



# UCL



## UCL East Engagement

---

2020/21

# Welcome

## Welcome to UCL East's Engagement Report 2020/21.

Welcome to this look back at the work UCL has been doing with local communities in east London over the last year, ahead of the opening of our new campus in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

I am pleased to say that, despite the pandemic, we will be ready to welcome the public, students and staff into the first of our UCL East buildings in the autumn of 2022. Local communities will be central to the activity in our One Pool Street building as we bring together the public, scientists, students, business and industry to create knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of tomorrow's world. On topics ranging from robotics and AI to health, urbanisation, disability and sustainability, we will be inviting people from east London to collaborate with us.

This report gives you a brief snapshot of just some of the many ways we have begun to do that, working with local community organisations and putting culture, art and history at the heart of this activity too.

I look forward to welcoming you to UCL East to see its transformative potential first-hand. Whether you're helping shape our research and innovation, joining in our learning activities or enjoying a coffee and the work of local artists in our public spaces, I hope UCL East will be a destination you return to often to pursue your passions and goals.

Best wishes




---

**Professor Paola Lettieri FEng**  
 Director, UCL East  
 Professor of Chemical Engineering  
 University College London



As an east Londoner, Olympian and former UCL student, I'm proud to see my university's new campus nearing completion in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

In any neighbourhood, the spaces open to you and the facilities available to you help to shape you, from childhood through to later life. Which is why UCL East has been designed to welcome in the public all year round and involve local communities throughout its work - from collaborations with local businesses, schools and organisations, to the public art by local artists that it has supported for everyone visiting the Park to enjoy.

This report illustrates how UCL is already listening to and working with its new neighbours. I hope you will enjoy learning a little more about the impact so far. I'm excited to think how much more can be achieved in future by combining UCL's world leading research and innovation with the creativity, interests, aspirations and needs of local people in east London.




---

**Christine Ohuruogu MBE**  
 UCL Council member



# UCL East

UCL is London's Global University, engaged with the wider world and committed to changing it for the better. Driven by disruptive and critical thinking, UCL brings together education, research and enterprise for the long-term benefit of London and the globe.

UCL East is UCL's new campus at East Bank, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's cultural and education district. We and UAL's London College of Fashion are joining global cultural brands the BBC, Sadler's Wells and the V&A to create this powerhouse for innovation, creativity and learning in east London. East Bank will attract an additional 1.5 million visitors per year, create 2,500 jobs and generate an estimated £1.5 billion for the local economy.

We are building a new model of how a university campus can be embedded within its locality. Our work to engage with local communities is well under way, as illustrated in this report. Similarly, our UCL East campus will be welcoming, accessible and open to all through collaboration and co-creation.

Our first new building, One Pool Street, opens in autumn 2022, followed by our Marshgate building the following academic year. Once fully up and running, our new campus will see up to 4,000 students and 260 academic staff living, learning, and working at UCL East.

It will be home to brand new postgraduate and undergraduate degrees, responding to the challenges the world faces now and in the future. Disciplines will vary from robotics, artificial intelligence, urbanism, and engineering to the world's first business school dedicated to improving global health. Our new School of Creative and Cultural Industries combines collaboration, creativity and practical skills in areas like media, heritage, art, and technology.

UCL East will support businesses and enterprises too. In the 2019/20 academic year, UCL start-ups attracted £44m of external investment and employed more than 1,600 people. In addition, 64 new UCL graduate start-ups were formed during 2020/21. Since 2014 a total of 258 start-ups in business have collectively raised over £149 million in investments.

[UCL East](#)

[East Bank](#)



# Responding to east London

As Covid-19 took hold, our engagement teams wanted to know what the biggest concerns of east Londoners were, and how we could work with local communities to help.

UCL's new campus is all about breaking down boundaries between knowledge and experience to solve some of the most urgent challenges affecting people and the planet. Just as teams of UCL researchers worked on the global response to the pandemic, UCL East teams focused locally, and matched our resources to the needs of our neighbours.

This report gives examples of those partnerships and their impact, and shows how we found new, flexible ways to deliver projects in the Olympic boroughs despite Covid-19.

UCL East's engagement teams and local communities identified the following priority areas for action on challenges faced by east Londoners during 2020/21:

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

**RECREATION AND OUTDOOR SPACES**

**EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

**ART AND CREATIVITY**

**ADVICE AND SUPPORT**



*Images opposite from top:  
Aerial view of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounds,  
credit © Jason Hawkes  
Workshop, credit Matt Clayton for UCL  
STEM skills workshop, credit UCL Engineering*

*Images this page from top:  
Rubben Webb, Trellis project co-creator, credit Ollie Harrop  
In the garden, credit Ondre Roach  
Engineering Tutoring Programme, credit UCL Engineering  
Get Together participants, credit LLDC*



# Health and wellbeing

**Social connections are crucial for our health and well-being, especially during times of high uncertainty and distress. We collaborated with local partners to better understand the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of our local communities and explore the role social connections play in building resilience.**

East London has many self-employed and sole-trader artists and craftworkers whose work was particularly disrupted by the pandemic. Academics from the IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, worked with artists from Hackney on a research project [Solo – Surviving or Thriving](#), to understand how they have been adapting their work, and the specific changes and innovations they have made in response to the crisis. Findings were shared in a [video](#) and podcasts to highlight the psychological impact of the pandemic on artistic communities. These are valuable resources, giving an insight into artists' coping mechanisms during the pandemic.

