

Going Fourth: Kids enjoy whizz-bang workshops in Hackney at annual science festival organised by National Grid and City Year UK

Over 200 youngsters from schools across Hackney convened for the fourth annual National Grid Science Festival which celebrated the joys of science and engineering.

09 Mar 2015

Held at the Tomlinson Centre in Haggerston on Friday (March 6) the festival was organised by National Grid and youth and education charity, City Year UK. It was attended by pupils from Brook Primary School, Holmleigh Primary School, Millfields Community School, Sebright Primary School, St John and St James Primary School and Whitmore Primary School.

Attractions included 'whizz-bang workshops' which are run by science education provider Mad Science and 18-25-year-old volunteers from City Year UK. The workshops provide pupils with an opportunity to get hands on with a variety of science-themed activities. This year, a particular favourite was the 'smoothie cycle', where the children cycled on a bike which powered a blender.

The National Grid Science Festival has been designed to inspire children's love of science and engineering. The festival is part of the 'School Power' programme; a unique collaboration between City Year UK and National Grid to deliver high-quality and fun extra-curricular workshops to interest children in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects and demonstrate their relevance to everyday life. Since its inception 15,000 London pupils have benefitted from the programme.

Dunjhaise Singh, Special Projects Leader at City Year UK, said: "Young people volunteer to give a year as role models, mentors and tutors through City Year because they want to inspire children's love of learning. I can't think of a better way of sparking an interest in science than this festival with National Grid.

"When they see the balloon inflate during the baking soda and vinegar reaction, you can see the kids literally light up. I wish I'd had a chance to go to something like this when I was at primary school!"

David Lutchford, National Grid's Head of Cable Tunnels said: "Back in 2011 National Grid embarked on a seven year project to rewire the capital via deep underground tunnels, in order to meet increasing electricity demand and help London access the renewable energy of the future.

"At the same time we wanted to develop a programme which would connect with London's children and help them to better understand the science which is part of our everyday lives and even inspire some to go on to be the scientists and engineers of the future.

“Collaboration with City Year UK has enabled us to do that, through training the inspirational, local young people who are spending a year volunteering in London schools with the charity.”

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- > [Gas](#)
- > [Operating responsibly](#)

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