



## **Creative Director**

Rhode Island School of Design  
*Providence, Rhode Island*

RISD seeks an innovative, highly-collaborative Creative Director to develop and champion the college's visual identity and lead a cross-disciplinary team of nine in producing outstanding creative work. Strong expertise is needed in bringing design, editorial content and imagery together to create distinctive brand experiences that make a real impact on diverse audiences (including prospective and current students and their parents, faculty, alumni, donors, industry leaders, and the general public) across traditional and emerging media channels.

Internationally recognized for its immersive model of art and design education, RISD emphasizes conceptually driven studio-based learning and robust liberal arts studies. It upholds the belief that art and design are essential to human progress, well-being and the innovation needed to transform life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and is committed to playing a key role in promoting an inclusive, forward-thinking society. As an active and engaged member of the RISD community, the Creative Director will champion this spirit of creative experimentation and progressive thinking to audiences around the globe. The position offers an exciting opportunity for a dynamic creative professional to lead the visual expression of a vibrant community of thinkers and makers.

Reporting to the Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, who leads RISD's Media Group, the Creative Director will bring both strategic vision and inventive problem solving to leading the creative process from concept to completion. With input from RISD's President, academic leaders and other community stakeholders, the Creative Director will lead a cross-disciplinary team with expertise in writing, design and photography in developing forward-thinking creative strategies and communications solutions that advance institutional priorities. This includes elevating key initiatives with the highest impact on the RISD brand, student and faculty recruitment, fundraising and other institutional goals.

As RISD evolves, its Media Group is thinking broadly about how it can best tell the college's stories in new, engaging ways. While historically the group has been focused on awareness and promotions, there is a strong desire to create more dynamic engagement throughout the RISD community, especially via new technology and digital media platforms, while retaining the authenticity of materials-based experiential practice for which RISD is known. The Creative Director will serve as a strategic leader in this work, understanding how audiences are embracing new media and how different key audiences—from new generations of students and alumni to faculty and industry leaders—"encounter" the RISD brand.



An initial priority for the Creative Director will be leading the creation and evolution of RISD brand guidelines to help deliver more intentional, consistent and distinctive experiences. The Creative Director will also work to strengthen the team's workflow to better balance emerging projects and opportunities with cyclical responsibilities.

The ideal candidate is expected to have at least seven years of experience and a proven record of outstanding design practice. Previous experience working in a complex organization is highly desired, as is the maturity and acumen to successfully navigate and collaborate within such environments. While direct experience working in higher education, museums or arts institutions is not required, a familiarity with and appreciation for RISD's mission and ethos will be essential for success. Outstanding organizational and interpersonal skills are necessary, as are a belief in the value of teamwork, initiative and curiosity. A sophisticated visual sensibility as well as verbal and written communication skills are required and the ability to interact with all types of individuals is essential. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

## **Rhode Island School of Design**

Rhode Island School of Design has earned an international reputation as the leading college of art and design in the United States. Approximately 2,500 students from across the world study at RISD, pursuing degrees in 19 studio majors in architecture, design and the fine arts. More than 27,000 alumni worldwide testify to the impact of a RISD education, exemplifying the vital role artists and designers play in fueling global innovation. Founded in 1877, RISD and the RISD Museum help make Providence, RI among the most culturally active and creative cities in the region.

President Rosanne Somerson, an internationally-renowned furniture designer / maker and the first alumna to lead the institution, has long been a champion for the power of critical thinking and making, underscoring the value of art, design and a deeply immersive studio-based education to advancing life in the 21st century.

Additionally, RISD is strongly committed to ensuring that a RISD education is within reach of a larger, more diverse pool of talented students, in particular populations that are underrepresented in the fields of art and design. RISD has launched an institutional Social Equity and Inclusion Action Plan which address not only financial access but also ensures that students have the resources and campus support needed to thrive.

For more information, visit [risd.edu](http://risd.edu) and [our.risd.edu](http://our.risd.edu)



## Providence

RISD's home is Rhode Island's capital and largest city, with more than 1.6 million people in the greater Providence region. In close proximity to Boston, New York City, and Hartford, Providence has become known as the "Creative Capital" for its vibrant art and cultural communities, including seven colleges. This combination of comfortable scale and genuine community has made Providence one of the consistently-ranked best places to live and work in America. As RISD expands its presence on a global scale, it will continue to position Providence as a key player in the current design revolution.

## The Creative Director

By acting strategically, inspiring performance, developing talent and fostering an inclusive environment, the Creative Director will manage the creative process from concept to completion to help RISD achieve its communications and marketing objectives.

### Essential Functions/Duties

**Develop and champion RISD's visual and editorial voice to deliver intentional, consistent and distinctive experiences.**

- Lead the creation and evolution of RISD brand guidelines, directives and identity systems. Communicate with and gain investment from campus partners to ensure that these are embraced and adhered to across projects and platforms.
- Elevate key initiatives with the highest impact on RISD's brand, recruitment, fundraising and other institutional goals.
- Keep abreast of current and emerging industry trends, evaluate if and how they might be appropriate for RISD and implement accordingly.

**Cultivate strong and productive relationships with campus colleagues, as well as with external vendors and partners.**

- With input from RISD's President, academic leaders, and other community stakeholders, develop the creative strategies and communications solutions that advance institutional priorities.

**Lead a cross-functional team of creative professionals — whose responsibilities include graphic design, content planning/writing/editing, photography and production coordination — in conceiving and executing marketing messages, concepts and assets to achieve project objectives.**

- Hire, train and manage the creative team, providing members with direction, coaching and professional development opportunities. Inspire both team and individual performance, develop talent and foster an inclusive environment.



- Manage the creative process from concept to completion, communicate effectively with campus partners and ensure that high-quality work is completed on time and on budget.
- Prioritize projects based on strategic insight and information from the Chief Marketing & Communication Officer and key institutional goals and allocate resources accordingly.
- Determine, recommend, and implement the systems and structures needed for the creative team to operate most efficiently and effectively. Implement and/or modify technology, tools and processes accordingly.

## Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required, MFA or MA preferred.
- At least seven years of increasingly challenging related work experience
- Strong leadership abilities. Prior experience managing and mentoring creative professionals required; experience leading cross-functional teams strongly preferred.
- A strong record of outstanding design practice and a sophisticated visual sensibility.
- An understanding of visual systems, proficiency with design software and knowledge of design history.
- Demonstrated ability to successfully translate complex ideas into compelling print materials and digital experiences for visually sophisticated audiences.
- Proven ability to create a connection with and foster engagement from diverse audiences.
- A strategic and innovative thinker and creative problem solver.
- Stellar communication, presentation, problem-solving and project-management skills.
- Demonstrated success managing the creative process and proven ability to provide art direction on small-and large-scale projects from creative conception to completion.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and proven ability to cultivate and maintain strong relationships.
- Demonstrated ability to inspire and motivate others; ability to give and receive constructive feedback.
- Interest in art, design and higher education.
- An understanding of RISD's culture, identity and community appreciated.

## How to Apply

Rhode Island School of Design has retained Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. President Tracy Welsh and Associates Connor Daley and Viviana Aluia are leading this search.

Please submit your resume, cover letter and portfolio, detailing the reasons why you are best suited for the position and would be a great addition to the RISD team, and where you learned of the position. Applications should be sent to: [risd-cd@talentcitizen.com](mailto:risd-cd@talentcitizen.com)

*RISD recognizes diversity and inclusivity as fundamental to its learning community and integral to an art and design education. We welcome candidates whose experience has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and excellence. RISD is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Employment decisions are made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetics, or any other protected characteristic as established by law.*