

# People, Place & Promise

Strategy 2030



Royal Conservatoire  
*of Scotland*



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# Executive Summary

## We Will...

**Shape the future** of art forms, artists and society through education, engagement and research.

**Grow a sustainable community** that nurtures, supports and celebrates inclusive art making from grassroots to world-leading performance and production.

**Address inequalities** and enhance inclusion across every aspect of our activity.

**Ensure young people in Scotland have opportunities** to progress into further and higher studies in specialised performance and production, artistic practice and research.

**Engage collaboratively** and have impact through partnerships across Europe and throughout the world.

**Invest in our students and staff**, developing their sense of achievement and self-fulfilment.

**Be at the heart** of Glasgow's civic life, Scotland's cultural leadership and global artistic and educational impact.

**Be an exemplar for our sector and nation** in sustainable, ethical and inclusive initiatives, delivering a prosperous and artistically rich future for the organisation, community and Scotland.

**Deliver our vision** through five annual supporting plans with measurable outcomes.





# Our Mission:

For RCS's education, engagement and research in the performing arts to be a catalyst to shape the future of art forms, artists and society.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is a leading international institution delivering performing arts education. A rich seam of stories of our students, staff and alumni and what they do, tells of their far-reaching impact on individuals, communities and the very essence of the performing arts themselves across Scotland and around the world. RCS's last Strategic Plan, *Delivering a Defining Performance*, covered a period from 2015 in which RCS rose to world-leading prominence, achieving a top ten position in the prestigious QS World University Rankings for Performing Arts for six out of the last seven years. Building on this, Strategy 2030 focuses on enhancing further RCS's artistic ambitions, resilience and sustainability and, with it, the quality, diversity and esteem of our students, staff and graduates.







# Our Vision:

## A sustainable community that nurtures, supports and celebrates inclusive art making from grassroots to world-leading performance and production.



The operating environment in which we find ourselves is a complex mass of geopolitical and financial challenges set in the aftermath of a global pandemic. Set positively, this continues to encourage resourceful thinking and the deployment of imaginative creative opportunities in curriculum, research and engagement activity. It has also accelerated digital engagement and ambitions well beyond where they might otherwise have been in 2023. In pursuit of equity, **we are working with staff and students to address inequalities and enhance inclusion across every aspect of our activity** for a community of staff and students from more than 60 countries. An essential element of this is a commitment to **embedding the aims and goals of an anti-racism action plan** within all of our strategic planning as well as identifying and acting on the **intersectionality of experiences of our student and staff community**. We also remain committed to **confronting the climate emergency** and offering solutions, through our operation, behaviours and artistic practice.

We are invested in nurturing new generations but there are challenges beyond our control in sustaining, far less developing further, the talent pipeline in Scotland. In an increasingly competitive UK and international context, RCS's Pre-Higher Education and Juniors work is recognised as sector-leading, and we are committed to its continued development with the goal of **ensuring all young people in Scotland have opportunities to progress into further and higher studies in specialised performance and production, artistic practice and research**.

We are proud of the work our colleagues do across Junior Conservatoire, Fair Access and Pre-HE. They change lives, so investment in these areas is essential to the ongoing sustainability of a richly diverse cultural life for our nation. The creative sector in Scotland, and elsewhere in the UK and internationally, is a key economic driver and an important employment destination for RCS graduates. Alongside the many other areas to which our graduates contribute, film, screen, gaming and production/post-production in particular, are all fast-growing fields in Scotland, requiring many of the skills we teach.

RCS's consistently outstanding graduates place us at the forefront of artistic innovation *and* established quality across a breadth of areas in exciting times nationally, as well as beyond. We aim to **engage collaboratively and have impact through partnerships across Europe and throughout the world** – including regions and institutions new to us that share our creative values. Through these, we will support the diversification and enrichment of our practice and research community now, as well as for generations of students to come.