Researchers from UCL Psychology and Language Sciences co-designed a series of online sessions with east London artists, asking young people about their experiences of loneliness during the pandemic. [Connecting Spaces](#) invited participants to reflect on how and why different environments could increase the sense of loneliness. This study built an understanding of how spaces affect young people and their relationship with their local neighbourhood.

“

**Sometimes within the scientific community, approaches are very systematic but through this project, I learned to appreciate the value and importance of a more creative way of looking at a project.**

---

**Sam Fardghassemi**  
UCL Psychology PhD student

An interactive, online community map for parents of children under five years old was developed by UCL's Department of Geography with [Mapping for Change](#) and local families in the borough of Tower Hamlets. The [community map](#) became a resource for families with young children during Covid-19, focusing on child health, particularly in difficult or complex situations.

UCL's Institute of Epidemiology and Health worked in partnership with an east London photographer during the pandemic to explore the under-representation of ethnic minority communities in health research.

The seed grant funded [Diverse Voices](#) project invited minority community groups to share skills in visual storytelling to create new tools for self-advocacy and representation. This storytelling performed a dual role as both a form of creative expression and a way to document lived experiences.

Health and wellbeing in our cities is central to UCL research and our new Global Business School for Health will be based at UCL East. The opening of our new campus will see many more opportunities for research collaborations to improve health outcomes in east London and the wider world.

## CASE STUDY

### Newham Youth Map

#### Main project partners:

UCL The Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis - Dr Leah Lovett and Dr Duncan Hay

Young people - Irshad, Youssef, Mariana, Tekai, Kanye, and Bisi

One Newham

Newham Youth Empowerment - Tom Bayley

**Location:** Newham



As the pandemic developed, concerns emerged about how isolated and disconnected young people in Newham were feeling. Our Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis worked with local young people and youth providers to find a solution by creating the Newham Youth Map.

Young people from HeadStart and Fight for Peace, brought together by the One Newham community partnership, learnt about the history of mapping and different methods to make maps. They also collaborated with researchers from UCL's Connected Environments team to develop the Newham Youth Map. The map was built using the [Memory Mapper Toolkit](#), an open-source web application developed by UCL.

The project was delivered through eight online workshops over four months. Six participating young people researched, organised and populated the map to show what was available for young people across the borough and went on to deliver a training session to 30 Newham Council staff and connected youth services, enabling the Council to use the map as a local resource.

[Find out more](#)

“

We tried to incorporate everyone's local knowledge into our map to make it as diverse and interesting and jam-packed with information as possible.

**Youssef**

Co-creator of the Newham Youth Map

“

There's stuff around the corner from my house that I never even knew was there! That's why the map's a great resource.

**Tekai**

Co-creator of the Newham Youth Map

“

Lack of opportunity can often come from a lack of knowledge of what might be available to you... Initiatives such as this can go a long way to increasing accessibility for young people in Newham.

**Tom Bayley**

Senior Youth Worker  
Youth Empowerment Service

## CASE STUDY

### Connecting Communities Project

#### Main project partners:

UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment

- Dr Saffron Woodcraft

Stebon Primary School - Kulsuma Islam

Poplar HARCA - Sultana Yasmin

LETTA Trust Schools

East End Community Foundation

Tower Hamlets Council

Community Fibre: internet provider

**Location:** Tower Hamlets

The Covid-19 public health and socio-economic crisis has highlighted the extent and severity of inequality, poverty, and job insecurity across the most vulnerable sectors of the UK population.

The Connecting Communities Project will provide 100-200 low-income households in Tower Hamlets with a free broadband internet connection, a Google Chromebook digital device, basic digital training, and IT support over two years.

Two citizen scientists, Kulsuma Islam (Stebon Primary School) and Sultana Yasmin (Poplar HARCA), with UCL's Institute for Global Prosperity based in The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, conducted a qualitative analysis to understand the experiences of nine families who have taken part in the project. Findings show the project had rapid and important beneficial impacts. For example, access to the internet improved participants' home schooling, remote working and job searching. The participants also reported increased opportunities to socially connect with their friends and family and to pursue new hobbies and interests.

The results, so far, demonstrate the importance of universal access to critical services, such as digital infrastructures, digital training and literacy across the population.

[Find out more](#)

Image: Shyla Williams with partners, Stebon Primary School, credit Poplar HARCA

“

It's been such a struggle. I was having to link devices to get internet through my phone and my son and daughter, who both have schoolwork to do, were having to take turns. They've not been able to do a lot and they were falling behind. Having a proper broadband connection has made a big difference.

**Esra Mallick**  
Project participant



# Recreation and outdoor spaces

**Public parks and outdoor areas are essential to society as inclusive spaces for recreation and other uses. UCL East has been working with local communities to understand the benefits of green spaces and open-air areas for residents. Access to outdoor spaces has been shown to be crucial in how people handle the effects of Covid-19.**

Researchers from The Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis at UCL worked with young people and local charities on a one-day outdoor walking workshop around the Royal Docks in Newham to create an augmented reality (AR) trail. The end product, [ARGH Mateys!](#) invites walkers to discover powerful new writing by young people, hidden in digital portholes throughout the Docks. They find AR markers at different locations chosen by the writers and use them to hear their poetry - spoken by the authors - as an AR experience. Written extracts are sent via sms text messages for those without smart phones, and the content is available as an interactive map for anyone to enjoy online.

