UCL East: world class, outward-looking, progressive, creative, transformational, inclusive and... quirky”

Professor Paola Lettieri
The world is speeding up. But UCL is ready. Our new campus, UCL East, will enable our academics to think disruptively about what a university can, and should be.

"WE ARE BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS BETWEEN RESEARCH AND TEACHING, ACADEMIA AND ENTERPRISE, FACULTY AND PUBLIC"

Professor Paola Lettieri, Academic Director of UCL East
a large physical space to work on innovations in areas such as transport and advanced manufacturing. Professor Lettieri is also excited about the new ways UCL East will interact with its location and the connections it will create through its four tenets: making, connecting, originating and living.

“The Institute of Making will be able to expand on a big scale,” she says. “It will provide a domestic workshop for the local community as well as for students. People can bring in their own projects – whether personal or entrepreneurial – and get access to the knowledge of academics, through professional workshops and just by using the space. It will be true learning by doing.

“We’ll also be making connections, with an open and inviting approach to research and learning. The library, for example, will have seats for the public who will be able to access the university’s collections and research.”

The campus will also enable UCL to deliver on a global level when it comes to innovation and enterprise. “The ‘originating’ part of our mission means strengthening the link between innovation and commerce. The new campus will provide incubators for research and help translate them into economic benefit both locally, nationally and globally.”

Integration into student life
But perhaps what makes this campus truly unique is the ‘living’ strand of the project, which has resulted in a complete integration into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. “The park will be integrated into the student experience,” says Professor Lettieri. “It will be a living laboratory where we can acquire data on water and road usage, for example; study people and their environment; study wildlife … involving students of environmental engineering, bioscience, anthropology and urban living.”

Physically, the campus will comprise two main sites, either side of the river: Pool Street, containing student accommodation and teaching facilities, and Marshgate, with teaching, research and public facilities – what Professor Lettieri calls a ‘fluid building’. “Academics, infrastructure experts and architects are working together to imagine how we can make it open and attractive and totally accessible (except for places like the imaging centre, which will need to have controlled access for safety reasons!). It won’t be a series of floors like a traditional building but perhaps will have more than one ground-floor space and then take you up to different levels.”

The campus itself will link into Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Cultural and Education Quarter, the educational and cultural quarter of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, with the V&A, University of the Arts and Sadler’s Wells all set to have sites next door. “We are discussing with the V&A how we can create a new programme together, perhaps around object-based learning,” says Professor Lettieri. “With the University of the Arts, some activities can easily link, and the performance side, for example, is very exciting.”

The government has provided funding of £100 million for UCL East because of its link to the wider regeneration of the area. In a tangible, physical way the new campus will invite the public in. And through public access to research, links to local schools and provision of foundation courses, UCL East will help shape London intellectually today – and for the next generation.

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UCL East is a new campus for UCL in East London

UCL East has already attracted £100 million in government funding and philanthropy is now playing a critical role in helping UCL build a presence in East London, such as the Centre for Access to Justice and the Institute of Global Prosperity.

Philanthropy has enabled UCL to partner within the community, adding value and shaping new ways of thinking with innovative and creative outreach. It will continue to do so, because building a new campus with activity and programmes on this scale can only be done in collaboration with partnership and philanthropy at its core.

Thank you for partnering with UCL to achieve great things. To talk more about how your philanthropic support can transform our shared ambitions into impact, contact Lori Houlihan Vice-Provost (Development) on 020 3108 3801 or lori.houlihan@ucl.ac.uk

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