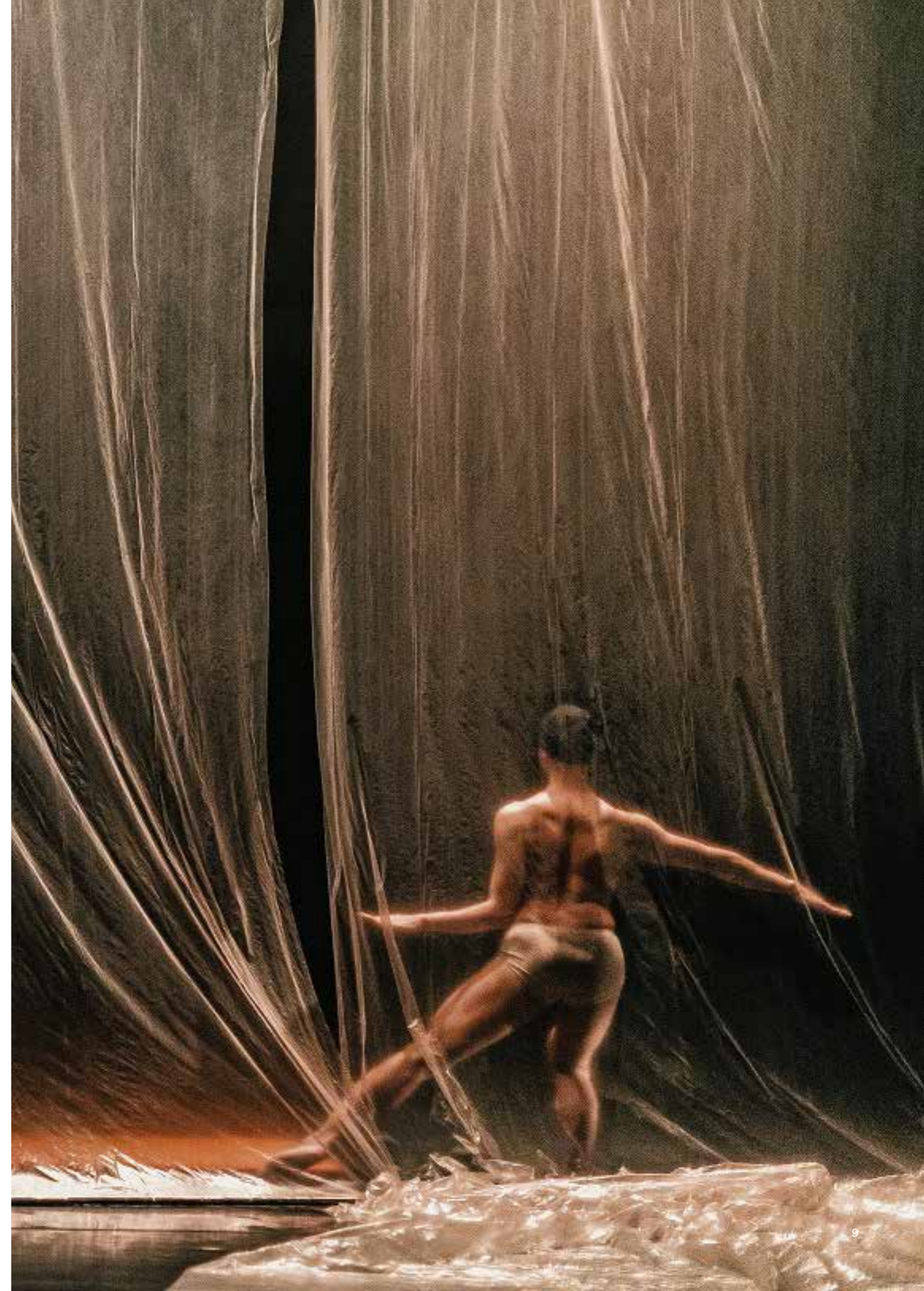


# Our Values:

- | Creative courage
- | Compassion
- | Constructive challenge
- | Curiosity
- | Craft, rigour and talent
- | Community

The core of what we do at RCS is student-focused, intensive and impactful learning, research and engagement activity. This is supported by professional services invested in our community, buildings and infrastructure, student experience and a sustainable, thriving RCS. **Refocusing on the power of the arts to impact lives from grassroots to new and established worldwide networks is central to our vision.** Our practice and commitment is underpinned by a core belief that arts engagement is life-enhancing. As an education institution, **we will seek to prepare students for - and to shape - the profession, and at the same time, uphold the special environment we have to be different,** to experiment, and to get to know works, creatives, histories and practices, whether established, under-represented and/or neglected.