“

**The way the project was facilitated was exceptional... at every stage the young people were the architects, from the design of the augmented reality marker to the location of the piece and the creation.**

---

**Tom Bayley**  
Senior Youth Worker  
Youth Empowerment

Newham Council invited UCL's Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis to take part in its [Citizen Assembly](#) in July 2021. Residents attending the Assembly were asked for their input in an envisioning exercise to generate ideas for new, safe green spaces for the borough. UCL researchers shared examples of their previous research, including installing [Echo Boxes](#) in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to monitor the activity of bats in an urban environment, and the use of [Internet of Things \(IoT\)](#) technologies for storytelling interactions with ancient trees on

Hampstead Heath. UCL academics also answered questions from residents to help imagine possibilities for the local area. The result of this ideas generation is still to be finalised.

“

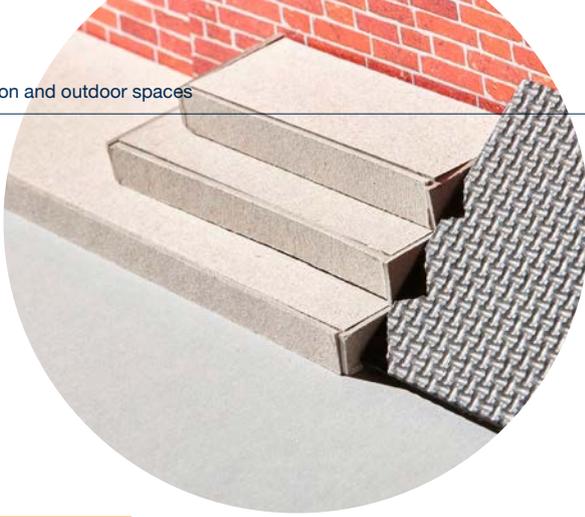
**Giving people the chance to have their say forms part of a radical overhaul of democracy in the borough, designed to involve residents in decisions and build trust in the Council and make it a happier and healthier place to live.**

---

**London Borough of Newham participant**  
(anonymous feedback)

Another UCL East project focused on the impact caused by the closure of east London's Victoria Park, which shut its gates to visitors for the longest period in its 175-year history during lockdown. The [Breathing Space](#) was a collaboration between UCL Anthropology, an east London artist, local residents and park workers to capture the community's life in the Covid-19 pandemic through stories and experiences of the park during this challenging and historic time. [The resulting documentary](#) discussed how east Londoners adapted to a 'new normal', including reduced outdoor activities, during the global pandemic.

The links between human health, biodiversity and the natural environment will be central to the work of our People and Nature Lab at UCL East where we will be creating a living landscape in partnership with local communities to explore issues of sustainability and health for people and the planet.



## CASE STUDY

### City Mill Skate

#### Main project partners:

UCL The Bartlett School of Architecture - Prof Iain Borden  
 UCL Urban Laboratory - Prof Ben Campkin  
 UCL PhD students Thom Callan-Riley and Sander Holsen  
 Goldsmiths, University of London - Dr Esther Sayers  
 Sam Griffin - artist and researcher  
 Betong Park - Daryl Nobbs

**Location:** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

Our City Mill Skate research project is opening our university spaces up to a more diverse audience by creating pieces of skateable architecture for use by the public at UCL East. City Mill Skate has been developed from the ground up, connecting skateboarders with artists and academics.

The project invites participants to get creative and design new types of structure to skateboard on, over or around. It is about creating exciting environments for other wheeled users and pedestrians too. City Mill Skate has engaged with a broad cross-section of the skate community: male and female skateboarders of all ages, from 8-65 years old, adaptive skateboarders from a range of ethnicities and including those with no experience of higher education.

Covid-19 caused the project to find new and creative ways to engage locally when face-to-face activities became impossible. DIY kits of materials were posted out to 80 participating skateboarders. They were asked to make small models of 'skate dots' – incidental architecture that could provide interesting terrain for skateboarders. A selection of these model skate dots will be scaled up and installed into spaces around the UCL East campus.

In early summer 2021, City Mill Skate also ran ten free skate lessons for 60 young people between 10-14 years from Newham. People of all abilities and backgrounds attended; 50% had learning disabilities, and 58% were girls. Later, more lessons were offered to young people from east London during the annual East Summer School. Both events took place at Here East on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which is also part of the East Bank education and cultural development partnership.

[Find out more](#)



“

As people who are from east London, who grew up in east London, you kind of saw the Olympics, changing the shape of it, it's quite important for our voice to come through.

**Skateboarder and online workshop participant**  
 (anonymous feedback)



Images from top:  
 Skate dot model, skateboarding workshop participants, both credit City Mill Skate  
 Urban Pamphleteer, UCL Urban Laboratory

Image opposite:  
 Vijay sharing experiences of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, credit UCL

---

**CASE STUDY****Amplifying Disabled Voices****Main project partners:**

UCL Global Disability Innovation Hub - PhD student Maryam Bandukda,  
Prof Cathy Holloway, Iain McKinnon  
London Vision  
Bikeworks  
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

**Location:** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

---

Amplifying Disabled Voices aims to improve access to public spaces for blind or partially sighted people, or those with a disability. Project participants, who were blind or partially sighted, reported feeling unsafe in public spaces during Covid-19, and were worried about social distancing and touching surfaces.

The project team conducted online ideation workshops with 10 blind and partially sighted people. These sessions were well received, and several participants went on to share their experience of visiting Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in person. In addition, Bikeworks participated in the project by offering all ability cycles, thus giving users with a range of needs the freedom to cycle safely in the park.

The project resulted in recommendations for more inclusive activities on the Park and improving wayfinding for blind and partially sighted people, such as raised ridges or 'guidelines' on pathways for long cane users.

