

Government and industry unite to launch Rail Innovation Exhibition

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Innovate UK, KTN, the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Railway Industry Association (RIA) are partnering to hold a four-day **Rail Innovation Exhibition**, showcasing the best in rail innovation.

The joint virtual exhibition will take place from 9-12 February 2021 is supported by Network Rail and the UK Rail Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN). It will bring together a fantastic line-up to showcase some of the most exciting innovations and projects the rail sector has to offer.

Across the four days, there will be sessions highlighting the winners of the DfT-funded 'First of a Kind' Rail Demonstration and Accelerating Innovation in Rail competitions, as well as several major announcements on projects and new research centres.

The exhibition will also feature RIA's next Unlocking Innovation series – titled 'Building Back Better' – which will focus on how the industry can improve passenger experience and accessibility to accelerate the post-Coronavirus recovery. As part of the proceedings, RIA will be holding 'problem solving' roundtables to match problem owners with companies and organisations who can offer innovative solutions.

Attendees at the event will be able to visit digital stalls, hear presentations ranging from customer experience and accessibility to sustainable stations and rolling stock, and participate in conference themes. Companies will have the opportunity to have their own virtual exhibition stand, promoting their innovative product or service to an engaged audience.

Commenting on the launch Milda Manomaityte, Senior Policy and Technical Manager at RIA, said: “RIA’s Unlocking Innovation series is fundamentally about catalysing innovative thinking across the industry, so making it part of the Rail Innovation Exhibition is an exciting opportunity.

“At a time when physical events are not possible, it is more important than ever to bring together leading organisations working on the latest products and services in rail and to enable discussions that help unlock innovation on the UK’s railways.

“We look forward to working with our event partners and exhibitors to provide a wide range of fascinating events and collaboration opportunities. Be sure to join us for what promises to be a brilliant four days of events.”

Daisy Chapman-Chamberlain, Knowledge Transfer Manager, Rail, KTN, said: “This promises to be an exceptional four-day showcase of innovation in the UK’s rail sector. Now, more than ever, engaging with businesses, particularly SMEs, making diverse connections and nurturing innovation in this sector is vital to rail and the UK as a whole. This virtual event is an opportunity to engage with innovators, funders and key industry operators and to hear from major players in rail.”

Kelvin Davies, Innovation Lead Rail at Innovate UK, said: “This exhibition and conference, delivered through a collaboration between Innovate UK, the Railway Industry Association and KTN on behalf of DfT, provides evidence of the high level of innovation delivered in recent years as part of the First of a Kind and Accelerating Innovation in Rail programmes. With a large number of products brought to the market, we are excited to present these to a wide audience from across the rail industry and to highlight the high-quality technology that has been developed to address the priority challenge of the industry.”

David Rowe, Head of Strategy – R&D Portfolio at Network Rail, said: “In Network Rail we have resolved to deliver a better service for passengers and freight, and strengthened our commitments to long term sustainable development. Supplier innovation is critical to achieving these ambitions and I am delighted to see this Unlocking Innovation event directly addressing these outcomes.”

Alex Burrows, Director, Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education and UKRRIN Centre for Excellence for Digital Systems Lead, said: “Collaboration is vital to ensure we are able to deliver the vision set out in the new Rail Technical Strategy and we are delighted to be partnering with UKRRIN’s founding members RIA, and Innovate UK, KTN and the DfT on this event. UKRRIN in conjunction with the Technical Leadership Group recognises the pressing need for innovation in passenger experience if we are to build back better, and is working to expand network and UK capabilities in line with this.”

To find out more and to register for the exhibition, [please visit the website here](#).