We will explore the potential for activity that promotes learning in a safe environment that ensures experience of and contact with the **widest range of techniques, repertoires, industry professionals and practices that we can engage with.** These practices will centre the work, challenge and fulfil the people shaping it, and offer creative insight into everything from industry, digital innovation and innovative techniques to perspectives and practice in environmental sustainability and ethical artistry. In our public-facing work, we will continue to drive and support an arts ecology that is relevant, beneficial and essential in wider life.







# Our People, Place and Promise

These are the three perspectives through which all our activity should be viewed.

## People

Everything we aim for through our Strategic Plan should be seen as an enhancement to the experience and celebration of our **people, the RCS community**. Our commitment to our people will also be reflected in their capacity to develop and achieve self-fulfilment, whatever their contribution to RCS life. Our goals include ensuring we have:

- | Talented and motivated **staff** who use artistic, research, professional and industry developments to enhance the Conservatoire's international leadership in multi-arts education from pre-HE to all ages
- | **Students and graduates** who create the future of performance and production, specialising and collaborating successfully
- | RCS as **partner** of choice for prestigious, forward-looking organisations, artistic leaders and entrepreneurs.

## Place

This plan recognises the huge importance of **place** to RCS – our place here in Glasgow, Scotland, the UK, as well as the strength of our Conservatoire's position globally.

Our ambitions include:

- | Playing a prominent role in **national cultural leadership**, as well as enhancing our **global artistic and educational impact**. Being active citizens of Glasgow, as well as having a positive creative impact wherever we are.
- | Becoming an exemplar for our sector and nation in **sustainable, ethical and inclusive** initiatives across our portfolio, estate and community
- | Assuring a financially **sustainable institutional ecology** and estate to deliver a prosperous and artistically rich future for the organisation, community and Scotland.

## Promise

This is our commitment to future students and to growing our relationships with those without whose generous support the RCS could not achieve outstanding outcomes with our learners. This plan prioritises artistic vision and the exciting development of our disciplines, relationships to fast-changing industry, and our motivations to become more inclusive, innovative and research and engagement-led as an organisation.

Our goals include:

- | Delivering ambitious philanthropic **investment** in student and staff success, to supplement core funding and generate more competitive scholarship capital
- | Delivering **growth** in identified areas of the portfolio to drive sustainability of the institution, local and national creative economy, and prepare employable artists to meet the demands of the creative sector
- | Generating significant **income** and commercial opportunity through the expansion of areas such as specialist short course provision.





# Bringing RCS's Strategy 2030 to Life

**This strategy proposes a vision, mission and objectives to be met by 2030, all underpinned by a set of values we uphold as a community.**

There are five active supporting plans covering the main areas of RCS's portfolio, and each of these will be delivered through projects whose outcomes will fulfil the objectives – and ultimately the vision and mission – of the Conservatoire.

#### The Supporting Plans:

- | Learning and Teaching
- | Research and Ethical Practice
- | Engagement and Creative Economy
- | Organisational Resilience
- | People and Culture

Each year, an operational plan in each supporting area will set out which projects will be prioritised, what the aims are for the year ahead, and who is involved in leadership and achievement of the project(s). A revised committee structure (the Conservatoire's 'deliberative structure') will ensure the visibility and progress monitoring of the strategic projects, which ultimately report to the Board of Governors. Student voice is an essential element of committees, ensuring student partnership remains a strong and prominent feature in all RCS work.



Realising this new plan will allow the RCS to make constructive choices – to keep artistic traditions that have stood the test of time while being bold and unafraid to embark on new models of collaborative learning. Blurring the boundaries between performer and creator allows our students to have more agency in their learning and in shaping the future direction of all our performing arts.

#### Measures of our success by 2030 will include:

- | Exceeding the UK benchmark for **teaching quality** across all programmes (National Student Survey)
- | People, Culture and Environment 4\* outcome >30% in Research Excellence Framework 2028
- | Building on our leading reputation internationally to recruit students and diversify our postgraduate programmes and modes of study
- | Retain a top ten position in the QS World University Rankings
- | >90% of graduates in positive destinations
- | Grow and diversify income streams, including short courses, with a view to turnover >750k per year by 2030
- | Increasing philanthropic giving year-on-year by at least 15%.



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