[Find out more](#)

“

**It's great because I can feel the line clearly, I can also walk faster. They should have lines like this everywhere, in parks, in the middle of the train platform so blind people can easily navigate.**

---

**Hasmukh**  
Participant

“

**The voice and lived experience of disabled people has driven changes to the built environment and supported a change in culture. The two go hand in hand to create spaces that foster creativity and innovation while removing the barriers that disable.**

---

**Kamran Mallick**  
CEO Disability Rights UK



# Education and learning

**Two of the big challenges facing east London families during Covid-19 have been home schooling and remote learning. Together with local education partners, UCL East's schools engagement team adapted its outreach plans to fit the needs of east London young people, their families, and teachers. As a result, UCL East worked with 28 east London schools and reached nearly 1,500 pupils.**

UCL East's schools engagement team developed a new, innovative programme for young audiences. An online, interactive question-answer session, '[Ask the Expert!](#)' aimed at pupils who want to have their questions answered by experts. Nearly 70 UCL academic and non-academic staff members answered young people's questions on topics such as, 'how does a TV remote control work?' or 'why do the rich keep getting richer, and the poor keep getting poorer?'. The answers to these questions, and many more, were uploaded to the UCL website. This online resource received 22,230 pageviews between August 2020 and July 2021.

**East Careers Week** aimed to showcase the diverse range of careers represented in the cultural and education district at East Bank. Together as partners we delivered 25 online workshops for pupils from school years 9-12. UCL East's schools engagement team also designed 5,000 hard-copy career packs, which were posted to 14 schools in east London. These hard copy packs were invaluable where students were unable to access the internet and when schools re-opened.

UCL East also took part in the **East Summer School**, which runs over two weeks in July-August each year. Over 450 students participated in one or more of the 30 courses on offer. UCL's different departments, including UCL's Institute of Making (see case study), delivered online or face-to-face activities at Here East in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

UCL Special Collections and Newham Heritage Month launched a New Curators Project in lockdown for young people between 18-24 years from east London. The project provided training in skills and competencies for working in the cultural heritage sector while demystifying the industry. The outcome was a collaborative exhibition for the Newham Heritage Month programme.

UCL East construction companies, Mace and Vinci, also continued working with local communities throughout Covid restrictions, from volunteering activities to running hybrid learning programmes. One such project was the Real World Learning Programme Leadership Academy with School 21 in Newham, where work experience has developed Year 10, and 12 pupils' employability skills. Additionally, pupils met construction industry professionals and solved real problems in a workplace environment.

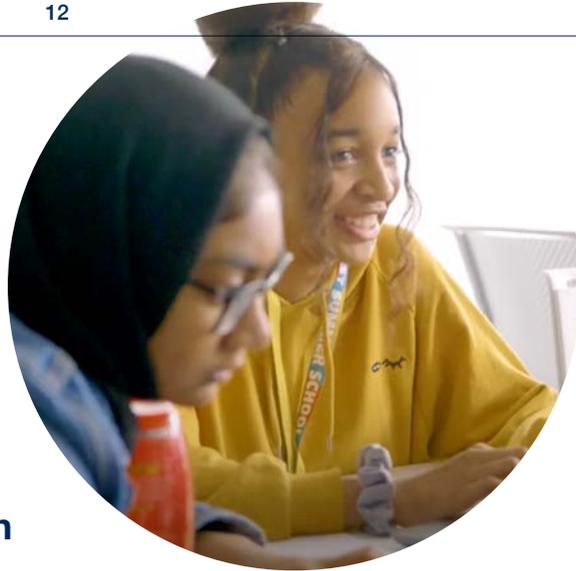
Educational outreach and partnerships with local schools are essential parts of UCL East's engagement programme. We are grateful to all those who worked flexibly and creatively to protect these activities despite the challenges of the pandemic and look forward to expanding this area of our work with our partners.

“

**I feel like I just discovered a different part of [Newham] ... I've seen it in a different light, I used to think it was just a stereotype, but have found out so much. When I walk around, I'll be wondering, if I see an old building, I'll be thinking what's the history behind this?**

---

**Project participant**  
(anonymous feedback)



## CASE STUDY

### East Summer School & East Autumn School workshops

#### Main project partners:

UCL Institute of Making - Sarah Wilkes and Sara Brouwer  
London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) - Tasnim Siddiqia Amin

**Location:** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

The Institute of Making is a multidisciplinary research club for those interested in the made world: makers of molecules to makers of buildings, soup to diamonds, socks to cities. Through the organisation's popular events programme, the public is invited to explore the links between academic research and hands-on experience, and celebrate the sheer joy of stuff.

From 2020, the Institute of Making produced a new programme of events for young people, supported by the Making Spaces research project, funded by Lloyds Register, and delivered in partnership with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) for its Summer and Autumn Schools.

The workshops, largely held online due to COVID-19 restrictions, were open to 12-14 and 15-18-year-olds from Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, and were co-designed with a steering group of young people. In this way, the content and the delivery of online workshops were designed with the participants, not just approved by them. The group had just started wearing facemasks at school and wanted to personalise their own cotton masks and understand more about the health and environmental benefits of reusable versus disposable masks. The popular Customise Your Own Face Masks online workshop was then taught by Tottenham-based textiles designer Rebeckah Kemi Apará.

Nearly 100 participants attended the Institute of Making workshops for the East Summer School and the East Autumn School. All workshops (face-to-face and online) were rated as 'excellent' or 'very good' by 79% of participants.

