

# THE GREAT EXHIBITION ROAD FESTIVAL 2026



6-7 JUNE, 12.00-18.00

Celebrate science and the arts with a weekend of free events for all ages.



www.exrdfestival.com @ExRdFestival

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

@ExRdFestival

## ENJOYED YOUR VISIT?

To improve our events, we'd love to hear your opinion of the Festival in our short survey.



www.imperial.ac.uk/festivalsurvey



## THE FESTIVAL IS PRESENTED BY

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON | ROYAL COMMISSION FOR THE EXHIBITION OF 1851 | SOUTH KEN CULTURE QUARTER | NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM | THE ROYAL PARKS | SCIENCE MUSEUM | V&A | ROYAL ALBERT HALL | GOETHE-INSTITUT | INSTITUT FRANÇAIS | ISMAILI CENTRE | ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART | ROYAL SOCIETY OF SCULPTORS

We are grateful to the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 for their ongoing support in making the Festival possible.

## WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTING PARTNERS:

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA | WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL | SERENDIPITY ARTS

Please be aware that the Great Exhibition Road Festival will be photographed and filmed and that by attending this event you consent to this material being used for publicity purposes by any of the partners listed above. If you do not wish to consent please pick up a red sticker from an Info Tent and wear it prominently.

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all activities. The Festival can get busy so please keep a close eye on children. The Festival is a no smoking site. Festival partners reserve the right to refuse entry or eject participants. This programme was accurate at the time of going to print. Any changes will be updated on our online programme. Thank you.

# ALL AGES



## ON EXHIBITION ROAD

- 01 **Drop-in Design: The Circulation Department**  
Make wearable art with the V&A in this hands-on family workshop.
- 03 **The Fabric of Us** Help create a woven installation exploring how experiences shape our ageing brain.
- 04 **Giant DNA Paper Modelling** Build a record-breaking paper DNA helix and learn all about the code of life.
- 05 **Climate Friendly Pop-Up Kitchen** Sample delicious planet-friendly snacks and recipes.
- 07 **Junk Sculptures** Make your own sculpture using upcycled materials.
- 08 **Paint Lab** Watch artists create ten murals inspired by the past, present and future of science.
- 09 **Step into a Souvenir** Snap an 1851-inspired moment of your time at this year's Festival.
- 10 **Prints, Pigments and Press** Investigate the art of printing and the science of pigments in this hands-on creative workshop!
- 11 **1851der Tent** Visualise sound, learn about hydrogen heroes and create with the Inventors Lab.
- 12 **Maths in Motion** Art meets fluid motion in this workshop inspired by the Islamic tradition of Ebru marbling.
- 13 **The Great Counter Exhibition of 2026** Contribute your own memories, ideas and favourite objects to a 21st century Great Exhibition.
- 14 **Machines of No Reason** Invent, draw and print playful, imaginary machines inspired by 1851's industrial marvels.
- 16 **The Crystal Palace Sandcastle** Watch a giant sand sculpture of the iconic Crystal Palace take shape across the Festival weekend.

## 19 MAIN STAGE

**Exhibition Road** Enjoy a packed schedule of vibrant and lively music from the Royal Albert Hall. Presented by West London's Portobello Radio.

## Giants on the Move: A Puppet Street Parade

Parades start at 12.45 and 15.15 (30 mins)  
Witness a stunning spectacle as handmade puppets move along Exhibition Road. Presented by Serendipity Arts.

## UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE ZONE

### Prince's Gardens, Imperial College London

Explore subterranean wildlife, glowing soil microbes, fossils and minerals through games, demonstrations, crafts and dance!

36 **Spores Galore: Wearable Wonders**  
Make and wear your own beautiful, printed textile fungi design.

37 **Earthbeat: The Underground Disco**  
Sessions start at 12.45, 14.15, 15.45 and 17.15 (45 mins) Bring your best moves to Earthbeat, an immersive dance experience inspired by the secret living worlds beneath our feet.

## WORLD SCIENCE ZONE

**Imperial Main Entrance, Imperial College London**  
From intelligent cities to the future of food, take a trip around the globe to see the international projects powering tomorrow's scientific breakthroughs.

