

Global High Speed Rail Learning Programme – Bombardier Transportation and Hitachi Rail to work with the National College for High Speed Rail

November 30, 2018



Hitachi and Bombardier, the UK-based global technology and engineering leaders who have joined forces in a bid to build the trains for HS2, are already attracting new British talent into the industry and developing the next generation of engineers. Today at the NCHSR in Doncaster, the companies are announcing the next step: A Global High Speed Rail Learning Programme.

If their bid is successful, the two companies have committed to working more closely with the NCHSR at its campuses in Doncaster and Birmingham. The companies are today meeting with the College in Doncaster to discuss the development of a new Global High Speed Rail Learning programme designed to provide a pathway from apprentice to further study at degree level; study which could include global high speed placements at the two company's locations in Italy, Germany, Japan, Sweden and the UK. The pathway would be open to NCHSR students, and those recruited by Hitachi and Bombardier.

Hitachi and Bombardier have formed a joint venture to bid for the contract to build and maintain the trains that will operate on Phase One of High Speed Two (HS2) from London to Birmingham. Hitachi and Bombardier's experts are already innovating to create a new lighter, quieter and more energy efficient train, with features to maximise passenger comfort and capacity, and running at speeds of 360km/h. This hugely significant project will require the global expertise of both companies, and the participation of the next generation of specialists in design, production & maintenance.

The JV companies will expand their graduate and apprentice schemes, with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion, and aim to attract and develop the very best talent to work within HS2 project delivery teams. Train delivery for Phase One of HS2 is scheduled to take place by 2026 and maintenance of the trains will be required over a minimum 12-year period, meaning that the high speed rail sector will provide exciting, long-term career prospects.

Subject to passing a rigorous selection process run by Hitachi and Bombardier, a selected group of students from the NCHSR in Doncaster will be invited to undergo an intensive learning programme which will involve skills development acquired through experience of Hitachi's and Bombardier's global centres of excellence.

Once the contract has been awarded in 2020 the successful HS2 bidder will be part of a collaborative design process to shape the final product, with the interiors and passenger offering specified by the Department for Transport and the HS2 franchise operator.

Karen Boswell, Managing Director at Hitachi Rail, said:

"This exciting global scheme offers young people a once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunity. We aim to build an iconic British train for HS2 that will offer an unrivalled passenger experience but this investment also has to deliver a skills and supplier legacy for the UK. We want to bring in and nurture new talent that will support the high speed rail industry both here at home and for export abroad."

Phil Hufton, Managing Director UK, Bombardier Transportation, said:

"HS2 is the ultimate future-looking project so we are developing a train fit for the 2030's, not today. That's why we are determined to harness the very best young talent, and build learning pathways from Doncaster and beyond; all to create in this country a lasting, exportable legacy in high speed rail."

Clair Mowbray, Chief Executive, National College for High Speed Rail, said:

"We are excited about the potential development of an innovative global high-speed rail learning programme for the Bombardier and Hitachi joint venture, as part of their building and maintenance bid for HS2. We are thrilled to be engaged with Bombardier and Hitachi at this stage in their bidding and we are working with the companies to develop and implement a robust and inspiring apprenticeship programme that will ensure a highly skilled workforce to deliver the build and maintenance contracts for HS2."