[Find out more](#)

“

I really enjoyed hearing about the different career paths that could be taken in design tech [...] really inspired me and I liked how they answered my question which was how do they find motivation to do things, I really lack having motivation and the answers helped me to try different ways of motivation.

**14 year old attendee**  
(anonymous feedback)  
'3D design' workshop participant

“

I really enjoyed today's workshop. It revived my love for embroidery again and now I am addicted to sewing! I want to customise more face masks for my family and friends, and the face masks you sent to me were perfect.

**Grace L, aged 15**  
'Customise your own Reusable Facemask' workshop participant

“

This was so therapeutic! I can't wait to experiment with this with the other mask.

**Grace R, aged 15**  
'Customise your own Reusable Facemask' workshop participant

---

**CASE STUDY****Engineering Tutoring Programme****Main project partners:**

UCL Engineering - Dr Elpida Makrygianni MBE  
BADU Community CIC - Nana Badu

**Location:** East London

---

The Covid-19 pandemic provided a dramatic reminder of the accelerating education attainment gap between young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who have been disproportionately affected by the impact of the pandemic and their peers. As a result, the demand for high-quality tutoring increased. Thus, the UCL Engineering team started offering an online version of its existing tutoring programme to address this disparity and educational inequality.

The UCL Engineering Tutoring Programme collaborated with BADU Community and 11 east London schools. Free, daily 1-2-1 tutoring sessions in STEM subjects were offered to secondary school pupils. These online sessions were tailored to each pupil's ability, learning style and pace, with input from teachers. UCL Engineering student tutors helped school pupils progress in STEM subjects while acting as role models. In total, more than 5000 tutoring hours were delivered to 214 pupils in Years 9–13, with 83% from a BAME background.

Offering tutoring entirely online created challenges, including online safeguarding rules and regulations, tackling digital poverty issues, and finding new ways to learn together online. But the online delivery also offered an opportunity to think differently. It showed the project team how the programme can achieve even more in a post-Covid-19 world. It became clear that there is a strong interest in collectively exploring resilience in education and what meaningful engagement might look like in the future.

Promoting wellbeing in education through STEM mentoring helps young people develop new skills, increase subject-specific knowledge and build confidence and resilience. In the future, the programme will prioritise educational well-being together with academic progression, while considering the diversity of young people. The hybrid model of delivery will cater for a broad range of abilities and levels of understanding. Crucial to the programme's continued success is high-quality tutor training and effective tutor-tutee matching.

During the pandemic, the tutoring programme team, was able to form exciting new partnerships with east London education providers who have unique local knowledge and community connections. Strengthening these links and incorporating community perspectives, young people's voices and local knowledge will be vital to the future of UCL Engineering's engagement work in east London.

**“**

**The tuition has been extremely useful. It helped me become more motivated as it forced me to get back into the flow of doing work on a daily basis. Since I started the tuition, the idea of me returning back to school has become less daunting because I am now in a position where I feel as though I can pass my mini exams with a good grade..**

---

**Year 13 pupil**  
Project Participant

[Find out more](#)

*Images opposite:  
Participants of Engineering Tutoring Programme,  
credit UCL Engineering*



“

I oversee all KS4 interventions, and I can say that this intervention is by far the most rewarding for all involved. The tutors inspire our pupils to aim higher. Through the personalisation of learning, every student leaves the sessions feeling they can tackle the exam questions independently. They always look forward to their tutoring and that speaks volumes. I wish we had more!

---

**Danielle Osman**  
Assistant Principal  
Chobham Academy

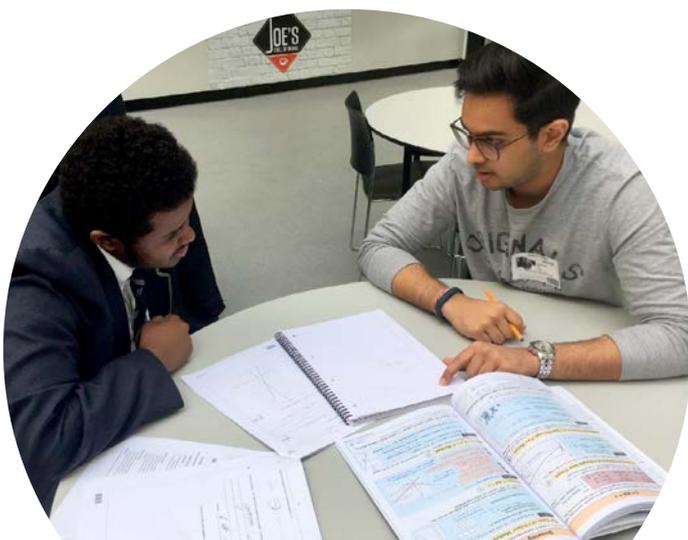


“

The best thing about being a tutor is the bonding and social experience. It is a breath of fresh air to meet the tutees every week, and their zeal to learn and excel inspires me to put in more efforts for my own assignments and exams. It is, by far, a principle driving force for motivation for me as I get to help my tutees and also help myself along the way.

---

**Zarin Haque**  
UCL Engineering Tutor



# Art and creativity

**Cultural engagement is at the heart of UCL East's relationship with east London. Aligning the work of community engagement and public art, we aim to create meaningful, creative and impactful collaborations. Through unprecedented times, UCL East's engagement has continued providing funding, opportunities, and networks to connect UCL East teams with east London communities and support their art and creativity.**

Trellis is a programme of knowledge exchange between researchers, east London artists and communities. The programme provides an opportunity for all participants to test out new frameworks for creative collaboration.

