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50 Days to go to The Big Bang – It's elementary!

Children create "Human Periodic Table" to mark countdown to UK science & engineering spectacular

With just 50 days to go, over 100 children have come together to help organisers of the 2010 Big Bang: UK Young Scientists' and Engineers' Fair launch the full programme for the March spectacular in Manchester.

The students from Manchester schools launched the countdown by creating a human representation of the periodic table, with each child representing a chemical element (photo available on request). As well as highlighting the fun "elements" of the forthcoming Fair, organizers launched a new 'countdown' website giving visitors a flavour of what to expect at March's extravaganza: www.thebigbangfair.co.uk/countdown

The Big Bang 50 day countdown website showcases the most exciting activities and exhibits at The Big Bang and the best of the events from National Science & Engineering Week. The site also provides ideas of great things to do to get you in the mood for The Fair, including 50 experiments to do at home and in class and 40 fascinating science facts for kids:

- find out weird and wonderful science facts such as why people sneeze when looking at the sun or how to grow your own body parts.
- or learn about experiments to do at home such as using marshmallows to look at how cells split or a 'blubber' glove to investigate heat insulation. .

The Fair, which takes place at Manchester Central Convention Complex, 11-13 March 2010, will also host more than 120 interactive activities, exhibitions and live shows, as well as the finals of the National Science & Engineering Competition. Organisers believe The Fair will be the biggest, single celebration of science and engineering in the UK, with more than 15,000 people already registered to attend. This year, for the first time, there is an open day on Saturday 13th when The Big Bang team is inviting children to bring their families and friends for free*.

Lead acts at The Fair include live performances of television's 'Bang Goes The Theory' and 'Brainiac Live' shows, as well as the 2009 Royal Institution's Christmas lectures - 300 Million Year war between plants and animals. Other great activities available include:

- The finals of the National Science & Engineering Competition
- Live shows from science comedians Punk Science
- Beautiful Music – Horrible Sounds – using acoustics science to make two terrible bands sound better
- Welding large structures using chocolate
- F1 in Schools Primary UK National Championship
- Primary Engineers National Finals
- 'CSI Manchester' workshop
- Smallpiece Trust challenge to answer engineering challenge set by Unicef
- Design and technology using Laser technology
- 'Space invaders' machine demonstrating solar emissions
- Experiments allowing visitors to measure the speed of light
- Maths challenges around oil trading and dealing on the markets
- Bridge building exercises from the Institute of Civil Engineers
- Do-it-yourself DNA and more

Sir Anthony Cleaver, Patron, The Big Bang 2010 said: "We are delighted that our second Big Bang Fair is just around the corner and that it is going to be even bigger, better attended and, more spectacular than last year's inaugural Fair, thanks to some amazing events and acts planned in our line-up. With 50 days go we're keen to build up to The Fair and whet the appetite of those thinking of coming along to find out more about science, technology, engineering & maths."

For more information and regular updates and to register for the public day of The Fair, go to www.thebigbangfair.co.uk

Ends

*Please note an adult must be accompanied by a minor

For more information, please contact the Big Bang press office at 020 7492 0978, or email bigbang@fishburn-hedges.co.uk

Notes to editors

About The Big Bang www.thebigbangfair.co.uk

The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists' and Engineers' Fair kicks off National Science and Engineering Week and will this year be held at Manchester Central Convention Complex, 11-13 March 2010. The Big Bang will celebrate and raise the profile of young people's

achievement in science and engineering and encourage more young people to take part in STEM initiatives with support from their parents and teachers. School groups are invited to The Fair, which will take place over three days and include over 300 student projects showcasing innovation and creativity competing in the National Science & Engineering Competition for national and international awards. And this year the event will also be open to the public on Saturday 13th March.

Led by EngineeringUK, The Big Bang is developed in partnership with over 70 organisations from business & industry, government and the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) community - with support from across the political spectrum.

About the National Science & Engineering Competition

The National Science & Engineering Competition is an initiative of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills as a response to a recommendation in Lord Sainsbury's report 'The Race to the Top'. It is coordinated by the British Science Association in partnership with Young Engineers and The Big Bang. The Competition, open to all 11-18 year olds, accepts projects from all areas of science, technology, engineering and maths. The finals of the National Science & Engineering Competition will be held at The Big Bang. For more information and a full list of sponsors go to www.nationalsciencecompetition.org.

About National Science & Engineering Week

National Science and Engineering Week (NSEW) is a ten day programme of science, engineering and technology events and activities across the UK aimed at people of all ages. In 2010 it will run from 12 – 21 March and the theme will be 'Earth'. National Science and Engineering Week is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and led by the British Science Association. The programme also works in partnership with EngineeringUK.