

FRANCES CORNER

Professor Frances Corner OBE works at the intersection of education, culture, and civic life, helping institutions navigate their futures with creativity and purpose. Driven by a conviction that creativity and values are powerful forces as to how we learn, lead, and live, she places education at the heart of a more equitable, sustainable future.

As the first woman to serve as Vice-Chancellor of Goldsmiths, University of London, and formerly as Head of London College of Fashion, she has led organisations through for example Covid, but also developing new initiatives such as the Centre for Sustainable Fashion and establishing Goldsmiths' Migrant Futures Institute, as well as developing new, values-led models of philanthropy and partnership.

Across more than three decades in higher education, her focus has been on connecting creative practice with social purpose, ensuring that universities and cultural institutions serve their communities and respond imaginatively to the challenges of our times.

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NON-EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

With extensive experience of both executive and non-executive positions means Frances has detailed understanding of governance, its development, processes coupled with how to carefully balance the requirements of a board with those of the executive. Frances' range of non-executive positions has enabled the development of a range of strategic experiences and oversight of commercial, operational and fundraising aspects

2022–PRESENT MAUDSLEY CHARITY

Frances is Chair of Trustees of Maudsley Charity a mental health charity that funds significant research and projects into young people's mental health and psychosis.

The key areas of oversight:

- The endowment of over £165 million
- Dispersal of £ 20million over 10 years centred on the two key areas of research and focus on mental health
- Strengthening mental health knowledge and support across South London notably through key links with SLaM, South London boroughs, King College
- Supporting the Director and Senior Team

2023–PRESENT APPG Council member on Higher Education

2023–PRESENT CREATIVE UK Council member

- Contributing to policy on future of Higher Education.

2024–PRESENT LAMDA

Frances was recently appointed a trustee to LAMDA a performing arts institution the longest established drama school in UK, LAMDA is a world- leading, specialist conservatoire, based in the heart of London. Key aspect:

- To proactively support the on-going development of LAMDA, whilst ensuring that the organisation meets its charitable objectives.

2025–PRESENT UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE Advisory Board member Centre for Systemic Change

PREVIOUS NON-EXECUTIVE ROLES

2020–25 UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Frances was a Trustee of University of London is the UK'S leading provider of digital and blended distance learning and a federation of 17 leading London based Higher Education institutions. Frances contributes in a number of ways:

- As a member of REMCO committee
- Panel member for appointment of a new Chair
- A panel member reviewing new members of the University Federation
- Developing projects around shared services and LLL.

2020–25 LONDON HIGHER

Frances was a Trustee of London Higher a membership organisation for universities and higher education colleges across London and represents the full diversity of HE education across the capital. As such Frances is:

- A member of REMCO.
- Represents the interests of Access HE to the Board.
- Until 2023 Executive Chair of the London Higher Sustainability Network.

2023–25 ACCESS HE

Frances was Chair of the AccessHE Steering Group which is focused on improving social mobility and access to Higher Education for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Key aspects include:

- To support the strategy and focus for London aspect of UniConnect
- To keep oversight of the activities and communication
- To support relationships with a range of NGOs, HEI, FEI and bodies such as GLA and OfS to support widening access of pupils from disadvantaged groups.

2019–25 UNIVERSITIES UK

Contributed project work on quality, the environment and how the Higher Education sector addresses racism, identity, and provision across sector for vulnerable subjects.

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- 2020–23 ADVANCE HE**
Trustee of this professional membership scheme promoting excellence in Higher education to improve higher education for staff, students, and society.
- 2018–22 CENTREPOINT**
Trustee and member of the Resources Committee for the UK's leading youth homelessness charity which alongside its partners supports over 16,000 young people every year.
- 2017–19 GLOBAL DISABILITY INNOVATION HUB**
Trustee of this partnership of UCLF, LCF/UAL, I-LDC and Loughborough University based at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- 2017–19 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER FOR V&A RESEARCH INSTITUTE**
- 2015–19 HOUSE OF ILLUSTRATION**
Chair a new London gallery dedicated to all aspects of illustration. This included developing a new financial model and identifying new location.
- 2012–16 INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION for FASHION & TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTES**
Chair of this global federation of 54 fashion and technology institutes
- 2011–19 BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL**
Member Advisory Board member
- 2009–15 WALLACE COLLECTION**
Appointed as Trustee and Chair of the Audit Committee two terms.
A Ministerial appointment, Frances was on the panel for the appointment of a new Director.

EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE

- 2019–25 GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**
Professor Frances Corner OBE has been Vice Chancellor of Goldsmiths, University of London since 2019 a university specialising in arts, humanities, and social sciences. It has a turnover of £135 million, 7,800 students, 1,500 staff and a single campus based in South London.
- The accountable officer and academic and administrative lead (the first woman to assume this role since Goldsmiths was founded in 1895).
 - Responsible for strategy, governance, legal and fiduciary duties.
 - Managed and delivered two major change programmes addressing financial planning and curriculum development.
 - Developed new strategy for period 2023–2033.
 - A strong team builder and implementer of organisational change balancing internal and external pressures.
 - Developing Goldsmiths as an anchor institution in South London including 11 diverse partner organisations as part of an innovative collaborative Civic University Agreement.
 - Ensures equality, diversity, and inclusion plays a central role in developing Goldsmiths and that Goldsmiths' future is as an anti-racist organisation.
 - Developing innovative approaches to fundraising and profile raising including the creation of a new endowment and securing over £10million for the establishment of the Migrant Futures Institute.
 - Involved with appointment of new Chair to Goldsmiths' Council.
 - Contributes to debates and policy about the future direction of arts, humanities and social sciences in the HE sector with the DfE, DCMS, DEIS, UUK and OfS including as advisory member for the UUK Blueprint (report Chapter 7).
 - Led and sponsored a HEPI publication on new approaches to business models for the sector.
- 2005–19 UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON**
As Head of London College of Fashion and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Digital of University of the Arts London, Frances brought about transformational change by repositioning the college as global leader in sustainability, fashion research and education in all aspects of the fashion industry.
- Transformed the course offering at UG and PGT level.
 - Increased income from 30–70 million,
 - Strategized the move from 6 sites across London to 1 site on Olympic Park including the new building design.