Although heavily affected by the pandemic, the Trellis projects commissioned for exhibition in March 2021 achieved great results in collaboration with their community partners. Covid-19 restrictions meant that the physical exhibition could not happen as planned. Instead, an online [Trellis Festival](#) was developed, celebrating both the art created and acknowledging the work by all the participants involved.

#### **Trellis Festival projects:**

[Xenia Citizen Science](#)

[H is for Hostile Environment](#)

[Mulberry – Tree of Plenty](#)

[‘Light Wave’](#)

[Flow Unlocked](#)

“

**Together, these five projects have resulted in a multitude of artistic outputs – walks and workshops, films, drawings, photography, an artist's book – as well as multiple legacies that may or may not be defined as art, including new relationships, new knowledge and understanding, new ways of working together and, more tangibly perhaps, tree cuttings that will soon be planted in the grounds of UCL East.**

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park [Great Get Together](#) event resumed on a smaller scale in 2021 after being cancelled the previous summer. UCL invited visitors of all ages to discover Ancient Sudan and create masks inspired by its kings and queens or play ancient board games. These activities were inspired by using 3-D printed replica artefacts from UCL's Petrie Museum to engage primary school pupils, in a project supported by UCL masters students studying the role of museums and galleries in education.

The [Avenue Road Down Memory Lane](#) project focused on capturing the sense of place and community on a social housing estate in Leytonstone in Waltham Forest. The estate is on the outskirts of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and is due for regeneration. UCL Special Collections, UCL students, community groups, residents and young people co-curated a virtual reality experience with a local film company, E17 films. The final [film](#) was shown to residents, and further co-creations are being explored.

Our [Integrating Arts into Disability Innovation](#) project explored technology as a unique opportunity for expression and came about through collaboration between UCL's Global Disability Innovation Hub, east London artists, and disabled people. Participants produced collaborative artistic outputs, and the overall experiences and knowledge gained will enhance and enrich UCL's teaching and research.

UCL East is all about bringing diverse minds together to listen, explore, push boundaries and respond to issues and challenges in the world. Which is why creativity and innovation are at the heart of our engagement programme in east London too. Here we have captured just a snapshot of the arts and culture projects that have brought new thinking and perspectives in the last year, despite the sector being one of the most challenged during the pandemic. These creative collaborations will continue to be central to UCL East and help provide a blueprint for engaging with partners, including start-ups, as we continue to support fresh enterprises on our new campus and in our surrounding London boroughs.

## CASE STUDY

### Flow Unlocked

#### Main project partners:

Georgia Pavlopoulou - UCL psychologist, autism researcher and neurodiversity advocate

Briony Campbell - artist and facilitator

Jon Adams - project manager, neurodivergent artist, polymath and mental health champion

**Location:** East London

Flow Unlocked is an autistic-led project that explores the importance of relationships and belonging to autistic people's wellbeing. The project aims to increase awareness of the intense sensitivity with which autistic people relate to the world. Traditionally, many studies and projects are done *about* autistic people, not with them. Flow Unlocked broke the mould by redefining autistic narratives from lived experience.

Autistic east Londoners joined creative writing workshops based on a six-month autistic-led consultation process. They explored their relationships with place, people, objects and nature. This neurodiverse and multidisciplinary group built a safe space for sharing perspectives and writing poetry on relationships, and the effects of lockdown.

Visual artists made paintings, drawings, poetry, photography and film works inspired by the words written and spoken during the workshops, revealing authentic lived experiences and rewriting the stereotypes that exist about autistic people. You can enjoy a sample of the artwork produced as a result on the front cover of this report.

[Find out more](#)

*Images from top:  
Through your eyes, credit Briony Campbell for  
FlowUnlocked; 'Bag save number 3745' by Jon Adams,  
which features on the cover of this report*

“

It's been a total joy, it's been so validating for me to be part of that safe space, to be encouraged to think maybe I do have something to share... it's like a seed has been planted that makes me want to carry on doing this kind of thing.

Caroline Oliver  
Co-creator

“

This project has helped me to see me, and to see where those preconceptions of autistic people which others hold have intersected with defending authenticity. True participation is not a token gesture but a gift.

Jon Adams  
Artist



---

## CASE STUDY

### RGB East

**Main project partners:**

UCL Institute of Ophthalmology - Dr Emily Patterson  
UCL Slade School of Fine Art - Jo Guile  
Into Focus  
Four Corners Film and Photography Centre

**Location:** Tower Hamlets

---

RGB stands for red, green, and blue. The light-sensitive cells in our eyes are sensitive to these colours. UCL's Institute of Ophthalmology and UCL's Slade School of Fine Art co-designed a series of workshops with Into Focus, an east London charity specialising in photography.

This intergenerational project enabled twelve Tower Hamlets residents of different ages to produce traditional black and white and colour photographs alongside inverted digital colour prints. Through a scientifically engaged photographic practice, participants explored their relationship with Tower Hamlets through colour.

The final colour illusion photographs were exhibited in Tower Hamlets in summer 2021.

[Find out more](#)

“

**I liked the questions the programme raised about perception/memory/biology and how an individual can experience 'reality' through a multiplicity of filters ...pointing to a uniqueness and the absurdity of standardisation.**

---

**Participant**  
(anonymous feedback)



*Images:  
RGB East photography, and exhibition  
visitor, credit Declan Slattery*

# Advice and support

**During this pandemic year, UCL East's engagement programmes swiftly adapted to maintain east Londoners' access to advice and guidance on managing everyday life, despite unexpected changes due to Covid-19. Peer support and access to communities of practice for providers also ensured a steady stream of opportunities for longer term ideas generation and the launch of new projects.**

In Stratford, the [UCL Integrated Legal Advice Clinic](#) offers free legal advice in housing, welfare benefits, community care and education law. During the pandemic, services moved online, although in-person advice sessions were delivered at various points during lockdowns. The Clinic saw a significant spike in enquiries during the year, with just over 700 new enquiries and 123 new cases. The feedback received was very positive: 100% of clients would recommend the services to a friend and use the Clinic's services again.

