution—requires us to intervene in the critical challenges of our time. Artists and designers play important roles in addressing the world’s political, humanitarian and climate crises.

The RISD community’s deep well of critical thinking and making allows us to shape new creative perspectives at the intersection of the environment and social justice. With an institutional commitment to creating just global societies, a sustainable planet and engaged practices, we have a responsibility to act with urgency and to respond with empathy.

BUT WE HAVE WORK TO DO TO GET THERE.

To secure RISD’s future, we need to improve our structures and processes. At a time when the cost of higher education continues to rise, one of our top priorities is a commitment to decrease our dependence on tuition-based revenue in order to make RISD accessible to a broader range of talented students.

As this plan unfolds, our intensive, immersive, residential model of education will evolve in exciting ways over the next seven years. We will be poised to celebrate our 150th anniversary with enhanced flexibility to catalyze new realms of teaching and learning and to activate ethical solutions for global challenges.

THIS PLAN IS OUR PLEDGE TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF CREATIVE LEADERS.

OUR NEW STRATEGIC PLAN STEMS FROM RISD'S CORE MISSION AND VALUES.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Rhode Island School of Design, through its college and museum, is to:

- educate its students and the public in the creation and appreciation of works of art and design
- to discover and transmit knowledge
- and to make lasting contributions to a global society through critical thinking, scholarship and innovation.

OUR VISION FOR 2027

RISD will contribute to the creation of just global societies, a sustainable planet and the cultivation of engaged practices that equip humans to live in mutually enhancing ways with each other and with the earth.

OUR VALUES

We value the material practices of artists and designers as principal modes of engagement with the wider world.

We value the necessary and crucial contribution of deep disciplinary understanding to effective interdisciplinary practice.

We value collaborative interplay across design, fine arts and the liberal arts to cultivate deep literacies, to shape cumulative understanding, to transform thought and to expand making practices.

We value experimental, contextual and culturally diverse methods of creative practice and rigorous scholarship as essential ways of creating knowledge and engaging with complexity and uncertainty.

We value enlightened engagement with emerging and evolving technologies, along with critical reflection on the interests those technologies serve and the impact they have on diverse peoples, communities and the planet.

We value a classroom, studio and campus environment that advances principles of social equity and inclusion, environmental and climate justice, and equal access to resources and opportunities.

We value the development of lifelong skills that integrate the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of our entire community.

We value the careful stewardship of our human, financial and physical resources.

We value our role as a place-based institution with a commitment to furthering progress in Providence and Rhode Island through mutually beneficial engagement with the community.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Since our founding in 1877, RISD has worked to expand artistic knowledge and offer a coherent educational experience that celebrates the diverse practices of art and design and cultivates advanced inquiry and ethical leadership. As we examine our strengths and expand our understanding of contemporary cultural practice, we want to ensure that the contributions our students, faculty, staff and alumni make in the world are as relevant as ever. To unleash our community's full potential, we will:

- support the exploration of new models of teaching and learning
- build capacity for new pedagogies and research
- address faculty teaching loads and reduce student workload
- support holistic and integrated wellness practices

FOUNDATIONAL GOALS

PROMOTE INNOVATIVE TEACHING

We will create a laboratory for teaching and learning to promote innovative teaching methods, diverse learning modalities and new curricula and courses. This lab will also support opportunities for faculty to come together to exchange knowledge, debate pedagogy and establish mutually supportive systems for improved teaching.

BUILD CAPACITY FOR NEW RESEARCH

We will establish an ongoing Faculty Fellows Program to bring a dedicated cohort of scholars and practitioners to RISD to support teaching, research and artistic inquiry around critical topics such as equity and inclusion, sustainability, and climate and environmental justice.

PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS

We will commit to addressing faculty teaching loads through a phased approach and explore different models of faculty work that allow for more participation in research, scholarship, creative practice and institutional service.

We will reduce undergraduate credit-hour requirements from 126 to 120 and explore a similar reduction for graduate credit-hour requirements. We will implement a common scheduling grid across divisions and review student work patterns to create more flexible learning structures and encourage cross-disciplinary exploration and co-curricular participation.

