



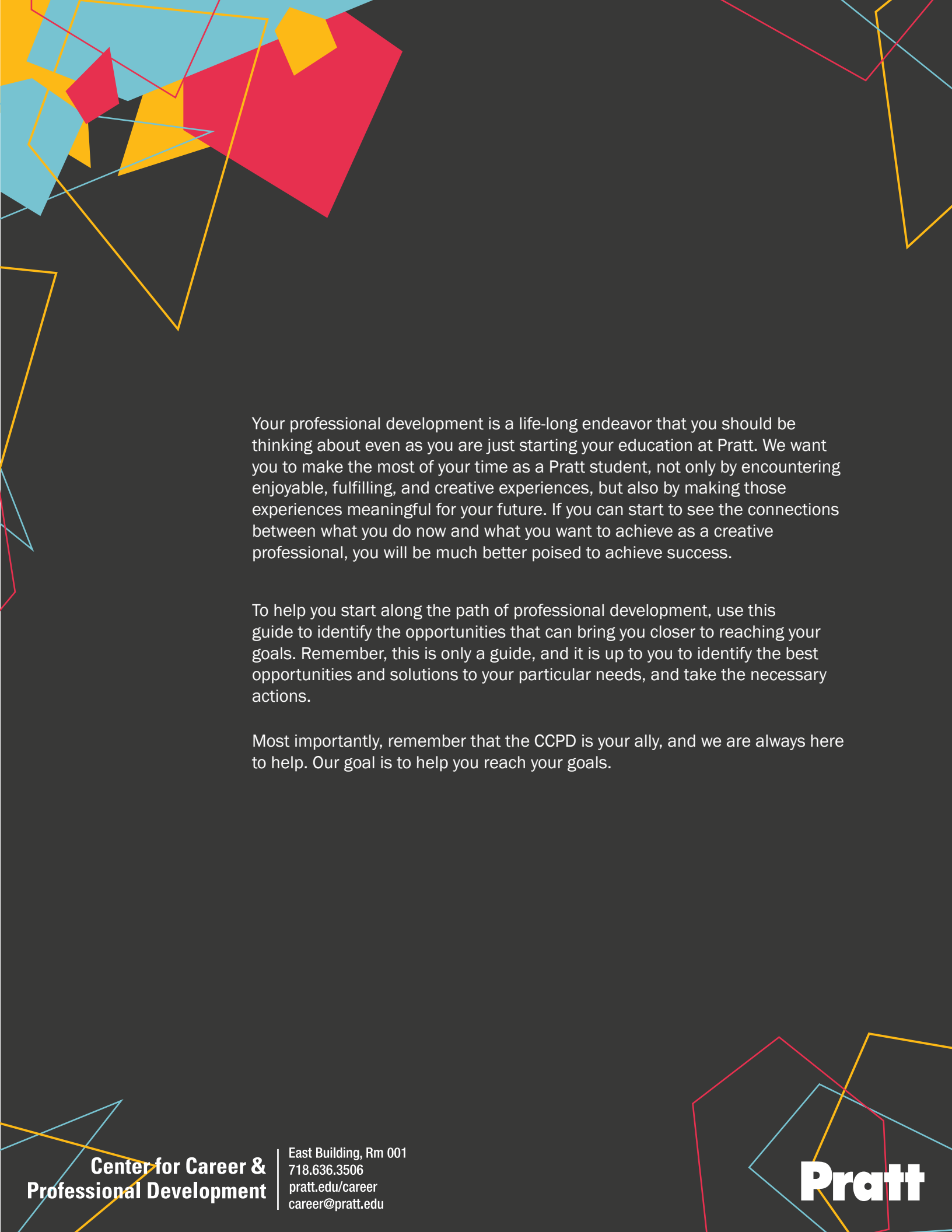
REALITY CHECK

take action towards success

**Center for Career &
Professional Development**

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Pratt



Your professional development is a life-long endeavor that you should be thinking about even as you are just starting your education at Pratt. We want you to make the most of your time as a Pratt student, not only by encountering enjoyable, fulfilling, and creative experiences, but also by making those experiences meaningful for your future. If you can start to see the connections between what you do now and what you want to achieve as a creative professional, you will be much better poised to achieve success.

