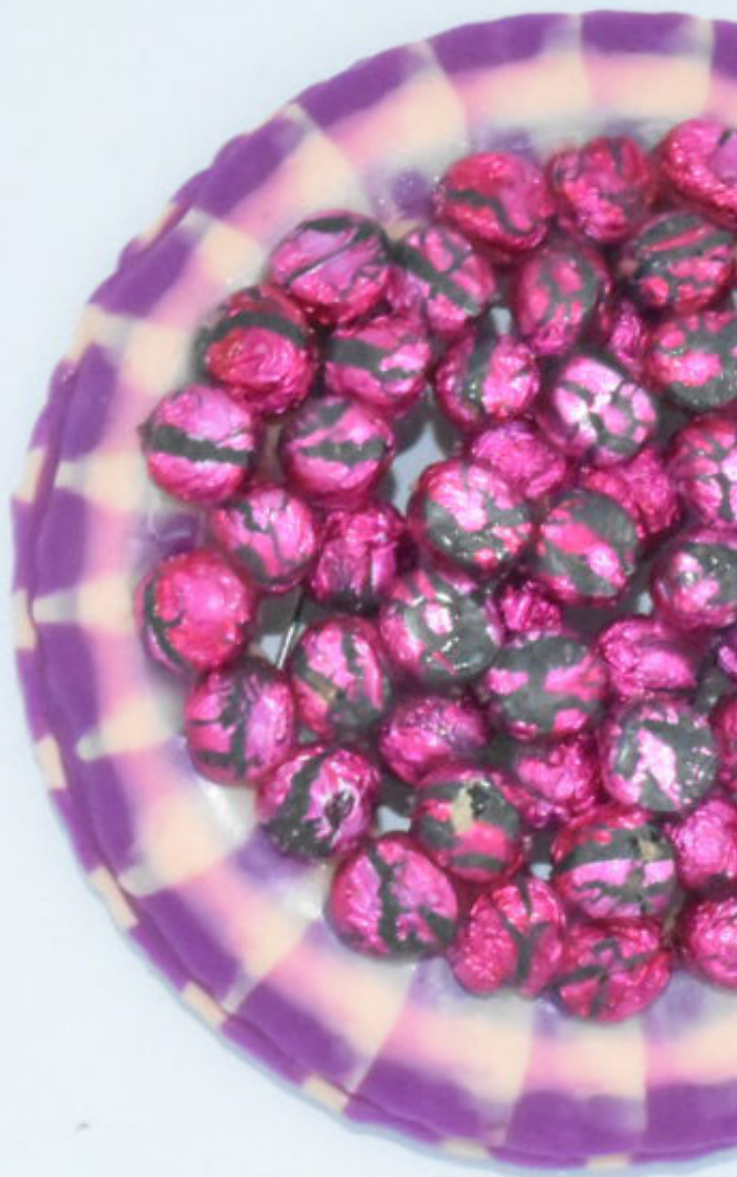


**THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART**

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FRAMEWORK



At The Glasgow School of Art, we recognise that we are in a time of profound change. The climate emergency, ecological degradation and social inequalities present urgent challenges that demand meaningful, sustained action. As an institution dedicated to creativity, innovation, and critical thinking, we hold a responsibility to respond to these challenges not only within our own community but also through the knowledge, skills and values that we instil in our students as future architects, artists, designers and cultural leaders - makers who will help shape the future.

In response to this, our Environmental and Social Justice Framework serves as a roadmap for meaningful action, structured around six key pillars: an efficient, robust and resilient estate; a circular campus; a transformed curriculum; working for climate justice; creating a fair and just institution; and investing in our people. These interconnected pillars ensure that environmental and social justice remain central to the GSA's institutional strategy, shaping our future decisions and commitments.

This document outlines our ambitions across these pillars and demonstrates our commitment to fostering a more sustainable and equitable future. Addressing these issues requires collective action, and we are committed to engaging students, staff, graduates, and external partners in shaping the future of the GSA. Beyond our campuses, our people and our academic disciplines offer powerful tools for advocacy and innovation, and we must continue to harness these strengths in the service of a more just and sustainable world.

We invite you to engage with this framework, reflect on how you can contribute, and join us in driving forward our shared commitment to environmental and social justice. Together, we can create an institution that leads by example—one that prioritises ethical responsibility, celebrates diversity, and embraces sustainability as fundamental to the development of our estate, as well as our teaching, learning and the creative process.

