SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO PARTICIPATES IN THE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABILITY FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES OF ART AND DESIGN

Hosted by Pratt Institute; Leaders Explore Future of Design Ed. Through Collaboration

Chicago, September 25, 2012—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) along with 35 independent colleges of art and design from across North America, take part in the Pratt Academic Leadership Summit on Sustainability (PALSS) September 25 through September 29, 2012 on the SAIC Campus. The event, which aims to help colleges work collectively to build a strategic plan for integrating environmental sustainability education into art and design programs, focuses on three themes—the future of design education, curricula for a new generation of artists and designers, and strategies for organizational change.

Summit fellows have been appointed by the presidents of their institutions to participate in a collaborative effort that will link the resources of independent art and design colleges around critical environmental and social issues. Fellows will work together to share resources, offer insights, and present case studies that will develop knowledge, leadership skills, and build strategies for integrating sustainable design into academic practices. The group will also consider academic sustainability and the strain on academic institutions to keep pace in a world that is built on immediacy and access. Each theme will be shaped and challenged through a series of interactive presentations, peer-to-peer conversations, and themed work sessions.

The purpose of the summit is to provide PALSS fellows with the tools and strategies they need to integrate sustainability into their programs and set the stage for art and design education for the class of 2030. The fellows will then become members of the PALSS Cohort—an ongoing network that will meet monthly via web conference to continue the dialogue regarding the sustainability of art and design education at independent colleges of art and design. In June 2011, the cohort published a report that incorporated standards as well as broader issues related to the sustainability of higher education. A key outcome of the publication serves as a model for collaboration that can be replicated by other academic institutions and organizations that benefit from collaboration across traditional institutional boundaries.

“Right now each institution is working on its own and we’re losing valuable time,” said Debera Johnson, Director of PALSS, who leads Pratt’s Center for Sustainable Design Studies as Director of Sustainability. “To ensure a future for art and design education in the new millennia, we need to move forward from a model of competition to one of collaboration and shared resources. The aim of the PALSS summit is to encourage the integration of sustainability into our programs collectively so we can advance the academic dialogue to the next level.”

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The summit is partially funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) Grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the Association of Independent Colleges Art and Design (AICAD).

Participants include the following colleges of art and design:

Alberta College of Art + Design
Art Academy of Cincinnati
Art Center College of Design
Art Institute of Boston
California College of Arts
California Institute of the Arts
Cleveland Institute of Art
College for Creative Studies
Columbus College of Art & Design
Corcoran College of Art + Design
Cornish College of the Arts
Emily Carr University of Art + Design
Kansas City Art Institute
Laguna College of Art and Design
Lyman Academy College of Fine Arts
Maryland Institute College of Art
Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Memphis College of Art and Design
Minneapolis College of Art and Design
Montserrat College of Art
Moore College of Art & Design
Nova Scotia College of Art & Design
Ontario College of Art & Design
Oregon College of Art & Craft
Otis College of Art and Design
Pacific Northwest College of Art
Parsons The New School for Design
Pratt Institute
Rhode Island School of Design
Ringling College of Art and Design
San Francisco Art Institute
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
School of Visual Arts
University of the Arts

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About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate and graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. SAIC also enables adults, high school students, middle school students, and children to flourish in a variety of courses, workshops, certificate programs, and camps through its Continuing Studies program. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.
About Pratt Institute:
Founded in 1887, Pratt Institute is one of the largest and most prestigious independent colleges of art and design in the United States, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the schools of architecture, art and design, information and library science, and liberal arts and sciences. Pratt is located on 25 landscaped acres in the Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn and has a Manhattan campus in a renovated eight-story building on West 14th Street.

About AICAD:
AICAD is a non-profit consortium of 40 leading art schools in North America. It was founded in 1991 by a group of 25 college presidents who felt a need for the similarly structured art schools to come together so as to mutually develop their schools and programs. AICAD’s mission is to help strengthen the member colleges individually and collectively, and to inform the public about these colleges and the value of studying art and design.