**Make a Body Bot** Create a flexible textile robot with engineers designing squishy bots to explore our bodies.

20 **Space Craft Corner**  
**Shields Space, City and Guilds Building, Imperial College London** Make a decorative cosmic ornament with astrophysicists studying black holes.

## ON IMPERIAL COLLEGE ROAD

- 24 **Steelpan Jam-Along** Play, learn and explore the rich heritage of steelpan music.
- 25 **UK Wildlife Wonders** From pollinating bees to water purifying plants, discover how wildlife supports our everyday lives and then join a wildlife parade.

## 26 FUTURE FOOD LIVE

Shows start at 12.00, 13.15, 14.30, 15.45 and 17.00 (45 mins). Explore new flavours and ingredients, as chefs and scientists whip up dishes for you to sample.

## TECH ZONE

**Sir Alexander Fleming Building, Imperial College London**  
Experience the ground-breaking technologies that are shaping our world, from robots to spacecraft inspired by origami.

**Orbital Origami** Art and engineering come together in a paper folding workshop exploring future spacecraft design.

**Resonating Possibilities** Discover an immersive and interactive digital art piece that explores the strangeness of new quantum technologies.

## 32 BANDSTAND

**Dangoor Plaza, Imperial College London**  
Dance along to feel-good live performances and workshops.

## BE A SCIENTIST ZONE

**Flowers Building, Imperial College London**  
Shape the future of research, put your heart to the test and help design new wearable tech jewellery.

**RoboDoc: Robots and Radiation**  
Discover the potential of medical imaging and robotic surgery. Then put your skills to the test with a new spin on the classic game Operation.

**Ladders to Immunity** Try out a life-sized twist on Snakes and Ladders where vaccines take centre stage.

## HAPPINESS AND HEALTH ZONE

### Queen's Tower Rooms, Sherfield Building, Imperial College London

Explore the science behind feeling your best as researchers, doctors, and engineers share secrets to hacking your health and wellbeing.

**Making the Invisible Visible** Make your own mini-zine to reflect on invisible disabilities like Sickle Cell Disease that can change people's everyday experiences.

**Gene Home** Step inside a recreated 1970s living room of a Caribbean family to uncover how genes, culture, community and migration shape health and identity.

**Medicine, Metabolism, Meals and Me** Explore how culture, food and traditional knowledge affect our wellbeing in this creative workshop.

# ADULTS



18 **Moving Through Time: A Dance Experiment**  
**Auditorium, Goethe-Institut**  
Sessions start at 13.45, 15.15 and 16.45 (40 mins)  
Delve into the deeply personal nature of time at this unique disco inspired by how time moves, bends and flows.

## ADULTS ONLY ZONE (AGES 18+)

**Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College London**  
Grab a drink and explore science connected to our bodies, relationships and the wider cosmos through hands-on activities, comedy, dancing and quizzes.

**Beads and Biomes** Create your own textile art inspired by the fascinating world of the vaginal microbiome.

**Bollywood Under the Stars**  
Sessions start at 12.30, 13.40, 15.00, 16.10 and 17.20 (40 mins). Get ready to shine in a fun beginner-friendly dance class exploring how stars are born.

## 35 SCIENCE CABARET

Take in a high-energy live show or explore science through a creative workshop. Discover the science of attraction, laugh at award-winning comedy or craft a scientific mocktail.

**Saturday**  
12.45-13.20 The Quantum Disco  
13.55-14.25 The Science of Attraction Quiz  
15.05-15.50 This Turning World: Nature Music  
16.20-17.00 The Story Collider: Finding Your Path  
17.20-18.00 The Story Collider: Changing Perspectives

**Sunday**  
12.45-13.20 The Quantum Disco  
13.55-14.25 The Science of Attraction Quiz  
14.50-15.50 The Chemistry of Curiosity: Science and Sip  
16.20-17.00 Science Comedy: Water  
17.20-18.00 Science Comedy: Self-Care

## 06 CULTURAL CONNECTIONS TALKS

**The Lydia and Manfred Gorvy Lecture Theatre, V&A**  
Exploring culture together through conversation and creativity.

**Saturday**  
13.30-14.25 Dancing Nature: Science Storytelling Through Ballet  
15.00-15.55 Britain's First Black Musical Superstar  
16.30-17.15 Queer Albert Hall

**Sunday**  
13.30-14.25 Revisiting the Great Exhibition of 1851  
15.00-15.55 The Joy of Playing Music  
16.20-17.15 Design Your Own Crystal Palace

## 27 SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE TALKS

**G16 Lecture Theatre, Sir Alexander Fleming Building, Imperial College London**  
Meet the scientists shaping tomorrow's big breakthroughs.