Professor Rachel Dickson

Deputy Director Academic

Eleanor Magennis

Director of Estates and Infrastructure

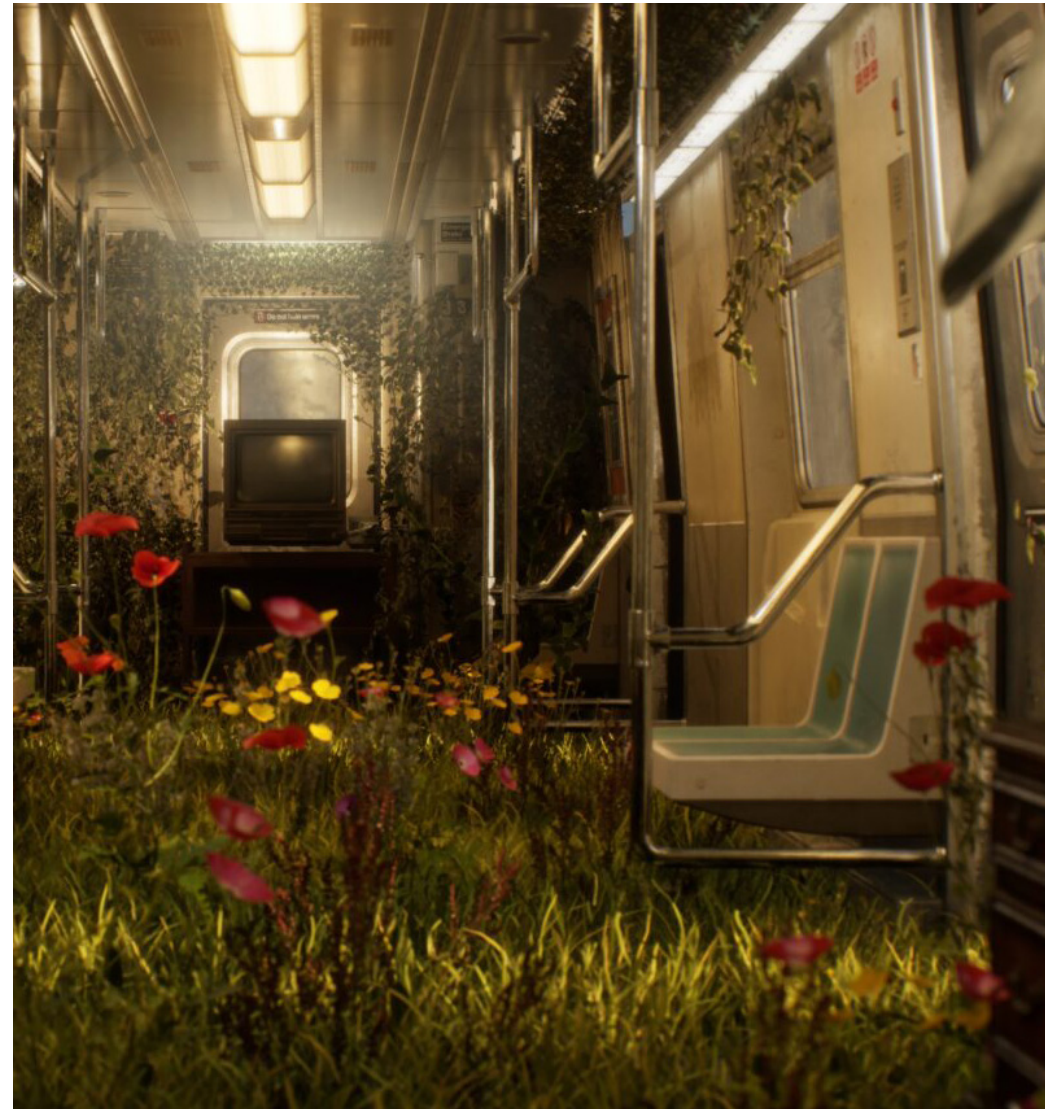


Image: Hyunjae Kang, *REVERIE* (Communication Design, 2024)

In Scotland, the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) have asked every publicly funded body to play its part in addressing the climate and ecological crises and demonstrate how they will contribute to national and international efforts to achieve Net Zero.

We recognise that this is an emergency and dedicate ourselves to it. All of our community, students and staff will be given the chance and means to play a part in addressing these crises in the most meaningful way possible through their creative work and disciplinary expertise.