“

**UCL's service is excellent, very helpful and kind. Thank you so much for your support and help.**

---

**Client**  
(anonymous feedback)

UCL's Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose provided evaluation support to Hackney and Newham Councils' Here to Help project. This aimed to increase the capacity of the Councils' social welfare services to meet the growing needs of vulnerable residents during the pandemic.

The two boroughs ran a pilot that equipped staff with improved mechanisms for residents to access the right support more efficiently. UCL researchers' evaluation of the pilot, showed that the programme had enhanced the capacity of frontline staff who felt more supported and able to engage better with residents.

**Social Hackathons** are problem-solving events co-hosted by UCL's Volunteering Service and community organisations. UCL students are placed with a local community group for a day, devising solutions to issues presented to them. During the pandemic, social hackathons were moved online. One example was with KEEN London, a charity providing one-to-one support for children with additional needs at free sports events, where UCL volunteers were asked to review

KEEN's volunteer retention. They conducted web research, identified new ways to motivate volunteers, and reviewed the organisation's social media presence. As a result, a report was produced that informs KEEN's volunteer management strategies.

“

**As a small charity with limited resources, events like the UCL Social Hackathon can help directly inform our strategies and give us new perspectives. The students came up with some great ideas about how to engage volunteers using training, rewards, and social media (one group even designed a TikTok dance challenge for us!), and we're planning to put some of these into practice over the next few months.**

---

**Social Hackathon participant**  
(anonymous feedback)

At UCL East we will continue to flex and collaborate and draw on the extensive resources UCL can provide to help partners maximise the impact of the vital services they provide, through evidence gathering, analysis and evaluation.

## CASE STUDY

### East London Inclusive Enterprise Zone (ELIEZ)

#### Main project partners:

UCL Innovation & Enterprise - Dr Martin Davies  
 UCL Global Disability Innovation Hub - Professor Cathy Holloway  
 GDI Hub CIC - Vicki Austin  
 Disability Rights UK - Kamran Mallick  
 Plexal - Andrew Roughan  
 LLDC - Emma Frost  
 Here East - Jasel Nandha  
 Loughborough University in London - Ben Cole  
 UAL London College of Fashion - Linda Roberts

**Location:** Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP)

East London Inclusive Enterprise Zone (ELIEZ) was an accelerator programme focused on entrepreneurs and design thinkers who are disabled or whose work focuses on disabled people. From September 2020 to March 2021, ELIEZ helped 30 entrepreneurs accelerate the development of products and services that addressed unmet needs, from the idea stage to global deployment. The partners also co-produced a set of supporting programmes, and 547 people attended online workshops on different topics. Supported by a grant from Research England and co-investment from workspace at Plexal, the programme also enabled expert-guided modifications to be made around the shared offices at Plexal and these accessibility improvements remain a legacy of the activity.

Another key outcome of the programme was a podcast series, [The Inclusive Innovators](#), with over 9,500 streams between March and August 2021. In addition, innovators were invited to present their progress to public and expert financial and business development audiences at an event in March 2021, hosted by the Paralympic athlete Baroness Grey-Thompson.

[Find out more](#)



“

**The voice and lived experience of disabled people has driven changes to the built environment and supported a change in culture. The two go hand in hand to create spaces that foster creativity and innovation while removing the barriers that disable.**

**Kamran Mallick**  
 CEO, Disability Rights UK

“

**It has been a privilege to have a workspace at Plexal and attend workshops with like-minded people in the industry. One of the major benefits of being part of ELIEZ was getting a mentor. The ELIEZ team has been great in sharing knowledge and making connections**

**Anike Mlemchuku**  
 Founder, Lapapo

*Images this page:  
 Plexal breakout space, credit Plexal*

*Image opposite:  
 Money A+E team, credit Money A+E*

## CASE STUDY

# Money A+E

### Main project partners:

UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment  
- Dr Christopher Harker  
Money A+E - Suzy Kirby, Jerry During and Greg Ashby

**Location:** Newham

Money A+E provides money advice and education to Newham residents. The charity saw a threefold increase in demand for its services. Those who were already struggling pre-pandemic were left especially vulnerable. Collaborating with UCL's Institute for Global Prosperity, Money A+E sought to understand the situation better and adapt their services for those 'slipping through the cracks'.

UCL Researchers met with Money A+E's service users to understand more about issues around housing, employment and finances in general. The study found that Covid-19 had significantly reduced individuals' and communities' overall ability to live in their homes safely. For example, about 30% of service users reported not paying rent, and nearly 25% had gas, electricity, or their internet turned off. Based on these findings, Money A+E adapted its services, providing more support around housing; 60% of respondents reported these services positively impacted their everyday lives.

“

**This was more than just a pleasant surprise for us: it underlined the lasting value of providing accessible, community-led money support to Diverse Ethnic Communities.**

**Suzy Kirby**  
Comms Director  
Money A+E

[Find out more](#)



# Ways forward



“

As we approach the opening of UCL East in the autumn of 2022, the way we engage with local people in east London has never been so important.

