

Date: 23 May 2023

Dear Students and your parents/carers,

**Subject: Big Bang Fair 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023**

Thank you for signing up to attend the Big Bang Fair on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 – we are really looking forward to hosting you. I thought I would give you a little more insight into how the day will run, and some background on why we are doing this.

**First, the formalities:**

You need to be at your school at 6.45am with your packed lunch and refillable water bottle, ready to board the bus at 7am. The bus will leave promptly – be sure to be there on time. Bring a pen and notebook – you might want to take notes throughout the session.

There are 150 Year 6-8 students from three schools in the region! You'll arrive to Birmingham NEC at around 8.45am, traffic permitting, and a host of Arcadians will be there to welcome you and your teachers off the bus. With the Arcadians, including Laura Macdonald, we'll all sign in at the registration area – our session starts at 9am and runs until 12pm noon. At check-in, you will be presented with lanyard. Please wear these at all times; you will not be allowed into the event areas without them.

Together, we'll have a quick welcome session, then we'll break you up into smaller groups, along with a teacher/responsible adult from your school, and a couple of Arcadians. You'll tour the exhibition – there are hundreds of stalls, all showcasing different STEM activities you can participate in. I suggest you check out <https://www.thebigbang.org.uk/the-big-bang-fair/what-s-on/> and make a bit of a plan for what you especially want to see on the day. It's a huge space and it's going to be a (fun and engaging) sensory overload – feel free to bring anything you need (including noise cancelling ear defenders) to ensure that you have a great visit.

At 12pm noon, the session completes – there are picnic areas within the NEC hall, so we'll all have our packed lunch there, we'll ask you to fill in a feedback form from the session, and we'll get you back on the bus.

You'll be boarding the bus around 1pm, and we aim to have you back at your school at 3pm, ready to go home/onto after school activities as you usually would.

**Now for 'the why':**

For over 135 years, Arcadis has passionately given back to the communities in which our commissions are based. We are working on a new railway project called East West Rail that aims to deliver much-needed transport connections for communities between Oxford and Cambridge by:

- Upgrading an existing section of railway between Oxford and Bicester
- Bringing back a disused section of railway between Bicester and Bletchley
- Refurbishing existing railway between Bletchley and Bedford
- Building a brand new railway between Bedford and Cambridge.

Arcadis and East West Rail Company (and other companies who are supporting the works) are investing in the communities that will benefit from East West Rail by way of school visits, helping mentor and upskill people, recruiting individuals to join our companies, giving up our time to help with charities in the area, offering work experience, and showcasing STEM sessions to inspire young people to continue with their studies and hopefully take up a career where they will make use of STEM. We thought that the **Big Bang Fair** was a great opportunity to see all the fun that can be had in a condensed period of time.

If you have any questions ahead of the day, please do field them through the teacher who is coordinating the attendance to **Big Bang Fair** for your school, and they will get through to me. I'll respond as quickly as possible.

Otherwise, I am really looking forward to seeing you on 22<sup>nd</sup> June at the Birmingham NEC for what is set to be a really fun session.

Kindly

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Social Value Manager

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