In December 2022 the Board of Governors at The Glasgow School of Art approved an Environmental and Social Justice framework. This is our road map for improvements and change which we have set out under six linked pillars:

- Pillar 1 **An Efficient, Robust and Resilient Estate**
- Pillar 2 **Circular Campus**
- Pillar 3 **A Transformed Curriculum**
- Pillar 4 **Working for Climate Justice**
- Pillar 5 **Creating a Fair and Just Institution**
- Pillar 6 **Our People**

We have a champion for each pillar and a group that meets regularly to track progress. This is a cross School, student and staff group that ensures the golden thread of environmental and social justice runs through all our strategies and everything we do.

What follows is a summary of each of these pillars. Beneath each pillar, we have indicated in graphic form the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals they link to.

The content of this publication has not been approved by the United Nations and does not reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials or Member States.



Image: Axel Gutapfel, *Late Bloomers* (Sculpture and Environmental Art, 2024)

The GSA Estates Strategy sets out our plans to refine our existing estate, making better and more efficient use of our buildings whilst reducing the overall footprint of our campus. We will reduce the energy consumption and emissions of our buildings, as per the GSA Net Zero Plan, first looking to improve energy efficiency, utilising measures such as improving the fabric of our buildings and mechanical controls, before exploring opportunities to generate green energy.

Decarbonising our heat and domestic hot water will be a major challenge for the GSA as we work towards achieving Net Zero. We will work collaboratively with consultants and other local partners to identify low and zero carbon heating solutions that are appropriate for our buildings.

A large proportion of our emissions are generated from non-operational sources such as our supply chain and staff and student transport. As such we will work closely with procurement partners at Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges to procure responsibly and will consider sustainability metrics such as embodied carbon and operational efficiency as part of our processes for purchasing new materials and equipment. Materials should be reused where possible and disposed of in the most responsible manner in line with the waste hierarchy at end of life.

We have carried out an initial assessment of the risks of climate change to our campuses and operations. This assessment will be reviewed regularly and will be utilised during consideration for future works to our owned estate to ensure resilience.



Image: Mahdiya Zubairi, *Journey of Time* (Mackintosh School of Architecture, 2024)



The GSA's Strategic Plan sets the values and behaviours that guide our decision making. Among these values is a focus on having "a sustainable and equitable approach to our work" which we are committed to delivering on across the GSA.

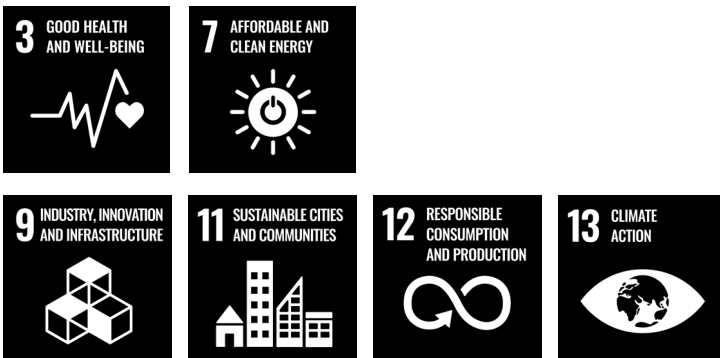
Circular Campus at the GSA involves cross institutional and local initiatives which emphasise reuse and promote the sharing and circulation of resources and equipment across the school. This includes approaches to procurement which prioritise resource reuse; initiatives such as our Media Bureaus which allow for the sharing of equipment; the development of reuse hubs across our campuses; encourage the use of circular project briefs and promote the integration of circularity into our curriculum and teaching delivery; and aid initiatives that support all of our community to reuse, repair and recirculate resources.

We will clearly identify our future goals through our Sustainability in Action Group to establish a GSA-wide team who promote the Circular Campus and support The Green Team to care for and grow biodiversity within the estate, looking at the expansion of composting across campus. With the creation of a centralised equipment store we will manage and reuse exhibition resources and establish in-house material recycling practices which invest in facilities for recycling silicone, plaster, textiles, paper and 3D printing materials, alongside championing water reuse in areas of heavy use such as screen printing, textiles and photography darkrooms.

Through this work, our overall goal is to raise awareness and education of circular approaches through the development of a materials lifecycle biobased materials database.



Image: Maud Ross, *Untitled* (Sculpture and Environmental Art, 2024)



The GSA Education Strategy 2023-27 commits us to: delivering an extraordinary student experience; transforming our models of creative education to meet the needs of students and global challenges; supporting all students to achieve their potential and make positive contributions; working in ambitious, creative partnership with students; and strengthening and enhancing our practice.

Our students and staff have the expertise, ambition, and opportunity to design impactful buildings, products, community and social systems, interiors, objects and materials, energy waste and other systems; and use the power of art and design practice to connect people emotionally to local and global challenges, to educate, and support meaningful action. The climate emergency and social justice are interlinked, therefore our Environmental and Social Justice Framework must be embedded in all that we teach, practice and research.

