



THE CCAD WAY

Columbus College of Art & Design
Strategic Plan, 2021–2026





The CCAD Way

“I see CCAD’s impact throughout Columbus. In a society in which more and more jobs are being outsourced to machines, creatives are one resource that can’t be replaced. Artists and designers are the innovators continuing to drive society forward, and you can see the impact everywhere—from architecture and interior design to the development of goods and services, from television and movies to advertising and marketing campaigns and brand redesigns.”

—Ally Hays, Former Associate Academic Advisor

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Introduction

As creatives, we understand that the process of developing a strategic plan is almost as important as the plan itself. The success of a plan depends on collective buy-in and collaborative implementation, and at Columbus College of Art & Design, those things start in the development phase.

In the spirit of **Intentional Inclusivity**, our planning began with two student-led ideation sessions in early 2020 that included more than 100 faculty and staff members, students, alumni, trustees, and community partners. Those sessions were generative and inspirational and set the stage for the process of winnowing the many good ideas to our top priorities.

And then, COVID-19. And then the national wake-up call on racial injustice in our society. The global pandemic and social upheaval quickly pushed CCAD into emergency planning mode. We turned our attention to caring for our community, implementing successful remote learning, and maintaining sustainable operations during the most challenging moments of 2020.

However, by summer we realized that strategic planning was not something that could be set aside, even as our world was being turned upside-down. In fact, returning our attention to long-range vision and strategy was exactly what we needed to emerge from the pandemic as a stronger and better CCAD. We recognized that a strategic plan is one critical way to enact systemic change and to promote action vs. reaction. So, we called upon the value of **Creative Collaboration** to move us through virtual working sessions with a small taskforce and countless revisions with input from dozens of our community members, all working together to finalize this Strategic Plan, which the CCAD Board of Trustees approved on Dec. 8, 2020.

Of course, every plan builds on the prior, and ours is no different. Building the Future, CCAD's 2017–2020 Strategic Plan, provided a critical foundation for what is found here. The **Proven Potential** for CCAD to successfully execute a plan, learn from our shortcomings, and build on our successes can be seen in [the accomplishments from our last strategic plan](#).

Additionally, this plan is part of a larger interconnected group of working documents—including the Campus Framework Plan, the Campaign for The CCAD Way Case for Support, and the Presidential Commission on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Action Plan—that will guide the college forward over the years to come. And, finally, it is important to note that a long-range plan is never perfectly accurate nor completely exhaustive; this plan simply aims to highlight the key initiatives that will be our collective focus in the next period. If planning during a pandemic has taught us anything, it's that vision and planning are no more useful when carved in stone than when written in sand. CCAD's future depends on the creative and flexible innovation that is, thankfully, part of our DNA.



Dr. Melanie Corn
President

CCAD's Journey

Columbus College of Art & Design, founded in 1879 by five women, is one of the oldest and most prestigious art and design colleges in the United States. We're an independent, accredited, nonprofit college with more than 1,000 students across an array of bachelors and masters programs in visual art and design disciplines.

As a cultural and educational leader for more than 140 years, our college has made a significant impact on our region. And, over time, we've developed a certain way of doing things—The CCAD Way—with an emphasis on **Creative Collaboration**, **Intentional Inclusivity**, and **Proven Potential**.

Many of the pivotal moments in CCAD's history—from our founding in the nineteenth century to seeking accreditation and gaining independence as an institution in the twentieth to prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives today—were spurred by the passionate agitation of our students and faculty. We take pride in the way CCAD has consistently made space for a multiplicity of voices, especially when those voices query and challenge the status quo. That's what artists and designers do. It is our community members who want to make CCAD a better place, and it's with them in mind that we built this plan. CCAD is more than an institution. It's our people. And our people are the ideal changemakers. For our institution and the world.