**Saturday**  
14.00-14.55 Growing Food in Space  
15.30-16.15 Myth Busting the Immune System  
17.00-17.55 The Robot Doctor Will See You Now

**Sunday**  
14.00-14.45 Plant-Powered Vaccines  
15.30-16.15 50 Years on Mars  
17.00-17.55 Ideas That Will Change the World

# FAMILIES



## FAMILY FUN ZONE

**Kensington Gardens**  
Try awesome activities especially designed for families and delivered by real-life scientists, engineers and ecologists.

- 39 **Discover the Royal Parks** Explore the parks' incredible wildlife and unique heritage.
- 41 **Molecules and Red Cells** Race blood cells through mazes and make candy models of molecules.
- 44 **Soaring Sailing Solar Planes** Check out a solar-powered, unmanned aircraft developed for a record-breaking flight attempt!
- 46 **Culture and Creativity in French** Experiment with cyanotype printing or write a poem.
- 48 **Antarctica: The Coolest Place on Earth** Dress up like a polar researcher, make penguin crafts and find out what life's like on our most remote continent!
- 50 **The Story, Song, Wriggle and Rhyme Tent** Join our fun-packed, story-filled tent for children aged under 5 and their families.



## 38 FAMILY STAGE

**Saturday**  
12.30-13.00 Mission to Space with the Science Museum  
13.15-13.45 The Insect Game Show  
14.00-14.30 Bass in Your Face  
14.45-15.15 The Insect Game Show  
15.30-16.00 Speaker Box Street Party!  
16.15-16.45 Mission to Space with the Science Museum  
17.00-17.30 Bass in Your Face

**Sunday**  
12.00-12.30 Bubble Superstars  
12.45-13.15 Mission to Space with the Science Museum  
13.30-14.00 Folk Dance Remixed: Ceilidh Jam!  
14.15-14.45 Hertha Ayrton Sings: The Cambridge First All-Ladies Fire Brigade  
15.00-15.30 Bubble Superstars  
15.45-16.15 Mission to Space with the Science Museum  
16.30-17.00 Hertha Ayrton Sings: The Cambridge First All-Ladies Fire Brigade  
17.15-17.45 Bass in Your Face

## 21 SUPER COOL CHEMISTRY SHOW

**LT200 Lecture Theatre, City and Guilds Building, Imperial College London**  
**Saturday: 13.00, 14.20, 15.40 (40 mins)**  
**Sunday: 13.00, 14.20, 15.40, 17.00 (40 mins)**  
Chemistry is brought to life through amazing reactions, slime and explosions at this family-friendly science show!

# WELCOME

Enjoy an incredible weekend of free, fascinating talks, hands-on workshops, lively shows and more at the Great Exhibition Road Festival!

Browse a selection of events for all ages in this programme, or visit our website for more.

This year, to mark the 175-year anniversary of the Great Exhibition of 1851, we will be exploring its complex history and legacy through talks and events.

Don't miss our themed Zones, each filled with creative workshops, interactive exhibits and live demonstrations showing the future of science, the arts and innovation, including our Family Fun Zone in Kensington Gardens, near the site of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

All featured events will have drop-in spaces, even those with advanced tickets.

Visit the website for the full events programme:  
www.exrdfestival.com



# YOUNG ADULTS



## NEXTGEN ZONE (AGES 13-25)

### The Smith Centre, Science Museum

Join us at this high-energy hub designed by, and for, the innovators of tomorrow. Explore advances in robotics, discover the unexpected side of human biology, and unleash your creativity.

**Uncovering 1851** Explore hidden stories from the Great Exhibition of 1851 through a textile art installation.

**RoboFootball** Watch fully autonomous robots competing in a fast-paced football match.



Marking 175 years since the Great Exhibition

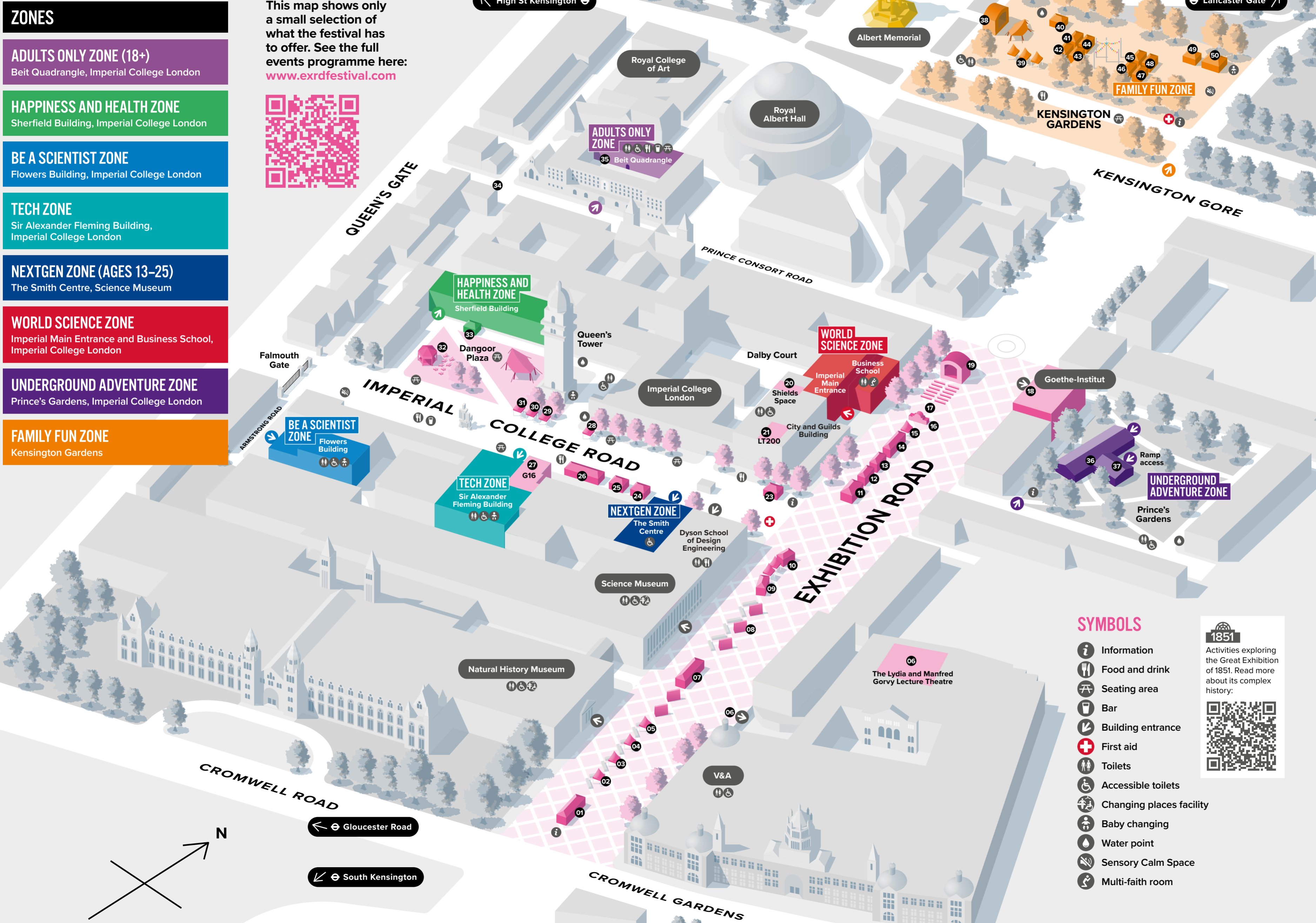
Look out for activities labelled with this symbol and read more about the complex history of the event here:



