

[Giana Eckhardt](#)

Professor of Marketing

What attracted you to become an academic in your research field?

I have always been fascinated with why and how people use brands to set themselves apart from others or to make a social statement. All human cultures have hierarchies within them; why are brands and consumption the basis upon which they are formed in contemporary society? I worked in advertising before going back to school to get my PhD, which gave me a great insight into these fascinating issues, but I wanted to examine them more in depth. I did my PhD research in China, when global brands were just entering the country. After that I was hooked!

What attracted you to work at Royal Holloway?

The marketing group at Royal Holloway is one of the best in the world. Almost all of us take an anthropological/sociological view towards understanding the role of consumption and brands in society. The opportunity to work with such amazing colleagues was one I could not pass up. Also, I specialize in teaching MBA students, and the MBA program at Royal Holloway is especially diverse, with students coming from all over the world, which lends itself to a great classroom experience for my course, Global Branding.

What piece of advice would you give your younger self?

Travelling and experiencing other cultures, histories, landscapes and especially food is my passion. I would advise my younger self to say yes to all opportunities to travel to offbeat locations. Some of my favourite memories are teaching MBA students in China, presenting my consumer ethics research at the UN, and kayaking to hidden waterfalls