The CCAD Way

The CCAD Way—one of **Creative Collaboration**, **Intentional Inclusivity**, and **Proven Potential**—is The Columbus Way, and the way of the future. The Columbus Way was defined in 2015 by Harvard Business School as the distinctive quality of our city to expertly utilize public-private collaboration to meet the challenges of the day. Expanding beyond this, The CCAD Way is about a spirit of **Creative Collaboration** that not only prepares our students for contemporary art and design practice, but brings a flexible and creative mindset to businesses and institutions around us. It is also about **Intentional Inclusivity**, bringing a diverse group of students to the college and creating an equitable institution that will help them thrive in their careers and diversify the region's—the nation's—creative workforce. And with those two elements as a foundation, it's about the **Proven Potential** of CCAD and countless stories of how our students and alumni enhance the world around us, instigate big changes in culture and commerce, and use art and design for the good of Columbus—and around the globe. With this Strategic Plan as a guide, CCAD will expand our **Creative Collaboration**, further our **Intentional Inclusivity**, and capitalize on our **Proven Potential**.

Mission

CCAD fosters a diverse community that educates students so they can unleash their creative power to shape culture and commerce.

Vision

CCAD aspires to be a nationally recognized leader in art and design education. The work of the college and our alumni will amplify the necessity and importance of creative practices to our collective sense of cultural vibrancy and connectedness, to our economies and communities, and to social justice causes and civic engagement.

Core Values

CCAD values every member of our community and together we focus on student and institutional success. The CCAD community expects:

Respect

- Be respectful in tone and with people's time, and offer constructive criticism.
- Be transparent by communicating directly, clearly, and in a timely manner.

Positivity

- Be supportive and praise your peers.
- Assume positive intent and competency.

Inspiration

- Model the behavior you want to see in others.
- Embrace change and innovative thinking.

Accountability

- Be accountable to one another at all levels.
- Lead from every seat and with a "we."

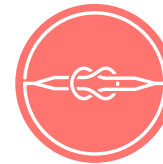
classroom
image

Our Goal

*Create a transformational educational experience that serves our diverse community of students and drives the growth of the region's creative economy by launching The CCAD Way—one of **Creative Collaboration**, **Intentional Inclusivity**, and **Proven Potential**.*

Iconography

Throughout this document, you will see icons representing the three key facets of The CCAD Way: Creative Collaboration, Intentional Inclusivity, and Proven Potential.



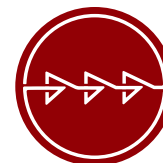
Creative Collaboration

is all about preparing our students for contemporary art and design practice and bringing a flexible and creative mindset that engages and informs individuals and entities around us. It's represented in this document by a square knot.



Intentional Inclusivity

is our purpose-driven efforts to bring a diverse group of students, faculty, and staff to the college and to create an equitable institution that will help students thrive in their careers and diversify the region's—the nation's—creative workforce. It's represented in this document by a braid.



Proven Potential

is evidenced by the countless stories of how our students and alumni enhance the world around us, instigate big changes in culture and commerce, and use art and design for the good of Columbus—and far beyond. It's represented in this document by a string of arrows.

Empower Students

to confidently pursue meaningful, impactful, creative lives while in school and after graduation.

Activate Alumni

with a compelling and inspiring strategic engagement plan that connects alumni to CCAD and to each other, supports their continued development, and promotes their success.

Transform Faculty and Staff

with greater support for their professional growth and excellence as well as an equity- and inclusion-focused expansion.

Amplify Educational Offerings

that build on CCAD's history of responsive and innovative curriculum and its commitment to lifelong learning.

Leverage Our Expertise and Strategic Partnerships

to support student development and demonstrate CCAD's unique role in collaborating with community and corporate partners to solve the real-world challenges of today and tomorrow.

Commit to Our Community

through thoughtful engagement and transformative actions that reinforce the power of art and design to foster more equitable and prosperous communities.

Reimagine Campus

using the 2019 Campus Framework Plan to guide improvements that better support the evolving nature of an exceptional art and design education.

Propel CCAD Forward

by expanding financial resources to better fulfill the college's mission and purpose with a focus on access, affordability, and excellence.

