

10 June 2025

Members of the House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Members of the House of Lords

As Holocaust historians, educators and curators with many decades of experience, we are honoured to serve on the Academic Advisory Board of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation (see attached biographies). We have followed the public debate and media coverage with interest and concern and note that a number of statements seriously misrepresent the plans for the Memorial and Learning Centre and therefore misguidedly criticise the Academic Advisory Board. To address this, we would like to highlight some basic principles guiding our deliberations and our discussions with the exhibition team.

The main focus of the Memorial and Learning Centre will be Britain and the Holocaust. It will explore the differing responses of individuals, communities and institutions – press, government, and parliament – to the persecution and mass extermination of Jews by Nazi Germany, prompting visitors to reflect on such questions as whether more could and should have been done to help. The Memorial and Learning Centre will also highlight the fate of British nationals caught up in Nazi terror and those involved in liberating camps.

To help visitors understand the immense destruction and impact of the Holocaust, the Memorial and Learning Centre will outline the wider historical context. In particular, it examines Jewish culture and communities around Europe, and the Nazi policies that destroyed them, meaning that the issue of antisemitism will be central to the exhibition as a whole. The exhibition aims to deepen understanding of the complex past and provide perspectives relevant to the present. This includes legacies in the postwar period, such as the impact of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes on international law leading, for instance to the Genocide Convention.

This multifaceted story will be told without a political agenda. Rather, the Memorial and Learning Centre will approach the Holocaust – including the various British actors involved – carefully and judiciously, based on the historical record, and drawing on research into Holocaust education. We believe such an evidence-based approach is the only way to help visitors engage meaningfully with the past and to reflect on the dangers of indifference, hatred and antisemitism.

Ben Barkow CBE
Chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre Academic Advisory Board

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Ben Barkow worked at the Wiener Holocaust Library from 1987 to 2019 and was its Director for 20 years. He is the author of *Alfred Wiener and the Making of the Holocaust Library* (1997), co-editor of *Als obs ein Leben wär: Tatsachenbericht Theresienstadt 1942-1944* (2005), and co-editor of *November Pogrom 1938: Die Augenzeugenberichte der Wiener Library London* (2008). His most recent book is *Poetry After Auschwitz: Walking in West Cornwall with the Ghost of Great Aunt Hilde* (2024).

He served on the Advisory Board for the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum. Currently he serves as a Trustee of Holocaust Centre North, of which he had previously been Chair. He is also a Trustee of the Ernest Hecht Charitable Foundation and of Trelya in Penzance.

Professor Gilly Carr OBE PhD, FSA, FRHistS

Gilly Carr is Professor of Conflict Archaeology and Holocaust Heritage at the University of Cambridge. Publishing in the fields of Archaeology, History, Heritage Studies and Holocaust Studies, Gilly is the principal historian of the German occupation of the Channel Islands. Her publications include *A Materiality of Internment* (2024), *Nazi Prisons in the British Isles* (2020), *Victims of Nazism in the Channel Islands: A Legitimate Heritage?* (2019), *Legacies of Occupation: Archaeology, Heritage and Memory in the Channel Islands* (2014), and, with Paul Sanders and Louise Willmot, *Protest, Defiance and Resistance in the Channel Islands, 1940-1945* (2014). She is also a member of the UK delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), where she chaired the project which developed the IHRA Charter for Safeguarding Sites (2024), a heritage charter to safeguarding Holocaust sites in the 21st century.

Professor Robert Eaglestone Royal Holloway, University of London.

Robert Eaglestone is Professor of Contemporary Literature and Thought, and former Deputy Director of the Holocaust Research Institute, at Royal Holloway, University of London. Robert is a UK leading scholar of Holocaust-related literature and philosophy. His publications include *The Broken Voice: Reading Post-Holocaust Literature* (2017), *The Holocaust and the Postmodern* (2004) and *Teaching Holocaust Literature and Film*. He was on sub-panel 27 in the 2021 REF, chaired the QAA advisory board for the Benchmark Statement for English (2022), and chairs the Common English Forum. He has spoken at many literary festivals and on Radio 4, including 'In Our Time' (on Hannah Arendt) and 'Great Lives' (on Elie Wiesel).

Professor Stuart Foster

Stuart Foster was Director of UCL's Centre for Holocaust Education from 2008-2025.

