

11 December 2009

**AstraZeneca, BAE Systems, Shell and Siemens lead national event to inspire children about science and engineering**  
**Four of UK's major companies come forward to sponsor The Big Bang**

AstraZeneca, BAE Systems, Shell and Siemens have today announced they are to lead sponsorship of The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists' and Engineers' Fair. This comes as organisers confirmed that more than 13,000 students have already registered to attend the free event in March 2010 in Manchester. The Fair, which hosts the finals of the National Science & Engineering Competition, will celebrate young people's achievements in science and engineering during 2009 and will encourage young people of all ages to do more with science, technology, engineering and maths, (STEM), at school and beyond.

As part of the sponsorship agreement, AstraZeneca, BAE Systems, Shell and Siemens will demonstrate how they use STEM in their every day businesses. The sponsors will lead the event with a range of inspirational and interactive activities, in what organisers expect to be the UK's biggest celebration of science and engineering under one roof.

Sir Anthony Cleaver, Chairman of EngineeringUK, which leads The Big Bang, said: "Having leading companies from life sciences, aerospace, energy and electrical engineering, involved in The Big Bang allows us to show young people just some of the fantastic careers that are possible with a background in science, technology, engineering and maths. The participation of AstraZeneca, BAE Systems, Shell and Siemens - some of the UK's biggest employers of scientists and engineers in the UK - makes The Big Bang even more of an appealing event for students, teachers and parents who want to see science in action, outside the classroom."

Aileen Allsop, Vice President for Science Policy at AstraZeneca, said: "AstraZeneca is proud to sponsor the Big Bang Fair. We are keen to share our passion for science and play our part in developing the next generation of scientists and engineers. This event recognises the importance of ensuring that the UK has a strong foundation of skilled and passionate young people in these important areas and celebrates the marvellous achievements that young people can make."



Dick Olver, Chairman of BAE Systems said: ""As Britain's largest employer of engineers, we place huge importance in ensuring that world class scientists and engineers are nurtured through the UK's education system. To support this, we invest £41 million in the UK every year in working with schools, supporting university partnerships in the UK and providing training within the company. The Big Bang offers a valuable platform for Government, industry and engineering institutions to work together and engage with the next generation of engineers at a time where they are beginning to form opinions about their future careers."

Lynda Armstrong, Vice President, Technical, Shell said: "At Shell keeping ahead of new technologies is central to our success so we need problem solvers who can bring a fresh perspective. This is why we are delighted to support the Big Bang, encouraging scientists and engineers of the future. Their skills and critical thinking will be essential to us and the energy industry as a whole. I hope that it has a lasting and positive impact on all who participate".

Andreas J. Goss, UK Chief Executive of Siemens, said: "We are delighted to support this event because we recognise the need to help create tomorrow's talent by engaging school children in engineering, science and manufacturing from an early age. By supporting the development of scientists, engineers, technologists and mathematicians, Siemens can help establish the UK as a world leader in research and development and strengthen global competitiveness. As a global leader in innovation, Siemens needs bright young people who are fascinated by science and technology and The Big Bang gives us an ideal opportunity to find them".

The second Big Bang will be held between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Manchester Central. It will kick-off National Science & Engineering Week and is expected to attract around 15,000 students. On-site attractions include a range of interactive science exhibits, theatre, workshops and events which represent the very best of British science, engineering and technology.

## **Ends**

For more information, please contact Fishburn Hedges:

Francesca Bennett on 020 7544 3051 or [Francesca.bennett@fishburn-hedges.co.uk](mailto:Francesca.bennett@fishburn-hedges.co.uk)

Dominic Weeks on 020 7544 3012 or [Dominic.weeks@fishburn-hedges.co.uk](mailto:Dominic.weeks@fishburn-hedges.co.uk)

Press office telephone: 020 7492 0978



## Notes to editors

### **About The Big Bang [www.thebigbangfair.co.uk](http://www.thebigbangfair.co.uk)**

The Big Bang: UK Young Scientists' and Engineers' Fair at Manchester Central Convention Complex, 11-13 March 2010 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 will be invited to The Fair, which will take place over three days and include the 300 student projects showcasing innovation and creativity competing in the National Science & Engineering Competition for national and international awards. The Fair, which kicks off National Science & Engineering Week 2010, will also be open to the public on the Saturday.

The Competition entries, including British Science Association's CREST awards and projects supported by Young Engineers' form the centre piece of The Fair. The event, with an expected 13,000 visitors, is being organised by an extensive partnership from across the science, technology, engineering and mathematics communities, with support from the EngineeringUK.

The Fair will represent the best the UK has to offer, with entries from students (both individuals and teams) aged 11 to 18. Projects chosen will cover all aspects of science, technology, engineering and maths (including computing) - and range from hands-on or practical, to research and test based.

Judging will start on day one of The Big Bang - with finalists shortlisted for judging again the next day. Day two will end with a glitzy and prestigious awards ceremony where winners of the National Science and Engineering Competition will be announced - the winners of the senior category will be crowned the UK Young Scientist and UK Young Engineer of the Year. For more information on The Big Bang visit [www.thebigbangfair.co.uk](http://www.thebigbangfair.co.uk).

### **About the National Science & Engineering Competition [www.nationalsciencecompetition.org](http://www.nationalsciencecompetition.org)**

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](http://www.nationalsciencecompetition.org).

### **About AstraZeneca**

AstraZeneca is a major international healthcare business engaged in the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of meaningful prescription medicines and supplier for healthcare services. AstraZeneca is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies with healthcare sales of US\$ 31.6 billion and is a leader in gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory, oncology and infectious disease medicines. For more information about AstraZeneca, please visit: [www.astrazeneca.com](http://www.astrazeneca.com).

### **About BAE Systems**

BAE Systems is a leading global defence, security and aerospace company delivering a full range of products and services for air, land and naval forces, as well as advanced electronics, security, information technology solutions and customer support services. Engineering is at the heart of BAE Systems and the company is proud to employ 18,000 qualified engineers in the UK - more than any other company. BAE Systems is committed to inspiring future generations of young people to consider a career in science, engineering and technology and invests £41M every year in education and skills programmes to support schools, training and university partnerships in the UK.

### **About Royal Dutch Shell plc**

Royal Dutch Shell plc is incorporated in England and Wales, has its headquarters in The Hague and is listed on the London, Amsterdam, and New York stock exchanges. Shell companies have operations in more than 100 countries and territories with businesses including oil and gas exploration and production; production and marketing of liquefied natural gas and gas to liquids; manufacturing, marketing and shipping of oil products and chemicals and renewable energy projects. For further information, visit [www.shell.com](http://www.shell.com).

### **About Siemens in the UK**

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 166 years ago and now employs 18,402 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £3.7 billion. As a leading global engineering and technology services company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges, across the key sectors of energy, industry and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit [www.siemens.co.uk](http://www.siemens.co.uk).