

Final call for LNER FutureLabs entry

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London North Eastern Railway (LNER) announces the final call for entries to its **FutureLabs 2022** programme – the third cohort of its industry-leading accelerator that is committed to solving rail passenger pain points through new digital technologies.

To help tackle these industry-wide challenges, the FutureLabs 3.0 team is looking for ambitious startups and SMEs to join its 12-week programme where they will receive mentoring and funding opportunities to develop and scale-up technology solutions that address them. This latest Future Labs application round is seeing the strongest interest from start-ups than previous years with time limited for those wishing to take part before the deadline for entries.

Danny Gonzalez, Chief Digital and Innovation Officer at LNER, said: “LNER has already established a reputation as a pioneer in digital innovation to improve the onboard experience, by transforming the whole journey from booking to boarding. This committed approach has been pivotal in LNER leading the rail industry in attracting the highest rate of passengers returning to rail in the past year.

“We are incredibly proud to launch FutureLabs 3.0 to continue disrupting the supply chain and driving game-changing partnerships. This year’s challenges will continue our vision of using technology to improve the rail experiences for our customers, as well as deliver more efficient and sustainable travel.”

The FutureLabs 3.0 challenges include:

1. Encouraging rail travel: Showing passengers that rail is the transport mode of choice by making it even more enjoyable and seamless than ever before.
2. Creating a more sustainable railway: to help rail achieve NetZero by 2050.
3. Cultivating a safe and secure railway: Rail travel is for everyone. LNER is looking for ways to deliver an even safer travelling environment for all.
4. Exploring future tech: As an industry leader in innovation, LNER is always looking for cutting edge teams that collaborate to apply and push technology in rail to the next level.

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to develop and pitch their concept to senior management at LNER. Previous iterations of the FutureLabs programme have been pivotal in demonstrating how technology can make train journeys better for the customer. The first launch of FutureLabs led to LNER's QR-code enabled 'Let's Eat at Your Seat' function, a first for the rail industry that allows customers to enjoy a variety of food and beverages delivered directly to their seat.

As part of Future Labs 3.0, LNER is working with partners Network Rail, Southeastern, Northern and Alt Labs, providing applicants with unrivalled levels of access to the data and environments of multiple rail partners, as well as expert advice on creating a market-worthy proof of concept.

Applications for FutureLabs 3.0 close on 5th August 2022, with shortlisted companies announced on 12th August 2022. For more information visit: <https://lnerfuturelabs.co.uk/>

Photo credit: LNER