To help you start along the path of professional development, use this guide to identify the opportunities that can bring you closer to reaching your goals. Remember, this is only a guide, and it is up to you to identify the best opportunities and solutions to your particular needs, and take the necessary actions.

Most importantly, remember that the CCPD is your ally, and we are always here to help. Our goal is to help you reach your goals.

GRADUATE STUDENT REALITY CHECK

◆ THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- What are your career interests?
- What are your expectations of Pratt? Your classes? Your professors?
- Are you well connected to your department? Do you know your Chair, Assistant Chair, Academic Advisor and Career Counselor?
- What special programs are offered by your department?
- Are you up to date on trends in your field? Do you follow blogs, trade journals, news articles, or other media?
- What is your online presence?
- Do you have a personal and professional development plan?

◆ ACTIONS TO TAKE:

- Frame your goals, identify your interests, and strategize your career path.
- Join professional organizations. Most professional organizations offer discounted student membership rates and offer events, information and opportunities to gain experience.
- Document your work and build your portfolio.
- Expand your social media presence, build out your LinkedIn profile and who you follow on twitter.
- Learn from the current trends and apply them to your professional development.
- Attend networking events with alumni and industry hosted by CCPD.
- Talk to faculty about their career paths and collect advice. Learn to be a generous listener.
- Meet with your career counselor to discuss strategies for entrepreneurship, employment and exhibition submissions.
- Make an action plan based on your goals, and ask for help as needed.
- Become an excellent researcher and presenter.

- Practice your pitch, draft proposals, and hone your communication style.
- Learn financial literacy, basic business skills, and don't be afraid to fail or succeed.
- Join a network. Be part of a community.

◆ SKILLS TO GAIN:

- Communication.** Learn to build dialogues, ask questions and how to present your ideas.
- Social media.** Think about how your social media demonstrates your interests, talents, and point of view.
- Cultivate mentors.** Conduct information interviews with professionals in your field and keep in touch with faculty even if you aren't taking their courses anymore.
- Work/Life balance.** Be sure you are taking care of your needs by getting plenty of rest, eating well, and exercising.
- Networking.** It's all about who you know. If you don't feel you have a strong network, join professional organizations, do information interviews, and spend time getting to know your faculty members and/or supervisors.

SKILL CHECKLIST

- Communication.** Learn to build dialogues, ask questions and how to present your ideas.
- Courage.** Think about risks you'll need to take and prepare yourself to be bold.
- Cultivate mentors.** Conduct information interviews with professionals in your field and keep in touch with faculty even if you aren't taking their courses anymore.
- Elevator pitch.** Think about how to make the best first impression and marketing yourself at a moment's notice.
- Focus.** Think about how your projects begin to tell your story and be intentional in the way you complete class projects and assignments.
- Interviewing.** Learn how to land the job by being confident and knowledgeable in front of an interviewer.
- Job searching.** Learn how to be thorough when researching opportunities.
- Manage your connections.** Keep track of who you meet. This will be the beginning of your network.
- Negotiating.** Start researching salaries and thinking about your financial responsibilities. It's good to know what you need, what's likely to be offered, and how to earn extra to make ends meet.
- Peer networking.** Learn who is in leadership positions on campus, talk to your fellow classmates, and start building strong connections with your peers.
- Presentation.** Seek out opportunities to present your work or research. Use each opportunity as a way of getting feedback from your audience.
- Prioritize.** Organize yourself by keeping a calendar of classes, meetings, events, and other obligations. Make sure you take time for yourself, too!
- Research.** Look into your potential career options and the fields that interest you.
- Resume writing.** Keep a list of all your skills, experience, education, leadership positions, volunteer positions, research, and projects.
- Self-Discovery.** Explore who you are to gain insight on what creative and professional pursuits you want to discover.
- Social media.** Think about how your social media demonstrates your interests, talents, and point of view.
- Work/Life balance.** Be sure you are taking care of your needs by getting plenty of rest, eating well, and exercising.
- Writing a cover letter.** Learn how to write a letter that markets your skills and meets potential employers' requirements.
- Documentation.** Make sure you keep excellent documentation of all your work.
- Networking.** It's all about who you know. If you don't feel you have a strong network, join professional organizations, do information interviews, and spend time getting to know your faculty members and/or supervisors.



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