# Competition winners announced for project looking to drive innovation through automated rail infrastructure design

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Network Rail and Innovate UK are pleased to announce Costain Limited, Graffica Limited, PEAN Technologies Limited and Plume Rail Limited are the winners of their collaborative research and development competition grant.

The competition, launched in November, asked entrants to develop solutions relevant to rail that apply automated design to track layout, overhead line electrification, traction power supply systems, and signalling systems. Automated design enables engineers to automatically explore a wide design space and identify the best design options quickly and in a cost-effective manner.

Following a competitive shortlisting process, the four winners were chosen and will share a slice of the £300,000 grant that will be put towards projects that develop and demonstrate tools to automatically plan rail infrastructure.

Atish Chauhan, project manager at Network Rail said: "I am really pleased that the challenge we set out in

our competition generated a lot of interest and that companies have come back with some excellent ideas and solutions. Using automated design will help Network Rail with producing better designs faster and support our support long-term service planning by allowing better assumptions about future infrastructure and associated changes to services."

Kelvin Davies, innovation lead for rail at Innovate UK said: "The collaboration between Innovate UK and Network Rail has seen the delivery of a very successful competition with a high level of interest, bringing together a range of organisations with different skills and specialisms. We look forward to working with Network Rail to deliver the exciting portfolio of projects over the coming 12 months and to help demonstrate the capability of automated design for planning different aspects of future railway systems."

Network Rail, through the Whole System Modelling programme, will continue to work closely with Innovate UK and the competition winners to give them the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their automated design tools.