PROMOTE STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

We will make key investments in Student Affairs—beginning with both Health Services and Counseling & Psychological Services—to create an integrated wellness program that fully supports our students.

We will make facilities more accessible for community members who are abled differently and will ensure that websites, publications and campus events address the needs of the visual- and hearing-impaired.

SECURING RISD'S FUTURE

We know that the inherent value and the financial sustainability of higher education in the US are being questioned as both the cost of attendance and student debt continue to climb. By tapping into the ethos of experimentation and collaboration on which RISD was founded, we are creatively reimagining organizational, administrative and financial models to:

- reduce our reliance on tuition
- increase financial aid
- improve our institutional operations
- ensure our long-term financial stability

FOUNDATIONAL GOALS

GENERATE NEW REVENUE

We will align and expand the activities of Continuing Education, Executive Education, Partnered Projects and Pre-College to honor our mission of opening up lifelong learning opportunities to a broader range of students. We will also increase income from grant-funded research and gain new revenue sources from events, conferences and facilities rentals. In addition, we will increase capacity in Institutional Engagement and lay the groundwork for a comprehensive fundraising campaign by expanding our global network of alumni groups and launching volunteer, mentorship, career planning and internship programs.

RETHINK THE WAY WE BUDGET

We will reconcile specific resource needs with the diversity of practices our model of immersive studio education requires by creating a more inclusive and integrated process for allocating and managing our budget.

RADICALLY IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

We will adopt a new enterprise management system to break down siloed functional processes and advance our operations. We will transform RISD's websites and other digital functions into a strategically consistent, intentional and audience-focused ecosystem. We will address space and scheduling issues by establishing clear policies and efficient workflows and by investing in enabling systems such as digital forms, workflow products and digital archiving. We will improve customer service and our ability to effectively manage student, employee and financial transactions.

CLARIFY HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

We will review our governance model to clarify the decision-making roles and responsibilities of trustees, faculty and administrators in order to enhance communication and effectiveness. We will also examine key functions such as graduate studies, research and community engagement to strengthen their efficiency, operations and impact.

**FROM 2020-27,
RISD WILL EMPHASIZE
THREE STRATEGIC AREAS:**

**EQUITY AND INCLUSION
SUSTAINABILITY
ENGAGED PRACTICE**

1

THE RISD COMMUNITY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A JUST GLOBAL SOCIETY.

To help build more democratic, equitable and globally literate societies, we are enriching our curricular and co-curricular opportunities with a range of global and underrepresented artistic and cultural traditions. Our students and faculty draw on such traditions and contexts in their investigations and research—in the realms of materials, emerging technologies, culture, civic practices, and social and natural systems.

Over the past decade, we have increased both the diversity of our faculty, staff and students and the disciplines and cultural traditions they engage in their work. We have expanded curricular opportunities to encourage meaningful immersion in a variety of global contexts, and have provided more support for students interested in pursuing international programs and travel/study courses.

In the coming years, we will accelerate and strengthen our commitment to inclusivity, equity and social justice both on campus and through our community's contributions in the larger cultural context.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

INCREASE ACCESS TO RISD

Strengthen financial support for both undergraduate and graduate students by increasing financial aid and scholarships, along with social equity funding for materials, travel, internships and research opportunities.

Share RISD's unique creative practices with wider audiences through Continuing Education, Executive Education and partnered projects.

EMPOWER STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

Create an integrated network of professional advising and develop new strategies of mentoring and tutoring in studio and liberal arts courses.

Build the capacity of our learning support systems to meet existing and emerging needs, including multilingual learning, peer tutoring and professional support for writing practices across the curriculum.

Coordinate and support diverse curricular, co-curricular, and institutional civic learning and engagement activities undertaken by both the college and museum.

SUPPORT FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Establish a Teaching and Learning Lab to promote inclusive and innovative pedagogy that advances principles of social equity and inclusion, environmental and climate justice, experimentation and global perspectives in our curricula.

