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## **UCT hosts official Sarah Baartman Hall renaming**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) will host the official Sarah Baartman Hall renaming ceremony, a moment long in the making, on Wednesday, 10 September 2025 at 14:00.

UCT will also host a special colloquium on Thursday, 11 September 2025 at 18:00, titled "Honouring Sarah Baartman: Feminist Perspectives on Rights and Social Justice".

In December 2018, the UCT Council took the historic decision to rename Jameson Memorial Hall after Sarah Baartman. After being delayed due to a number of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, seven years later UCT can finally fulfil this responsibility in a manner that honours the name and legacy of Sarah Baartman.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Mosa Moshabela said: "We owe our gratitude to everyone who recognised the importance of this change and took this decisive step as part of the transformation journey of our university. This includes staff, students, indigenous communities, researchers and advocates, the university leadership, community and Council of 2018."

Professor Moshabela said Baartman's life story represented both the brutality of colonial exploitation and the enduring human spirit in the face of unimaginable violation. Born in the Eastern Cape in the late 18th century, she was taken to Europe, where her body was objectified and dehumanised for public spectacle. Even after her death, she was denied peace; her remains were exhibited in French museums until their eventual repatriation to South Africa in 2002.

"Her name on this building calls us to confront injustice with honesty and courage. It reminds us of the violence of colonialism, the silencing of indigenous voices, and the mutilation of the female body in ways that denied humanity. It also calls us to healing: to create spaces where remembrance is linked to justice, where trauma is met with acknowledgement, and where history is engaged openly and responsibly.

"The Sarah Baartman Hall renaming ceremony will serve as a magnifying glass to injustice – past or present – holding us accountable as a university community. It will be an

opportunity to engage with the Khoi and indigenous heritage of this land. It will also be a place of remembrance and restoration, honouring women, resilience and dignity,” said Moshabela.

This deeply symbolic commemoration forms part of UCT’s spring 2025 graduation season, a moment of joy and achievement. It also falls within South Africa’s Heritage Month, and shortly after Women’s Month.

“These intersections highlight the themes of remembrance, restitution and recognition that give this ceremony a depth of meaning.

“As we approach this moment, I invite our very diverse community of UCT to reflect on what it means for us to bear the name of Sarah Baartman in our most iconic building, a sanctuary for our students coming from all walks of life. Perhaps it is an act of overcoming historical trauma and healing from injustices of the past, as we reaffirm our commitment to transformation and ubuntu.

“It is both an honour and a responsibility. It is an honour to recognise Sarah Baartman as a daughter of the land, an indigenous woman, a symbol of resilience and a beacon of hope for humanity. It is a responsibility to embody the values of remembrance, healing, dignity and redress in how we, as a university, endeavour to teach, research, innovate and serve society,” he concluded.

- [Read the full communication by the VC: UCT hosts official Sarah Baartman Hall renaming.](#)
- Watch Wednesday’s renaming ceremony on the UCT [graduation feature page](#), or on the university’s [Facebook](#) and [X](#) social media platforms.
- [RSVP](#) to attend Thursday’s colloquium.

***ENDS***

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

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