



Buildings Naming and Renaming Committee

Request for naming

Proposal

Please set out details of the room / building / equipment or other entity that you wish to propose a name / for, and indicate additionally whether

- a) this is a naming proposal associated with a philanthropic donation
- b) you are proposing to name a building or other entity in honour of a deceased staff member or student

This is not a philanthropic donation.

I am proposing to name the centre after a deceased former student.

I propose that we name UCL's new multi-disciplinary centre for the study of race and racism after Sarah Parker Remond (1826-1894). She meets the circulated criteria under which UCL honours individuals for their exceptional achievements, and I have no doubt that her image and example will inspire those who use the Centre's facilities and contribute to its mission.

Remond was a free-born African American radical, suffragist, anti-slavery activist and later, a physician. She moved to England in 1859 and, as a notable and effective abolitionist campaigner, was the first woman to lecture publicly against slavery in this country. Eventually, she settled in London's Holland Park where she became active in a range of radical social movements.

Remond studied languages and liberal arts at Bedford College before changing direction sharply and enrolling at London University College from where she graduated as a nurse in 1865. She relocated to Italy in 1866 and completed her training as a doctor of medicine in Florence at the Santa Maria Nuova hospital school in 1871. Remond married an Italian and practiced medicine in Rome for the duration of her life.

Rationale

Please present a short case for the proposed change, including evidence where possible. This should set out the arguments in support of the change, specifically addressing:

- * how the principal legacy of the namesake resonates with the mission, values and goals of UCL;
- * whether there are issues relating to the broader context and balance of existing space and building names across the estate (e.g. under-representation of particular groups)

If you are proposing that a room / building (etc.) should be named after an individual or group of individuals, please provide a short biography of the individual(s) as an appendix.

Naming the centre for the multidisciplinary study of racism after Sarah Parker Remond will assist in the process of projecting a much more "diverse" image of the history of UCL as an institution. Her life story and achievements certainly resonate with our current mission, values and goals. Her name and example can contribute to enhancing the brand and values of UCL and in particular to emphasizing UCL's commitments to diversity and inclusion. Remond's life is a notable part of the history of three different countries. First, her

birthplace, second, Britain the place of her antislavery and abolitionist work, and third, Italy where she acquired and practiced her profession.

Remond is particularly suitable for this form of commemoration because she was not only a dynamic political voice against racial hierarchy and gender inequality but also a woman of science and medicine. Her life reveals an interesting history of the ways in which the pursuit of civil and political rights and citizenship by black people have been connected to the acquisition of rights and recognition by women.

As we seek to develop a new curriculum and a locally inflected outlook on race and racism which does more than merely recycle influential perspectives arising from US culture and history, it is also thought-provoking that Remond turned away from her New England origins in the aftermath of the American civil war and made a new life in Europe as a physician. She never returned to the USA.

This important gesture will assist the initiative with its own branding and recognition in several different locations. This choice supports UCL's strategic vision, not only by accentuating questions of diversity and inclusiveness but by suggesting that political and social commitment is far from incompatible with a rewarding professional contribution in the fields of science and medicine.

Consultation and support

Please indicate whether and how you have consulted with the wider community and the results of that consultation.

The possibility of the new centre bearing Remond's name has already been widely circulated, canvassed and discussed with numerous local stakeholders and partners who have received the proposal with enthusiasm. The centre's advisory board considered the matter at its initial meeting on December 6th.

Academic expertise

Please indicate scholars with whom the committee can consult on the proposal and its implications. Please also set out any research or scholarly work that has been undertaken to inform this proposal (attached as an appendix)

Remond's biography has been explored by numerous historians of the Antislavery movement. The most recent biography was written by the Finnish historian Sirpa Salenius and published as *An Abolitionist Abroad: Sarah Parker Remond in Cosmopolitan Europe* University of Massachusetts Press, (2016). This text is already being used for teaching in UCL and can be easily accessed through the e-library.

Support of Faculty Dean / Director of Estates Strategy

For proposals relating to buildings associated with a faculty or faculties, please confirm that you have the support of the Faculty Dean(s)

For proposals relating to central estates buildings and rooms, please confirm that you have the support of the Director of Estates Strategy

This does not apply to this particular proposal.



*Sarah Parker Remond, undated photograph. Portrait Photograph Collection.
Courtesy Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass.*