Implement an annual development program for faculty and staff that furthers a learning environment of mutual respect and support.

PIONEER RESEARCH ON ISSUES OF RACE IN ART AND DESIGN PEDAGOGY

Inaugurate a Faculty Fellows program and invite the first cohort to focus on race as it relates to art and design in order to generate new research, curricula and teaching guides that advance our social equity and inclusion goals.

Develop, preserve and interpret the RISD Museum collections to uncover underrepresented stories and elevate marginalized or distorted voices in ways that support an inclusive environment, build meaningful relationships with our constituents and effectively reflect the communities the Museum serves.

Support additional curatorial internships and opportunities that encourage diverse perspectives and introduce potential career opportunities for underrepresented groups through the RISD Museum.

FURTHER DIVERSIFY OUR COMMUNITY

Implement a strategic, intentional hiring plan to attract and retain faculty and staff in order to expand our curricular offerings and create a more diverse and inclusive community. Develop a long-term recruitment strategy to enroll students from a broader range of domestic and international locations and life experiences, and plan for modest but strategic graduate and undergraduate enrollment growth.

Explore the development of global activities that expand our reputation internationally and promote collaborative innovation.

OUTCOMES

- cultivate an ever more diverse community
- expand the content of our curriculum and the practice of our pedagogy
- contribute to the decolonization our disciplines and fields of study

THE RISD COMMUNITY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A SUSTAINABLE PLANET.

Art and design are integral to addressing global needs. Empowered with unique gifts of questioning, making and communicating, artists and designers are positioned to command our attention, proactively effect positive change, steward sustainable practices and work toward environmental and climate justice.

Over the past decade, we have developed both a concentration and a new MA program in Nature–Culture–Sustainability Studies, expanded our examination of ecological art and design, critically engaged new approaches to issues of the day and supported deep scholarly engagement with living systems at the Edna W. Lawrence Nature Lab.

In the next seven years we will build on our progress and position RISD to lead in shaping new creative perspectives at the intersection of culture, creativity and the sciences. To accomplish this we will harness our efforts in more intentional and interconnected ways as we address sustainability challenges in our facilities, through our curriculum and through dedicated research and practice.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

BUILD AND RENOVATE FACILITIES IN LINE WITH SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES

Secure 80% of RISD's power supply from renewable energy sources.

Approach improvements to both our historical buildings and new projects as opportunities to conserve energy and employ green best practices.

INFUSE SUSTAINABILITY INTO THE CURRICULUM

Join the United Nations international Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Building on the Nature–Culture–Sustainability Studies program, coordinate the efforts of our departments to create a more comprehensive teaching program to prepare students working at the nexus of art, design, the environmental humanities and the sciences.

Support the infusion of sustainability principles and explorations of material practices through the Teaching and Learning Lab and expand models for addressing the challenges of climate change through art and design.

LEAD IN BRINGING ART AND DESIGN TO THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Invite a future cohort of Faculty Fellows to focus on issues of sustainability, environmental and climate justice, and the exploration of living systems.

CREATE STRUCTURES TO ADVANCE INQUIRY INTO ART, DESIGN AND LIVING SYSTEMS

Create a faculty advisory board to help interpret and aggregate our sustainability efforts across campus, the curriculum and the community.

Activate a comprehensive research program that catalyzes methods, pedagogies and multiple modes of practice at the nexus of art, design, the environmental humanities and the sciences.

Create new bio-making and research spaces to augment the Nature Lab's research activities.

OUTCOMES

- operate a greener campus
- embed sustainability principles throughout our curriculum
- contribute focused research

3

THE RISD COMMUNITY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO NEW WAYS OF MAKING AND KNOWING.

At RISD we engage in myriad forms of creative practice, culture making and critical scholarship. Through these efforts we address complex issues, contribute new ideas, enhance human understanding, create shared experiences and forge new collaborations across disciplinary boundaries. Such contributions require time and space for reflection, renewal, experimentation and innovation.