UCL's new campus represents an exciting opportunity for us to increase our engagement in the Olympic boroughs. This report shows the plethora of activity conducted over the past year, bringing us closer to our partners and communities and strengthening those relationships.

Despite all the challenges of the pandemic, fantastic contributions have been made to east London, and I congratulate all those who have worked together to create this success. I am even more excited to see how we build on this work and make an even greater impact in future.

---

**Professor Alan Thompson**

Pro-Provost (London) and Dean of Brain Sciences



During the pandemic, UCL East's engagement teams connected and supported communities in east London, as well as UCL staff and students. Creating safe spaces to share lived experiences and design solutions together was integral to supporting people's recovery from Covid-19. I am proud of how we adapted our engagement programmes to suit the changed situation and of how we continue to listen and work together in the spirit of collaboration, co-creation and co-delivery.

2022 is a landmark year for UCL when we will finally be able to welcome our east London neighbours into the first of two new campus buildings on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and strengthen our engagement with local communities. Our Institute for Global Prosperity has launched a [Citizen Scientist Academy](#), supported by [Compost London](#), a Newham-based Community Interest Company providing support to voluntary and community sector groups to help them grow, develop and thrive. The Academy is also creating the UK's first people-led study to understand the impact on individual prosperity of the ongoing regeneration in east London.

UCL is also spearheading the new [SHIFT innovation district](#) for east London. This will see seven organisations with links to the Olympic Park together creating a new inclusive 'living testbed' to improve climate resilience, the movement of people and goods and the health and wellbeing of our cities, bringing together changemakers from the community, business and academia.

UCL East will continue to support the [Good Growth Hub](#), which offers career opportunities, training and skills to 18 to 30-year-old east Londoners and diverse, new talent to local businesses. Our construction companies, Mace and Vinci, will continue their well-established apprentice scheme, offering local employment and skills development opportunities to east Londoners.

We are creating a new model at East Bank of how a university campus can embed itself within its locality. We would love to hear from you if you have ideas about partnering or collaboration. Follow us on Twitter [@UCLEast](#) or please email us via [ucl-east@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ucl-east@ucl.ac.uk).

---

**Simon Cane**

UCL Director of Cultural Engagement

**For everyone listed here and many others, our thanks for your engagement with UCL East. We look forward to continuing to work with you in 2022 and beyond.**

---

## **East London**

A New Direction	Hackney Council	Plexal
BADU Community Centre,	Hackney Quest	Poplar HARCA
Barclays Eagle Labs	HeadStart	Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
Barking & Dagenham Council	Into Focus	Raze Collective
Betong Park	Jane Watt	Rosie Murdoch
Bikeworks	Jon Adams	Royal Docks
Bravand and ICAEW	Kaitene Karonteng	Royal Docks Learning and Activity Centre
Bridge Academy	Karolina Raczynski	Rubbena Aurangzeb-Tariq
Briony Campbell	KEEN London	Sam Griffin
Canary Wharf College	Keren Weitzberg	Sara Heywood
Cardinal Pole	Kois Miah	Sarah Carne
Christian Sinibaldi	Krisiti Minchin	School 21
Clapton Girls Academy	Kulsuma Islam	Skatebiscuit
Community Fibre	Lendlease	SociAbility
Compost London	London College of Fashion	St Margaret's House
Dan Mayfield	London Legacy Development Corporation	Stoke Newington School
Daryl Nobbs	London Night Czar	Sultana Yasmin
E17 Films	London Vision	The Plug Youth Innovation Agency
East End Community Foundation	Loughborough University London	Tower Hamlets Council
Edwin Mingard	Marawa Ibrahim	V&A Museum of Childhood
Elizabeth Benjamin	Money A+E	Vicki Hambley
Emily Briselden-Waters	Newham Council	Waltham Forest Council
Dr Esther Sayers	Newham Heritage Month	West Silvertown Foundation
Fight for Peace	Newham Youth Empowerment	Youth Empowerment
Foundation for Future London	One Newham	Yves Salmon
Four Corners Film	Our Parklife	
George Mitchell Primary	Peter Bennett	
Grace Crannis		

---

## **UCL**

Jordan Abankwah	Caroline Francis	Dr Gemma Moore
Associate Prof Tim Adlam	Jo Guile	Dr Emily Patterson
Sarah Albala	Dr Christopher Harker	Dr Georgia Pavlopoulou
Dr Alexandra Albert	Dr Duncan Hay	Dr Shoba Poduval
PhD student Maryam Bandukda	Prof Catherine Holloway	Danielle Purkiss
Prof Iain Borden	PhD student Sander Hölsgens	Dr Rebecca Ross
PhD student Kate Burton	Prof Andy Hudson-Smith	Guglielmo Rossi
PhD student Thom Callan-Riley	Prof Helene Joffe	Hannah Sender
Prof Ben Campkin	Prof Dinah Lammiman	Dr Valerio Signorelli
Dr David Chau	Dr Leah Lovett	PhD student Caroline Wilson
Harnett Chau	Dr Elpida Makrygianni MBE	Prof Bencie Woll
Dr Martin de Jode	Laura Marshall	Dr Saffron Woodcraft
Dr Jay Derrick	Iain McKinnon	
Sam Fardghassemi	Dr Clare Melhuish	

“

**We were kept involved and consulted on everything and had a lot of input into how we wanted to be represented - what ideas we liked and didn't like. Everyone was equally important; our opinions were all valued.**

---

**Ben Wheeler**  
Co-creator, Flow Unlocked,  
Trellis arts programme