An aerial photograph of a university campus. A long picnic table with a red and white checkered tablecloth is set up on a paved walkway, with many people sitting at it. The surrounding area is green grass with several trees and people walking or sitting on benches. The text 'Accountability' is overlaid in large white letters at the top of the image.

Accountability

Inspiration

Positivity

Respect

Respect

Positivity

Inspiration

Accountability



Empower Students

Empower students to confidently pursue meaningful, impactful, creative lives while in school and after graduation by...



Increasing student retention and engagement through targeted data-driven initiatives and ongoing assessment.



Fostering a more diverse student body, inclusive campus community, and equitable institution where all can thrive.



Challenging all students to develop the skills, resilience, and resources necessary to advance their individual potential as they launch their creative careers.



Teaching a way of thinking and engaging in the world that is identifiably rooted in equity as well as art and design education; touting its value as transformative for citizenship and professional success.



Activate Alumni

Activate alumni with a compelling and inspiring strategic engagement plan that connects alumni to CCAD and to each other, supports their continued development, and promotes their success by...



Nourishing lifelong learning goals of alumni through seamless continuing education opportunities.



Building stronger alumni networks and establishing more alumni-specific programming, events, and opportunities to connect with students.

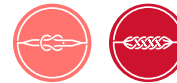


Celebrating alumni successes in new ways that advance their creative careers while also strengthening our institutional reputation.



Transform Faculty and Staff

Transform faculty and staff with greater support for their professional growth and excellence as well as an equity- and inclusion-focused expansion by...



Developing the infrastructure and resources to grow and support a faculty that engages in teaching practices rooted in anti-oppression, agility, collaboration, and innovation.



Implementing hiring and retention practices that increase the racial and ethnic diversity of our faculty and staff to better reflect the diversity of our student body.



Building pathways for professional growth within the college and enhancing our workplace culture and practices in ways that allow CCAD to attract and retain top talent and ensure that all employees can grow and thrive in a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment.



Amplify Educational Offerings

Amplify educational offerings that build on CCAD's history of responsive and innovative curriculum and its commitment to lifelong learning by...



Investing in the reinvigoration of our existing academic programs to ensure our offerings are best-in-class and prepare students for an increasingly complex, evolving, and diverse workplace and society.



Implementing new undergraduate degree pathways and modalities that will attract new audiences, offer increased flexibility for students, respond to the ever-changing needs of our students and their employers, and strengthen career preparedness.



Launching new graduate programs that address the region's professional needs and harness the distinctive strengths of Columbus to attract new students to CCAD and the area.



Growing our non-degree offerings in ways that sustain our strong community education and lifelong learning programs while adding robust and responsive professional studies opportunities that innovate in delivery models, answer the needs of working professionals looking to advance their creative knowledge and skills, and engage with industry demands.

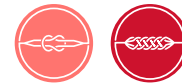


Leverage Our Expertise and Strategic Partnerships

Leverage our expertise and strategic partnerships to support student development and demonstrate CCAD's unique role in collaborating with community and corporate partners to solve the real-world challenges of today and tomorrow by...



Building more intentional and sustainable partnerships that are threaded throughout the institution and encourage mutual investment between CCAD and our partners.



Creating an infrastructure that allows every student to participate in professional-level, real-world experiential learning that is relevant to their major and career goals.



Communicating better about the experiential learning opportunities core to our education and the partnership work we do to showcase its impacts on students, partners, and the greater community.



Commit to Our Community

Commit to our community through thoughtful engagement and transformative actions that reinforce the power of art and design to foster more equitable and prosperous communities by...



Advancing the college's Healthy Creativity initiative and using our institutional voice to challenge the cultural and workforce narratives that creative excellence must come at the expense of a creator's wellness.