Adopting a research-informed approach to addressing the issues and challenges in Holocaust education, he has provided strategic leadership for the programme since its inception. More than 32,000 teachers have participated in the Centre's high quality, high impact programmes. He was lead author on the ground-breaking study, *What do students know and understand about the Holocaust?* (2016) which was based on the views and perspectives of more than 10,000 school students and has contributed to several landmark studies including, *Continuity and Change: Ten years of teaching and learning about the Holocaust in England's secondary schools* (2023). He co-authored the world's first research-informed school textbook on the Holocaust, *Understanding the Holocaust: How and why did it happen?* (2020) - distributed free of charge to more than 3,000 schools - and co-edited, *Holocaust Education: Contemporary challenges and controversies* (2020).

Professor Mary Fulbrook, FBA, University College London (UCL).

Mary Fulbrook, FBA, a graduate of Cambridge and Harvard universities, is Professor of German History at University College London (UCL). Her current research is on rescue and survival across Europe during the Holocaust; she also serves on numerous academic advisory boards concerned with Holocaust representation (including the USHMM Academic Committee, the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora KZ Memorial Site, and the Editorial Advisory Board of *Yad Vashem Studies*). She is the author or editor of some 29 books, including *Bystander Society: Conformity and Complicity in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust* (2023); the Wolfson History Prize-winner *Reckonings: Legacies of Nazi Persecution and the Quest for Justice* (2018); and the Fraenkel Prize-winning *A Small Town near Auschwitz: Ordinary Nazis and the Holocaust* (2012), as well as, most recently, *Ten Moments that shaped Berlin* (2025) and, edited with Jürgen Matthäus, *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust Vol. 2: Perpetrating the Holocaust: Policies, Participants, Places* (2025).

Paul Shapiro Director of International Affairs at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Paul Shapiro was Founding Director of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies (1997-2016) and is currently Director of International Affairs at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. A consultant to the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI) regarding Holocaust perpetrators in the US, he also served on the Congressionally mandated Interagency Working Group on Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Government Records which declassified millions of documents revealing American government knowledge and decision-making regarding the Holocaust. He has served on the Academic Advisory Committee of the Center for Jewish History (New York). Among other studies, he wrote major sections of the *Final Report* of the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania, chaired by Elie Wiesel, and is author of *The Kishinev Ghetto 1941-1942: A Documentary History of the Holocaust in Romania's Contested Borderlands* (2015). He is the recipient of Germany's Cross of the Order of Merit (*Verdienstkreuz*).

Emeritus Professor Philip Spencer Kingston University

Philip Spencer is Emeritus Professor in Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Kingston University, where for many years he taught courses on the Holocaust and on

Genocide. He set up and was the director of the Helen Bamber Centre for the Study of Right, Conflict and Mass Violence, and the first European-wide Masters programme on Genocide and Human Rights. He was a founder member of the European Sociological Association network on Antisemitism. He has been a Visiting Professor in Politics at Birkbeck College and is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism. He was for many years a Trustee of the Wiener Holocaust Library and is now a member of its Academic Advisory Board.

He is the author of several works on antisemitism, genocide, the Holocaust, and nationalism, including *Antisemitism and the Left; on the return of the Jewish Question* (with Robert Fine), Manchester University Press, 2017; *Genocide since 1945*, Routledge, 2102; and (with Howard Wollman) *Nations and Nationalism*, Edinburgh University Press, 2006; and *Nationalism : a critical introduction*, Sage 2002.

Professor Zoë Waxman University of Oxford.

Zoë Waxman is Professor of Holocaust History at the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (2006), *Anne Frank* (2015), and *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History* (2017), as well as numerous articles relating to the Holocaust and genocide. She has served as a trustee of the Wiener Holocaust Library and was a member of the Academic Advisory Board for the Imperial War Museum's Holocaust galleries. She is currently co-chair of the Wiener Holocaust Library's Academic Advisory Board, a member of the Advisory Board of the *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, and part of the Expert Advisory Council for the Montreal Holocaust Museum.,

Associate Professor Isabel Wollaston University of Birmingham.

Isabel Wollaston is Associate Professor in Jewish and Holocaust Studies at the University of Birmingham. She has published widely on the history, representation, and memorialisation of the Holocaust, with particular reference to Auschwitz, visual representations, Jewish-Christian relations, and the work of Elie Wiesel. Isabel was a member of the Home Office's Holocaust Memorial Day Strategic Vision Group (2002-2005) and has served on the Academic Advisory Board of the National Holocaust Museum in Laxton, Nottinghamshire. She served as President of both the British Association for Jewish Studies (2005) and the British Association for Holocaust Studies (2015) and is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.