To enable students and faculty to make still greater contributions, we will recalibrate workloads and enhance physical and organizational structures that cultivate thoughtful and reflective practices. We will frame and support cross-institutional inquiry (in material practices and existing and emerging technologies) to enrich our myriad cultural contributions and uphold social equity and climate justice by bringing the diversity of our current creative practices to bear on critical social, political and environmental challenges.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCE INNOVATIVE CURRICULA AND PEDAGOGY

Through the Teaching and Learning Lab, support faculty efforts to create more meaningful connections between their teaching and practice.

Use insights and discoveries emanating from classes or mined from practice to inspire new areas of research and inform new teaching methods and course development.

INCREASE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH CAPACITY AND OUTPUT

Expand and further develop the RISD Research office to broaden our institutional research agenda and support individual faculty and student research, projects and grant-related activities.

Activate the RISD Museum's physical and virtual spaces to allow for new forms of exhibition, collaboration and research that encourage and support collaborative and responsive work, multiple perspectives, cross-cultural dialogues and opportunities for free expression.

ENHANCE ACADEMIC FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Prioritize the continued implementation of the Campus Master Plan, focusing the next phase on improving academic spaces across divisions.

Invest in shared state-of-the-art equipment to enable cutting-edge work and support richer interdisciplinary and collaborative inquiry by aggregating similar methods and equipment from disparate departments.

ESTABLISH A SERIES OF LABS FOR INQUIRY AND EXCHANGE

Establish an ecosystem of research activity by creating a series of non-departmental, co-located labs that provide faculty and students with the flexibility to coalesce around common areas of interdisciplinary inquiry.

CREATE MORE FLEXIBILITY FOR FACULTY INQUIRY

Commit to addressing the reduction of faculty teaching loads to create time and space for research.

Explore alternative models of academic appointments that allow for more participation in research, scholarship, creative practice and institutional service.

SUPPORT STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH AGENDAS

Reduce undergraduate credit-hour requirements from 126 to 120, explore a similar reduction for graduate credit-hour requirements and create a common scheduling grid across all divisions that provides flexibility to pursue alternative modes of learning.

Increase undergraduate and graduate assistantships to support student engagement with research projects.

OUTCOMES

- create new knowledge
- enrich specific fields of study with contemporary research
- demonstrate the importance of creative practice to global issues
- promote the value of art and design in our everyday lives

BUILDING ON OUR PREVIOUS PLAN

RISD's last strategic plan, *Critical Making | Making Critical*, advanced seven key areas. The outcomes of that plan laid the foundation for the ambitious goals outlined in the new plan.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Added 10 new full-time faculty positions
- Developed 3 new interdisciplinary concentrations
- Created 2 new graduate programs
- Established 2 endowed faculty positions/
1 endowed curatorship
- Implemented 1-credit courses
- Developed additional science courses and additional HPSS tracks
- Added Museum fellowships for faculty and students

DISCOVERY AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH RESEARCH

- Established a new research office
- Developed regular sabbatical presentations
- Increased conference funding
- Launched annual license for Digital Commons

STUDENT SUPPORT

- Increased financial aid
- Expanded Career Center programming
- Increased staffing in Health Services
- Increased staffing in Disability Services
- Increased staffing in Counseling & Psychological Services

- Maintained selectivity and retention in admissions while increasing # of applications

FACILITIES PLANNING

- Developed Campus Master Plan
- Renovated 189 Canal Street
- Renovated 123 Dyer Street
- Completed planning for Quad housing
- Addressed shop safety issues / increased training in shops
- Increased annual funding for deferred maintenance
- Renovated first floor of 20 Washington Place
- Created new ambisonic sound studio at 15 West

CRITICAL MAKING AND INNOVATION

- Developed Co-works
- Upgraded classroom technology

DIVERSITY AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- Expanded recognition programs for staff
- Increased professional development opportunities
- Administered employee engagement / climate surveys
- Expanded diversity programs

TECHNOLOGY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

- Implemented Student Planning (student information system)
- Implemented Slate (Admissions management system)
- Implemented Tableau (institutional data analysis)
- Implemented Raiser's Edge (cloud-based fundraising and donor management)

PROCESS

Developing the thinking behind this plan has been a community-wide effort involving all the people it will touch. Here's an overview of how this new set of strategic directions evolved:

FALL 2016

Planning process launched at campus-wide sessions held during Development Days in November. Faculty and staff attendees worked in small, cross-institutional groups to respond to data presented at the opening session and to these questions:

- Who is a RISD student now and in the future?
- What are the advancements we should consider now and in the future?

