

IMPERIAL

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1. The naming of Imperial College London (“Imperial” or the “University”) entities provides the opportunity to recognise exceptional contributions to Imperial, whether these are financial, or in the form of distinguished service. Acknowledging a donor or sponsor with a named entity demonstrates to the public that philanthropic support and sponsorship is essential to the long-term sustainability and success of Imperial.
2. Naming opportunities arise in part because philanthropic donors receive nothing beyond incidental benefits in return for their gifts. A convention exists whereby the recipient (Imperial) will honour a donor’s financial contribution by offering them an opportunity to influence the name of an entity funded by their donation. Imperial retains the final decision over any name and the name taken may not necessarily be that suggested initially by a donor. The final name is most usually reached through a process of negotiation.
3. This Naming Opportunities Policy (“Policy”) sets out Imperial’s guidelines on naming opportunities. It applies to all naming opportunities and covers, but is not limited to, the naming of buildings, external and internal spaces, facilities, web resources, research centres and institutes, schools/departments, academic posts, scholarships, bursaries, prizes, lecture series, and outreach/enterprise programmes (collectively referred to in this Policy as “entities”).

PRINCIPLES

4. The naming of Imperial entities must align with the University’s overall strategic direction, mission, vision, and values. Naming must not detract from Imperial’s reputation, nor must any such actions create a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, or confer special privileges. This applies regardless of whether an entity is to be named in recognition of a financial contribution or distinguished service.
5. Imperial entities may be named after an individual or family or organisation associated with Imperial that has provided distinguished service to the University or has made a significant contribution to society or where their philanthropic gift(s) or sponsorship represent a “substantial contribution” to either an Imperial project or the financial sustainability of Imperial.
6. The definition and financial value of a “substantial contribution” will vary from case to case. Flexibility will therefore be required when determining minimum financial contributions for specific naming opportunities. Within the general guidelines provided by Imperial, detailed costings for specific naming opportunities will need to be agreed by the relevant Department or Faculty before entering into negotiations with donors or sponsors.
7. Two types of naming opportunity exist: 1) honorific, when a naming honours the past service, achievement or support of an individual, group, or organisation; and 2) financially-based, when a naming recognises financial support, most usually a philanthropic gift or sponsorship. As a matter of principle, honorific naming opportunities are backward looking, honouring past service, achievement, or support, while financially-based naming opportunities are based on current, or subject to proposed, relationships.
8. Naming opportunities remain at the sole discretion of Imperial and it reserves the right to make the final decision on the name taken by any entity. Naming must at all times enhance the reputation of Imperial. Imperial reserves the right, on reasonable grounds, to revise or withdraw any naming.
9. All donors or sponsors to whom naming opportunities are offered must have been through Imperial’s standard due diligence process in accordance with the University’s [Relationships Policy](#).

10. All philanthropic gifts to which naming opportunities are attached must be accompanied by a written gift document, confirming the donor's contribution, any terms associated with the gift and the agreed naming. This should include a clear statement of the intended duration of the naming.
11. For all entities with a physical presence that requires ongoing maintenance, or which may be subject to periodic renewal (e.g. buildings, external and internal spaces, facilities, web resources, research centres/institutes etc), naming opportunities will be of a fixed duration not usually longer than 25 years (or the useful life of the entity) agreed between Imperial and the donor or sponsor, and documented in a written agreement. At the end of the agreed period, Imperial and the donor or sponsor will review the naming. The initial donor or sponsor will ordinarily be given first refusal as to whether the gift (and any associated naming) should be renewed. It is at Imperial's discretion, in consultation with the donor, the donor's family/legal representatives, or the relevant organisation, to determine whether and for how long a name should continue to be used after the initially agreed period has passed.
12. Imperial will not grant in perpetuity naming rights unless the entity funded is supported by ring-fenced, permanently endowed funds in Imperial's Endowment. In perpetuity naming rights will also only be considered for entities that do not require a physical object needing ongoing maintenance or which may be subject to periodic renewal; for example academic positions, scholarships, bursaries, and prizes.
13. Honorific named staff positions will only be established on an ad hominem basis.
14. If it is decided by Imperial that a named entity is no longer required and naming rights still apply, a suitable alternative to which the name can be applied will, where possible, be determined in consultation with the donor, the donor's family/legal representatives, or the relevant organisation. If, after the end of the agreed period for which naming rights apply, an entity requires substantial renovation, naming opportunities may be offered to another donor or sponsor.
15. Donors or sponsors will not necessarily be required to provide the full costs associated with specific academic priorities in order to be offered naming rights. The proportion expected will vary from case to case. This will ensure Imperial remains competitive in attracting philanthropic donors or sponsors.

REQUESTS AND AUTHORISATION PROCESS

16. The University Management Board is ultimately responsible for all decisions on naming opportunities at Imperial.
17. All proposals for naming physical entities (honorific or financial) and non-physical entities (honorific or financial) must be signed off by the relevant Decision-Making Body in accordance with the [Relationships Policy](#).
18. It is the responsibility of the relevant Department or Faculty, via the Advancement Division where appropriate, to bring any issues surrounding an existing naming, donor or sponsor to the attention of the President and the Provost. All named entities will be reported to the University Management Board and Council as a matter of routine.

POLICY AND DOCUMENT CONTROL	
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Related internal policies, procedures, guidance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct for Staff • Conflict of Interest Policy • Guidelines for Accepting Philanthropic Income and Other Gifts • Relationships Policy
Division / Department / Function:	Division of the University Secretary
Policy owner:	Registrar & University Secretary
Point of contact(s):	Division of the University Secretary (university.secretary@imperial.ac.uk)