



# UCL

# 200

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2026

## **UCL200 Artist in Residence UCL East Brief**

### **About UCL200**

2026 is the year in which we mark 200 years since UCL's establishment as the first University in London. The ambition of the bicentenary is to celebrate and reinforce UCL's founding values, to highlight the excellence and impact of UCL's groundbreaking work, and to present an ambitious and inspiring portrait of our future. As well as reflecting on our past, we will use the bicentenary year to frame the future, to position ourselves as a forward-facing university and to convey the type of organisation we will become during our third century.

We are planning an entire year of bicentennial activity, with planned exhibitions, artist-in-residency programmes, new publications and an incredibly rich programme of engagement for both our internal and external community, including new extended learning offers for our students. A programme for UCL200 Public Art will be a key output for the bicentennial year. and the UCL200 celebrations offer us, the UCL community, a unique opportunity to invite artists to work with our diverse community from academic staff, students, professional service teams at the university and our vitally important local neighbours. The intention is to re-visit our history and consider our future in the run up to and through the celebration year with a view to creating artworks that reflect the legacy of the University for the next 200 years.

Through the UCL200 Public Art programme we will appoint an artist to deliver a permanent Legacy artwork for one of UCL's campuses signposting the vision for the future whilst three artists in residence will explore, celebrate, and challenge the culture of the institution at this important moment in its history. These artists will be appointed with three key areas of focus: UCL's Student Community in partnership with UCL Students', UCL's East campus and UCL's historic Bloomsbury campus.

### **UCL East Artist in Residence (AiR)**

The artist in residence at the UCL East campus will embed themselves within UCL's east London campus which opened in September 2023 on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, in the heart of the UK's newest culture and innovation quarter, East Bank, which brings students together with world experts in sciences, arts, and humanities to explore solutions to key challenges facing the planet. The new east London campus's focus is on interdisciplinarity across undergraduate and graduate degree programmes and research.

This focus on interdisciplinary learning offers knowledge and practical skills that go well beyond a single subject area, taught in groundbreaking UCL research centres in the heart of the UK's newest culture and innovation quarter, East Bank.

UCL East is a direct response to the biggest challenges facing people and the planet. It has been designed to accelerate breakthroughs in areas including sustainable cities, green manufacturing, decarbonised

transport, fair finance, robotics and AI, ecology, assistive technology, and global health. Every aspect of research and teaching on the campus sees different disciplines working together in shared laboratories and studios, setting aside traditional university structures and breaking down boundaries between academic disciplines. We hope that this residency will share this core value of interdisciplinary thinking, making, and doing with UCL East's student, staff and research communities and our neighbours and local communities in the boroughs of Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest.

This residency is being developed and supported by the Public Art, Community & Cultural Engagement team at the UCL East Campus. A commitment to working with east London communities and artists sits at the heart of our approach.

The artist will use the residency to embed, learn and collaborate with a view to creating (or co-creating) an artwork or intervention which demonstrates UCL East's core values, and its commitment to interconnectedness going well beyond our academic communities. Exemplifying UCL's ambition for a porous relationship between institution and community; operating both as an academic community and a civic space.

We are interested in how an artist can explore or problematise this ambition, how do we centre and facilitate porosity, dissolving the institutional threshold and blurring the physical and conceptual boundaries of an institution and its surrounding communities? Crucial to the residency is the artist's ability to engage with a broad cross section of internal and external communities and reflect this in the work produced. Centring voices and demonstrating the value of dialogue and interconnectedness.

The brief for what and how this work might manifest is being left intentionally open, allowing the appointed artist to learn from and be steered by the communities they come in to contact with. Expressions of interests are welcome from artists of all disciplines, but with a particular focus on socially engaged and place led practices.

### **Scope of Work**

The residency will run for 9 months, preceded by a 3-month planning period.

#### ***Planning Period (Oct 2025 – Jan 2026)***

Once appointed, the artist will begin an ad-hoc planning phase to collaborate with the Public Art team and prepare for the residency. This will include:

- Meetings with key UCL representatives
- Identifying access needs to sites, groups or individuals
- Developing a framework for engagement

#### ***Residency (Feb – June 2026)***

During the residency:

- The artist will deeply engage with UCL's internal and external communities, and histories
- This phase encourages consultation, experimentation, and exploration
- Artists may host events, discussions, or workshops to support research and idea development

#### ***Realisation (July – Sept 2026)***

The final 3 months are dedicated to developing and delivering the outcome of the residency—culminating in a public sharing moment as part of UCL's bicentennial celebrations in September 2026. This could take the form of a launch, unveiling, performance, or other suitable format.

Regular check-ins with the Public Art Producer will ensure continued support and progress throughout the project.

**The artist should:**

- Have a prolonged and embedded engagement with UCL's East Campus Communities – both internal, and external
- Have a particular focus on socially engaged and place led practices.
- Live or have lived in east London or have a connection to it.
- Document and capture their research processes
- Develop an outcome which will be developed for presentation at the end of the residency which reflects this meaningful engagement.

**Offer**

- A fee of £12,000
- Artwork Budget of £3000, managed by UCL Cultural and Community Engagement team
- A staff card enabling access to all UCL campuses and its libraries.
- The support of UCL's Cultural and Community Engagement team who will work proactively with you to engage the local community in the development of your residency work.
- Production and Curatorial Assistance in the realisation of the work developed.

**Timeline**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Oct 2025 – Jan 2026	Planning Phase
Feb – June 2026	Residency Period
July – Sept 2026	Artwork Development and Realisation
Sept 2026	Public Sharing / Celebration / Exhibition

We will be holding an information session for each residency on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June, **to book on to a session please [click here](#)**.

**Background UCL East Campus on the QEOP**

**Visit** [UCL East](#) to find out more about life on the campus and the programmes offered at UCL East.

**References**

- [UCL Bicentenary \(UCL200\)](#)
- [UCL East: Public Art & Art on Campus](#)
- [East Bank](#)
- [Connect & Collaborate](#)
- [Here East](#)