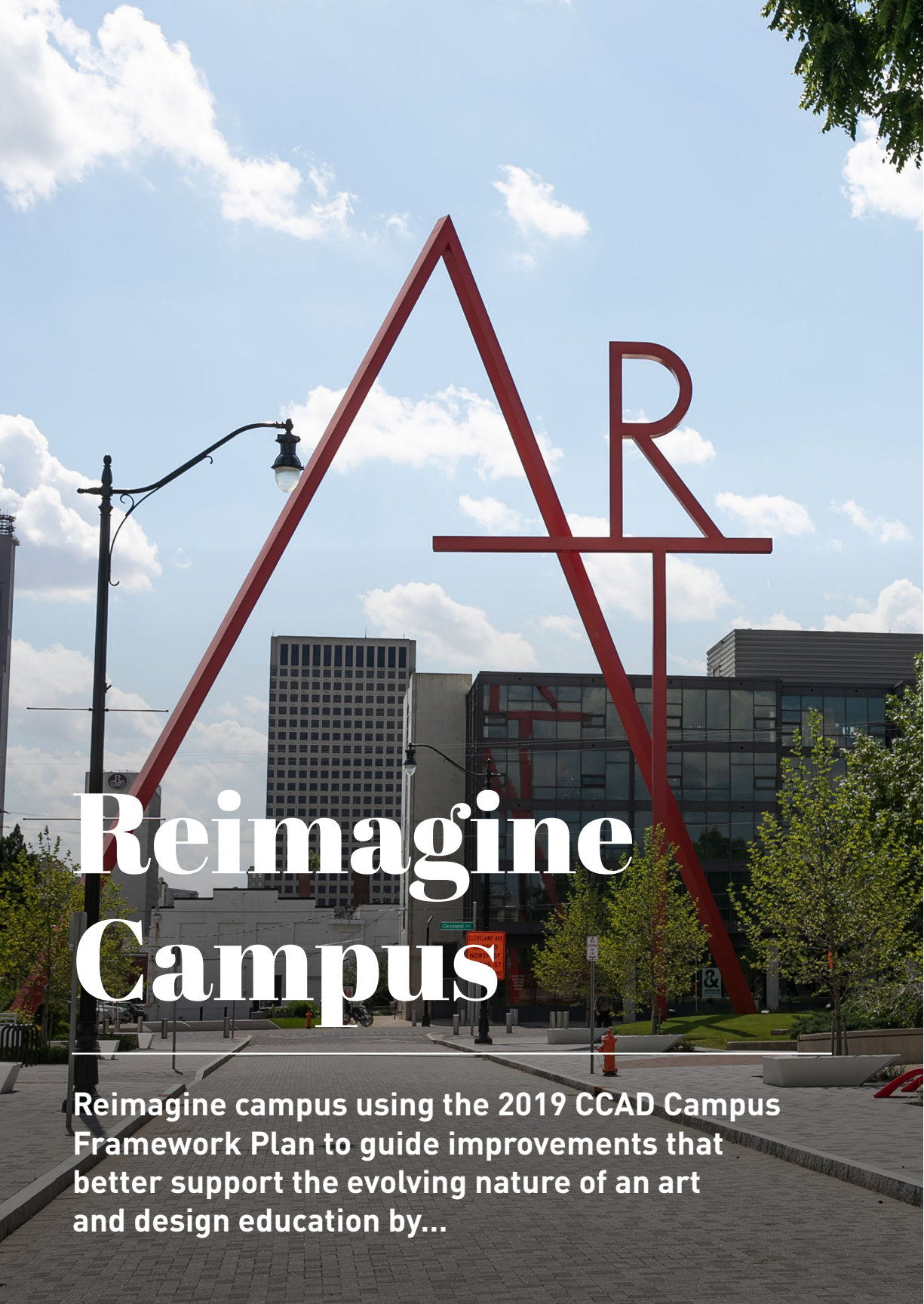
Accomplishing the goals set by the Presidential Commission on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion to fulfill our commitment to being an intentionally inclusive community and rewire CCAD to address structural inequities.



Expanding access to and evolving our youth programming to develop local pipelines that serve the central Ohio community and strengthen and diversify tomorrow's creative class.



Implementing an integrated community engagement strategy that serves the Columbus region, drives the area's creative economy, builds an inspiring and emotional connection to CCAD, and centers the intersection of all of our current and possible community touchpoints.