Members of the President's Cabinet used these responses to begin to identify key themes.

WINTER 2017

Values exercise conducted with Administrative managers. Responses from the breakout groups formed the basis of similar exercises at the Cabinet level.

SPRING 2017

A Strategic Planning Core Committee composed of faculty and staff began work to further explore the larger context and landscape of higher education, and to identify and sort the emergent themes from prior work that would form the framework of the strategic plan.

FALL 2017

The provost convened 21 working groups with 86 faculty and 60 staff members to respond to specific prompts and questions about themes that emerged from the SP Core Committee's work. These groups discussed everything from academic advising to scheduling, wellness and workflow, along with potential new research and interdisciplinary spaces.

SPRING 2018

The provost distilled and organized reports and recommendations from the working groups and shared a draft of the Academic Plan with the academic community. Throughout the spring, the Provost's Office convened a series of listening tours to encourage faculty and staff feedback on the proposed plan.

SUMMER 2018

Over the summer, the Cabinet and Deans' Council worked together to develop the first draft of RISD's new strategic plan, working to integrate the reports of the 21 working groups, the Academic Plan, Cabinet goals and other institutional plans (Social Equity and Inclusion, Campus Master Plan, projections from the accreditation self-study and areas of focus assigned by our accreditors).

FALL 2018

The first draft of the strategic plan was shared with the RISD community in September. Throughout the fall RISD leaders gathered feedback on the draft plan through forums that engaged close to 400 student, faculty and staff members. Based on community input, the Cabinet and deans worked to refine and prioritize strategic initiatives in alignment with a financial model and fundraising plan, which were also developed in the fall.

SPRING / SUMMER 2019

The final draft of the plan will be shared with all members of the RISD community. The Board of Trustees will vote on the final plan in May 2019. Once trustees approve the plan, the Cabinet and Deans' Council will create a high-level institutional implementation plan to guide all responsible areas. Detailed action and tactical implementation plans will be developed by each responsible area. The institutional implementation plan and high-level progress dashboards will be shared with the community as the plan is launched in the fall of 2019.

ACADEMIC WORKING GROUPS

Academic Advising	Humanities Lab
Community Engagement	Learning Outcomes
Continuing Education, Executive Education, Museum	Nature Lab
Color Lab	Publishing Lab
Complexity Lab	Research
Co-Works Lab	Residential Life
Center for Teaching + Learning	Scheduling
Faculty Types	Student Health + Wellness
General Education	Textile Lab
Global	Workflow + Process

CORE COMMITTEE

Maggie Balch Dean of Students	Margot Nishimura Interim Dean of Libraries
Patricia Barbeito Interim Dean of Faculty and Associate Provost of Teaching and Learning	Jorge Paricio Senior Critic in Industrial Design
Daniel Cavicchi Interim Provost	Dave Proulx Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration
David Frazer Professor of Painting	Lisi Raskin Associate Professor and Department Head, Sculpture
Sarah Ganz Blythe Deputy Director, Exhibitions, Education and Programs, RISD Museum	Taylor Scott President's Chief of Staff and Communications
Shawn Greenlee Associate Professor of Experimental and Foundation Studies	Matthew Shenoda Vice President of Social Equity and Inclusion
Mara Hermano Vice President of Integrated Planning	Emily Vogler Assistant Professor and Department Head, Landscape Architecture
Carl Lostritto Assistant Professor of Architecture	
Andy Martinez Archivist	