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- Developed a range of partnerships to place LCF as anchor institution in East London via creation Fashion District to promote fashion businesses and industries in East London in partnership with GLA, boroughs and partner organisations.
- Created the Centre for Sustainable Fashion, the Centre for Fashion Curation and a series of projects for women offenders and communities.
- Developed the University's approach to digital development.

2001–05

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

As Head of Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media, and Design at London Metropolitan University Frances merged two departments in a merging university and gained significant experience in delivering organisational change.

1994–2001

UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

1994–2001 Associate Dean (Academic and Research) Faculty Arts and Humanities prior to that Head of Department of Arts University of Gloucestershire.

EXTERNAL RECOGNITION

	Frances has been recognised for her contribution to academic developments, partnership and community enhancements and creative industries:
2026	Awarded Emeritus Professorship Goldsmiths University of London
2024	Awarded Freedom of City of London
2019	Honorary Fellow Kellogg College University of Oxford
2018	Hon Doctorate University Gloucestershire
2015–18	Named each year as one of Business of Fashion's Global 500 for work on fashion research.
2016–19	Awarded Distinguished Professorship for Fashion Education at Beijing Institute Fashion Technology
2016–18	Named in Evening Standard's Progress 1000 as one of London's most influential 'Trendsetters' for work on fashion education and sustainability.
2015	Awarded Highly Commended Green Gown for Leadership in Sustainability in Higher Education
2015	Awarded Women in Innovation and Enterprise for services to fashion Higher Education
2009	London Leader in Sustainability
2009	Awarded an OBE for services to fashion Higher Education and widening participation in arts education.
2009	Awarded Professorship for leadership in art and design education.
2000	Appointed Fellow of the Royal Society Arts, Commerce and Manufacture

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Frances is a strong communicator and is regularly invited both nationally and internationally to Chair conferences, give keynote addresses and take part in panel discussions where governments, NGOs, educators, and industry are represented. These draw on her expertise in education, and issues such as sustainability, feminism, equality and diversity and the creative industries. Frances is a confident and experienced Chair and has organised and taken part in a panel at the UN on women's education and is often asked to give after dinner speeches. Frances understands importance of advocacy and to that end regularly meets with politicians of all political parties and with the Mayor's Office and his deputies. Over the years Frances has met with MPs, Ministers, Shadow Ministers and members of the House of Lords and has attended and supported various APPGs. In addition, Frances has hosted and represented a range of organisations at numerous fundraising and positioning events including events at the Royal Palaces.

Examples include:

2025	Speaker for the establishment of a Centre for Systemic Change at Homerton College, Cambridge University
2025	Speaker at the UUK Community Cohesion Summit
2024	Key-note at Tsinghua University international conference on art education, paper theme AI and creative education
2024	Panel member for opening plenary session at Chartered Association of Business Schools on impact of Government policy
2023	Panel for Prime Minister's Creative Science and Technology Council
2022	UUK Panel on Diversity in Higher Education
2019	United Nations Headquarters: Panel - The Science for Sustainable Development.
2019	BBC and BFC: Panel - The Importance of Sustainability in Fashion
2019	Government and British Council: roundtable on Brexit and Creative Industries
2018	Sir John Cass's Foundation Keynote Education Lecture: Fashioning Futures. How Fashion Can Impact Social Mobility. Cass Business School City University
2018	Paris Embassy: Panel on Fashion and Sustainability
2016	TEDX Whitehall Fashion Isn't Frivolous'
2016	UN Trust Fund for Abolition of Violence Against Women gala in New York

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PUBLISHING TV AND RADIO

Frances is an experienced writer and broadcaster with writing focused on the social, economic, political, and cultural implications of creative education, this includes the 2014 publication “Why Fashion Matters” for Thames and Hudson which has a Chinese translation. Frances has undertaken editorial work and regularly review publications and book proposals. Frances has been media trained and makes regular TV and radio appearances including Newsnight, Channel 4, BBC London, overseas channels including those in South Korea, China, and France.

EDUCATION

Frances’ doctorate from Oxford University’s Education Department explored the effects on a subject discipline, Fine Art, as the Higher Education sector moves towards a mass system of education. Issues such as accountability, lifelong learning, employability, and skills, widening access, a diverse student body, new methods and modes of delivery were explored in relation to the needs and requirements of the subject and its curriculum content, teaching and learning methods, values, and expectations.

1996–2003	Oxford University D.Phil: During this period Frances received a Research Studentship from Kellogg College
1983–84	Chelsea School of Art: MA Fine Art
1978–81	St. Martins School of Art: BA (Hons)
1977–78	St. Martins School of Art: Foundation Studies