The GSA Education Strategy, underpinned by our commitment to environmental and social justice, guides and supports us to refresh our curriculum to equip our students with core literacies in social justice, climate action, digital literacy and collaboration for the 21st century world. We are committed to fully implementing our Common Academic Framework, ensuring all GSA students are equipped with the skills and common Graduate Attributes to make a positive contribution to society and lead a creative life. We are also committed to ensuring our admissions, pedagogies and curricula are inclusive and intercultural; decolonising our curriculum and strengthening our commitment to anti-racism and social justice. In doing so, we commit to supporting and training our staff to gain knowledge and confidence to translate relevant and challenging research into practice.



Image: Ted Tinkler, *pegging down their lace* (Painting and Printmaking, 2024) Photography by Meadhbh Corrigan



The GSA Strategic Plan commits us to addressing climate and ecological emergencies through innovation, working in collaborative and transparent ways. We seek to address social and economic inequalities and global challenges through our culture, values and behaviours as well as our approaches to research and design, artistic and architectural disciplines.

We have joined universities and colleges across Scotland, signing up to the Declaration Against Racism, and we are committed to addressing and challenging racism, inequity and discrimination, respecting diversity in people and views through our institutional Equality Outcome Action Plan and other strategies.

The GSA Race, Rights and Sovereignty series, a partnership between the GSA's Students' Association (GSASA) and GSA Exhibitions, has established a powerful forum for staff and students to engage with, explore and unpack ideas related to Race, Rights and Sovereignty in the context of creative practice. Similarly, GSA Sustainability supports the exploration of issues of environmental and social justice across The Glasgow School of Art's curriculum and estate.

We will continue to work towards building a safer, more inclusive and equitable future through reflecting upon our past and present, creativity, collaboration and partnership embedding environmental and social justice in all aspects of the work we lead, teach, practice and research.



Image: Suraj Pookkattuparambil Suresh, *Sustainable Material Explorations* (MDes Circular Economy, 2023)



The GSA aims to be fairer and more equitable, both within itself and how it interacts with the world around it. We recognise that we must invest and bank more ethically, strengthening our procurement policy and processes to ensure that what we buy promotes a socially just economy. Fair working conditions, a diverse staff and student body, a listening and responsive management, and an overall transparent and equitable institution are required to deliver this plan.

The GSA has begun to emphasise diversity, in turn working towards a culture that is adamantly anti-racist. We also recognise that we have a role to play in addressing local and global inequality and lack of opportunity. Everyone, regardless of any protected characteristic or socio-economic status, should feel welcome in the GSA community.

We have already started to build good practice across the GSA and the Students' Association, with systemic support in environmental and social justice within our departments and Schools.

We aim to see a school estate where all parts of the tender process, funded estate and curriculum reference these 6 pillars. The School and the Students' Association further commit to helping student and staff groups working for the values of climate and social justice, providing practical support for staff and students. Student voices need to be heard through the academic system, and Students' Association, and students should be rewarded for embedding environmental and social justice into their work and practices.

Through working towards a school and Students' Association that proactively engages in working towards climate and social justice, we aim to create an environment that improves students' and staff wellbeing, decreases anxiety, and provides greater agency and skills for taking action.



Image: Rose Davenport, *FAILEAS The Hands My Mother Gave Me* (Fashion Design, 2024)

Our People Strategy 2023-27 sets out our vision for the GSA to be a great place to work, where people are empowered to drive change and create impact that is both transformative and collaborative. Through the eight key pillars of the People Strategy we demonstrate our focus on fairness and opportunity for all, and the steps we are taking to enable this at the GSA.

We are dedicated to nurturing, recognising, and inspiring the diverse talents and potential within our workforce. By fostering a culture rooted in ethical leadership and inclusivity, we empower our colleagues to succeed and thrive in a respectful environment that values every individual, enabling them to reach their fullest potential. This includes providing training and development that aligns to the wider Environmental and Social Justice Framework and ensuring we embed environmental and social justice principles and practices across all stages of the employee lifecycle.

We proactively support the overall physical, psychological, and financial wellbeing of our employees via a range of different initiatives and resources and commit to looking at other innovative opportunities in the future that will further support and nurture the wellbeing of our community.

We actively seek feedback from colleagues to inform decision making, identifying what is important to continue creating a positive, sustainable environment that supports the success of every member of our community.



Image: Blake Ballard, *Underneath the Antimacassar* (Master of Fine Art, 2024)

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS