

INTER-FAITH MEETING UPDATE



INTER-FAITH MEETING | LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

Schedule:

Excel Opening & Didar Period:

- **6.30am:** Excel doors will open
- **9:30am:** Spiritual preparation/Intezar period begins
- **Didar period:** Expected to last at least 3 hours

Inter-Faith Meeting Timings:

- 1.30pm: Inter-Faith Meeting doors open
- 2.45pm: Inter-Faith Meeting doors close
- 4.15pm: Inter-Faith Meeting expected finishing time

Things to Remember:

- Please allow **up to 45 minutes** for event registration, security screening and placing your phones in locker storage
- No phones allowed
- Light refreshments will be provided on arrival to the Inter-Faith Meeting
- Collect your access card from the registration desk at either the East or West entrance

Access Cards:

We hope you have all collected your Access Cards from Jamatkhana now.

If you need to collect your Access Card on the day, or need it to be updated to include your attendance for the Inter-Faith Meeting, please visit the Registration Desks at either the East or West entry points.

Please ensure to plan your journeys with enough time to travel to Excel, leave your phones and pass through security screening before the start of the events you are attending.

Device Storage

- Lockers have capacity for 10-15 devices. It has been suggested that you purchase one per family that you intend to be with on the day. There may be lockers available to book on arrival on the day, subject to availability.
- We would recommend arriving at the **West entrance** if possible as this is closest to the Inter-Faith Meeting Hall. However, please check where your locker is located and aim to arrive at that entrance.
- Alternatively, you can use the **underpass** to travel to the other entrance to reach your locker.

Options for Inter-Faith Family Members During Didar Period:

Within Secure Zone of Excel:

- As Inter-Faith Family Members, you are welcome alongside your family from the time doors open, for the entire day.
- If staying all day, once your Ismaili family members have entered the Didar hall, you are welcome to stay in the Social Hall, where there will be space in the **East side of the hall** to socialise with other inter-faith partners and children, play games or join ice-breaker activities (ideal for meeting new people), and quiet areas where you can bring your own book. You will be able to access any first aid support if required. Please note volunteers will also be in the Social Hall preparing for lunch and moving large trolleys around, therefore please ensure young children are accompanied at all times. The area in front of the stage will be free with no expected work taking place, so may be a good area for your children to play freely.
- For young children (0-5 year olds), the Little Village will be **closed** during this time. However, there is the well-being hub in the same East area of the Social hall with private areas for nursing. Nappy change areas are available in nearby toilets. Please note that managed activities within this zone will be limited to games and playing cards during this time. Please bring activities for young children if you need.
- Volunteers will be available for any questions and to show you the different spaces available.

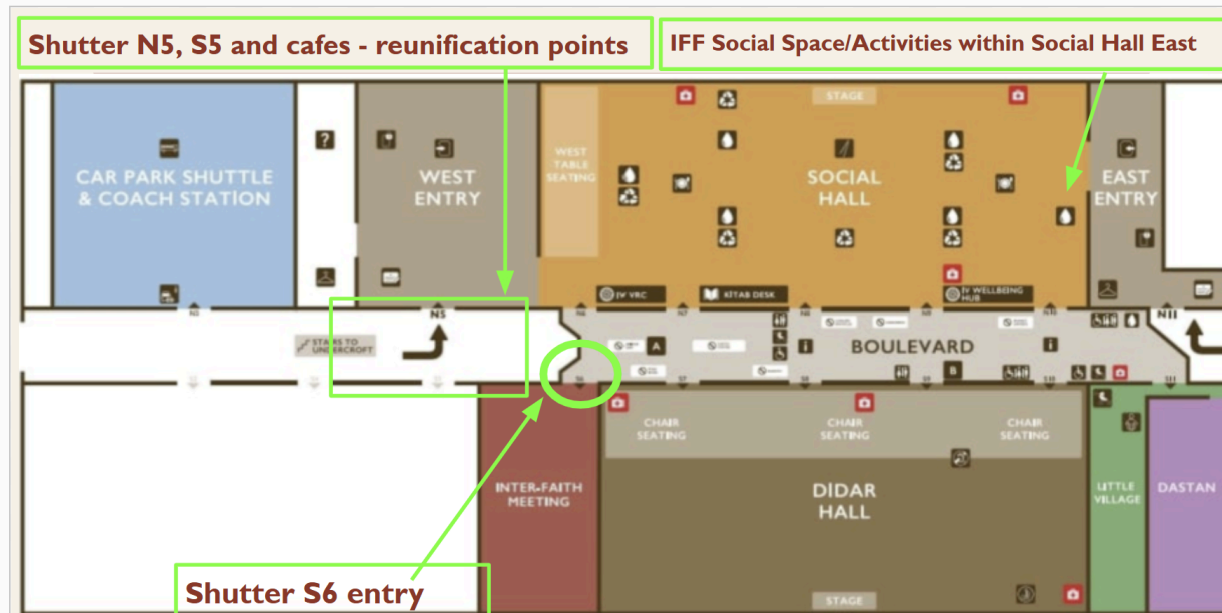
Outside Secure Zone/Excel:

- Another option is once your family is in the Didar hall, you may leave the secure (phone-free) area, retrieve your electronic devices, and stay within the Excel space.
- We recommend **remaining on the West side**, where food and beverage concessions may be open, and you will be easily able to rejoin in time to queue for the Inter-Faith Meeting.
- If you wish, you can also leave the Excel building. We recommend coming back to Excel by 1pm at the latest.
- The Didar hall itself will only be open to Ismailis before Didar; the only non-Ismailis who will enter the hall (and will exit prior to the Imam's arrival), are a small number of pre-registered carers for those with medical needs.
- We expect the Didar period to last at least 3 hours. We endeavour to try and keep you updated of timings of Hazar Imam's entry and exit with screen updates in the areas you'll be waiting.
- For those of you that have registered to volunteer, there may be roles you will be assigned during this time to support those using the Inter-Faith spaces.

If you plan to arrive after Didar:

- If you plan to arrive after Didar has started, please arrive no later than 1:00 PM. This allows time to check in phones and reach the Inter-Faith Meeting room, accounting for entry from either the East or West entrances and passing through security.

Reunification:



- We have shown here where the activities and social spaces will be in the Social Hall.
- We have also highlighted the entrance to the interfaith family room which is **via Shutter S6**. This is on the **West side of Excel**, close to the West side lockers and near the Secure Zone boundary.
- At the end of Didar, we encourage partners to use this time to reunite before queuing for the Inter-Faith Meeting.
- There will be only a short time between the end of Didar and the start of the meeting. We do not recommend collecting your phone to locate your partner, especially as phones are not permitted inside.
- **Suggested Reunification Points**
 - Inter-Faith partners will be able to enter the Inter-Faith Meeting room first so that they can secure a maximum of two seats, and meet their Ismaili partner there. If you prefer this option, we suggest agreeing roughly where to meet in that room - **for example, the left or right hand side of the stage**, so that you can find each other quickly in the large space.
 - Another option is to meet your partner at the following **Shutter entrances or cafes**, agreed in advance. This will help avoid overcrowding at any one meeting point or at the door.
 - Shutter N5
 - Shutter S5
 - Nearby cafes e.g. Rotisserie Chicken, Bagel, Viva! Burrito, Pizza Popolare



- To support a smooth transition from the Didar hall into the Inter-Faith Meeting, we recommend that the Ismaili partner exits the Didar hall from the West side and goes straight to your agreed reunification point.
- Volunteers in the Didar hall will be able to direct you to the correct shutters. Given you will be exiting from the West you may prefer to be seated on that same side of the hall for Didar.
- For those with young children, please also use this time for your children's guardians or carers to pick up your children, and agree with them a meeting point for after the Inter-Faith Meeting has completed. You are welcome to use the same reunification points, or you may want to choose somewhere in the Social hall or Little Village where they can continue their celebrations until you come to meet them. Alternatively, you can collect your devices after the meeting and contact your children's guardian/carers in order to meet up with them.
- For Ismaili's who need assistance, please ask the volunteer to support you with the shortest transition from the Didar hall to the IFM room.
- A sustenance bag including a piece of fruit, water, vegan granola bar, chocolate bar and a biscuit will be provided in the Inter Faith Meeting space on arrival, and fresh servings of biriyani lunch will be available after the meeting up until 5.30pm as the celebrations continue within the Social Hall.
- Note that the Inter-Faith Meeting is first-come, first-served seating with no reserved spaces and it may take you some time to enter the hall. So we recommend planning your route in advance and making your way as soon as possible to ensure you **reach the entry by 2:15pm latest** and have enough time to enter and be seated by 2.45pm.

Inter-Faith Meeting

Eligibility & Provisions for Young Children:

- This meeting is requested and designed at the direction of the Imam and is strictly for those who meet the eligibility criteria - the invite is for the inter-faith partner, and they can bring their Ismaili spouse if they wish. There will be no possibility of children attending.
- For those with young children, unfortunately we cannot provide a fully managed childcare provision for the group of this size, but there will be family-friendly places within Excel for them to use.
- The 'Little Village' with activities for 0-5 year olds will be open during the Inter-Faith Meeting and there will be a children's entertainer in the space from 3-5pm with exciting activities planned.
- It is important to remember that young children will need to be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times - for example a family member or friend.
- If an attending guardian is not available for your family, you can bring a carer that is non-ismaili, for example a nanny or an extended family member or friend.
- If you did not receive your carer's access pass yet, this will be available when you arrive at Excel, you can also bring a carer with you to get a pass on the day. Please allow enough time to queue to collect your passes and additional passes on the day.
- If you are attending alone and unable to make any other arrangements, please contact us and we will endeavour to support you as best we can.

Inter-Faith Meeting (IFM) Format

- It is exciting to see that over 2,500 people have registered for the Inter-Faith Meeting. The session will provide the opportunity to hear Hazar Imam speak and to meet other Inter-Faith Couples.
- The room will be set up with theatre-style seating facing the stage. Prior to Hazar Imam's arrival, the team will provide a short housekeeping reminder as well as an introduction to the meeting from a religious educator.
- Once Hazar Imam arrives, our MCs will guide us through the session and it's time to sit back and enjoy!
- The meeting will begin with a short address from the President of the UK National Council and then from Hazar Imam. After his address, Hazar Imam will share his perspectives on a few questions and themes which are important to Inter-Faith Families which will be shared with him in advance.

- We have collated the questions that you have sent to us and shared these along with the themes with Mawlana Hazar Imam's team. Our aim has been to address the main themes that have come up in your questions and in previous discussions and research, and that represent the wide demographics of inter-faith families.

The heart of this meeting is the opportunity **to be present together** – to listen to the Imam, to reflect, and to share the space with your partner in a way that we've not been invited to do in the past. We hope that the afternoon's planned events **will help create a meaningful and memorable experience for you.**

- We ask that you remain seated throughout the time Hazar Imam is in the room.
- Volunteers will be available around the room for any questions or support you may need, particularly in the lead up prior to Hazar Imam's arrival.
- The meeting with Hazar Imam in the room is **expected to last approximately 60 minutes.**
- From the schedule you can see that you will be queuing, entering the room and finding your seats up to 75 minutes before his arrival for your briefing.
- The whole period of the Inter-Faith Session will last approximately 2.5 hours. Please bear this in mind when planning childcare arrangements with your guardians and carers.

Etiquette:

- Although very unlikely in the abovementioned format, if Hazar Imam speaks with you directly, you may address him as **'Your Highness'**. Murids may also use the term **'Khudavind'**.
- There is no expectation to prepare anything in advance. We encourage you to be natural, respectful, and at ease. It is very unlikely, but if Hazar Imam initiates a greeting or a handshake, you are welcome to respond in the same way. Otherwise, simply follow his lead.
- Please don't worry about doing or saying the 'right' thing – being present and sincere is more than enough. Please also know that it is completely acceptable to simply listen and observe throughout the meeting.

Expectations of Inter-Faith Partners

- We acknowledge that for some partners, this meeting may feel both exciting and daunting. Please be reassured that the environment is intended to be welcoming, respectful and inclusive, and there is no expectation for non-Ismaili partners to have prior knowledge or familiarity with religious practices.

- People experience moments like this in different ways – some emotional, some quiet, some reflective – and all of those responses are completely valid.
- **You are welcome as you are.**
- Members of the team will be present throughout the event to support you with anything you may need.

Reminders:

- If you have wish to update your registration response, please email registration@iiuk.org
- Continue to check the [Inter-Faith Meeting webpage](#) and the usual social media channels for the latest updates
- On the day, remember to bring:
 - Access cards or any required documentation
 - Locker confirmation and agreed codes with those you are sharing with
 - Activities or snacks for young children
 - Any required medication
 - [Health passport](#) (if required)
- If you have a food allergy, feel free to bring your own food

Contact Details:

- Registration questions: accessline@iiuk.org
- Faith related questions to Waezeen (Religious Educators):
 - Amira: amira.tharani@gmail.com
 - Mohammed: msachedina@msn.com
- Volunteering queries - ivc@iiuk.org
- Any questions at any time direct to akysb.info@iiuk.org