# FESTIVAL MAP

- ZONES**
- ADULTS ONLY ZONE (18+)**  
Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College London
  - HAPPINESS AND HEALTH ZONE**  
Sherfield Building, Imperial College London
  - BE A SCIENTIST ZONE**  
Flowers Building, Imperial College London
  - TECH ZONE**  
Sir Alexander Fleming Building, Imperial College London
  - NEXTGEN ZONE (AGES 13-25)**  
The Smith Centre, Science Museum
  - WORLD SCIENCE ZONE**  
Imperial Main Entrance and Business School, Imperial College London
  - UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE ZONE**  
Prince's Gardens, Imperial College London
  - FAMILY FUN ZONE**  
Kensington Gardens

This map shows only a small selection of what the festival has to offer. See the full events programme here: [www.exrdfestival.com](http://www.exrdfestival.com)



## KEY TO NUMBERED ACTIVITIES

### ON AND NEAR EXHIBITION ROAD

- 01 Drop-in Design: The Circulation Department
- 02 1851 South Ken Culture Quarter tours
- 03 The Fabric of Us
- 04 Giant DNA Paper Modelling
- 05 Climate Friendly Pop-Up Kitchen
- 06 Cultural Connections talks
- 07 Junk Sculptures
- 08 Paint Lab
- 09 1851 Step into a Souvenir
- 10 1851 Prints, Pigments and Press
- 11 1851der Tent
- 12 Maths in Motion
- 13 1851 The Great Counter Exhibition of 2026
- 14 1851 Machines of No Reason
- 15 1851 Great Exhibition Road Festival tours
- 16 1851 The Crystal Palace Sandcastle
- 17 1851 A New Crystal Palace
- 18 Moving Through Time: A Dance Experiment
- 19 Main Stage
- 20 Space Craft Corner
- 21 Super Cool Chemistry Show
- 22 EVENT CANCELLED

### ON AND NEAR IMPERIAL COLLEGE ROAD

- 23 Maths Exploratorium
- 24 Steelpan Jam-Along
- 25 UK Wildlife Wonders
- 26 Future Food Live
- 27 Spotlight on Science talks
- 28 The Power of Water
- 29 Designing for a Greener Future
- 30 Electricity of Tomorrow
- 31 Sound of Serotonin
- 32 Bandstand

### HAPPINESS AND HEALTH ZONE

- 33 Resist the Resistance!

### ADULTS ONLY ZONE

- 34 Zen Bus: Creating Calm
- 35 Science Cabaret

### UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE ZONE

- 36 Spores Galore: Wearable Wonders
- 37 Earthbeat: The Underground Disco

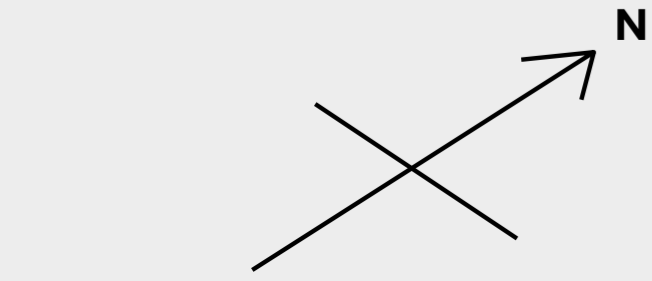
### FAMILY FUN ZONE

- 38 Family Stage
- 39 1851 Discover the Royal Parks
- 40 The Atomic Arcade
- 41 Molecules and Red Cells
- 42 What's in Your Blood
- 43 Future of Flight
- 44 Soaring Sailing Solar Planes
- 45 Wonderful Materials
- 46 Culture and Creativity in French
- 47 Eco Pawprints
- 48 Antarctica: The Coolest Place on Earth
- 49 Rocket Mice
- 50 The Story, Song, Wriggle and Rhyme Tent

## SYMBOLS

- Information
- Food and drink
- Seating area
- Bar
- Building entrance
- First aid
- Toilets
- Accessible toilets
- Changing places facility
- Baby changing
- Water point
- Sensory Calm Space
- Multi-faith room

**1851**  
Activities exploring the Great Exhibition of 1851. Read more about its complex history:



- Gloucester Road
- South Kensington