Reimagine Campus

Reimagine campus using the 2019 CCAD Campus Framework Plan to guide improvements that better support the evolving nature of an art and design education by...



Modernizing and constructing campus facilities to best serve our students, meet our programmatic and curricular needs, and engage with the broader community.



Defining and working toward an improved residential experience, including facilities and student services.



Deploying environmental branding that will improve wayfinding and enhance campus to make it more cohesive, creative, and distinctive.



Propel CCAD Forward

Propel CCAD forward by expanding financial resources to better fulfill the college's mission and purpose with a focus on access, affordability, and excellence by...



Growing enrollment, primarily through retention and new academic programs.



Developing a strategic enrollment management plan that balances student access and affordability with institutional growth and revenue.



Building Development Department capacity and momentum to increase fundraising in a sustainable and strategic fashion.



Completing a comprehensive campaign that will contribute to the longevity of the institution and enhance the student experience by funding faculty excellence and student success efforts, scholarships, and campus facilities.



Prioritizing operational excellence and improving resource stewardship in order to enhance our productivity and allocate our resources to best serve our students, mission, and purpose.



The CCAD Way

“The graduate program lives its focus on diversity by including different races, genders, and ages as part of each class. I am in my seventh decade and I was welcomed by students and faculty. The one-on-one mentoring, the critiques that build and offer constructive support, are part of the success I have earned.

It goes to show, ‘old people’ can go to art school and thrive!”

—Susanne Dotson (MFA Candidate, 2019)

CCAD aspires to be a nationally recognized leader in art and design education. The work of the college and our alumni will amplify the necessity and importance of creative practices to our collective sense of cultural vibrancy and connectedness, to our economies and communities, and to social justice causes and civic engagement.

Key Performance Indicators

Following are 10 key performance indicators (KPIs) that together serve as a measure of our progress toward achieving the goals, objectives, and strategies of this plan. These KPIs are intentionally measurable and yet not specific; they are not the only things that matter, but will serve as directional indicators of our year-over-year progress.

In addition, each strategy will have an implementation plan attached to it that clearly identifies the tactics, timeline, agile measures of success defined by campus experts, and a planning group responsible for overseeing the work and communicating the progress.

Finally, it is important to recognize that achieving the desired outcomes of this plan will take our entire community. It is vital that all of us see our work as moving CCAD forward and advancing the goals of The CCAD Way. Therefore, regular college business, evidenced in the work of annual departmental plans, budget and project requests, performance reviews, etc., will be tied to this Strategic Plan.

Creative Collaboration

All of our students will participate in at least one high-impact learning activity (e.g. sponsored project, internship, co-op, study abroad, student publication).

Our students will benefit from additional articulation agreements and other partnerships with other higher education institutions.

Our students will benefit from more sustainable community and corporate partnerships.

Intentional Inclusivity

Our students will learn from a more diverse faculty and staff.

Our students will view our campus climate as more equitable and inclusive.

Our students will experience a curriculum more consistently rooted in anti-oppression Pedagogy.

Proven Potential

Our student body will grow in number.

Our students will be better served by increasing operational effectiveness and resources.

Our students, alumni, faculty, and CCAD as a whole will receive more regional and national recognition for their successes.

Our students will increasingly be satisfied with how their CCAD education prepares them for post-graduation opportunities and will find meaningful employment related to their program of study.



The CCAD Way

“When I think of CCAD, I think of students with a fire for creative living and full of passion to do big things. I think of students I’ve seen grow from being insecure about their work into student leaders and makers on this campus and far beyond. I think of changemakers who have stepped up to speak against injustices; I think of rule breakers who ask forgiveness instead of permission; and culture shakers who work day and night for what they believe in. It’s not the buildings or the campus or the institution, it’s the people here who have decided that their lives were meant for more, and they aren’t settling for anything less.”

—India Orban (Advertising & Graphic Design, 2019)



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CCAD Student Agency