

HS2 contractor supports small businesses to win work to build Britain's new railway

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HS2's Contractor, Skanska Costain STRABAG joint venture (SCS Railways), are launching a virtual enterprise academy for the second time and are looking for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to get involved. The three-month programme has 150 free places available and will upskill businesses, giving SMEs the tools to work on projects like HS2.

Kicking off in April, the Academy will run through until June, and the modules will cover topics including HR, health and safety, social value, carbon management innovation, the environment, risk management, finance and commercial awareness.

David Poole, HS2 Ltd's Procurement and Commercial Director said: "The scale and complexity of HS2 means that we need businesses large and small with a wide range of expertise to work with us. The SCS Railways Enterprise Academy is a great opportunity for SMEs to receive support, prepare to win work and help us deliver this huge project."

To get involved, businesses need to have a turnover of £1 million for 2019/2020, a core business offering that aligns with the construction industry, and must demonstrate why they would like to take part in the

Academy.

To date, HS2 Ltd has already awarded around £18bn worth of contracts directly and a significant proportion of this value is expected to flow out to the wider supply chain. By the end of 2022, it's estimated this figure will reach around £25bn. Over 2,000 businesses have already won work on the project, 70% of which are SMEs.

Gareth Evans, SCS Railways' Head of Procurement and Supply Chain said: "We're essentially giving a new crop of businesses the opportunity to learn and upskill, so they're better positioned to compete and operate in our space. We want to give every company that attends the course the requisite tools that we look for in potential partners."

Emerson Cranes, a Buckinghamshire based SME, were one of 16 firms that completed last year's Enterprise Academy and have gone on to successfully win work on the HS2 project with SCS Railways.

Speaking about their experience at the Academy, Wayne Carr, Director at Emerson Cranes said: "The academy was a great opportunity to ensure that we understood how we can best navigate the HS2 supply chain and importantly understand and act on delivering the values and commitments that HS2 and their contractor SCS are looking for. The sessions were really useful and helped us to successfully work on the HS2 project."

Registration for the Virtual Academy closes on Tuesday 6th April. In order to access and apply for a place, businesses need to register on the CompeteFor portal. HS2 Ltd and its construction partners also use CompeteFor to advertise all subcontract opportunities and businesses who set up a company profile can receive tailored alerts to opportunities that match their trade. As Britain strives to build back better, businesses of all sizes from across the UK are encouraged to get 'HS2 ready'.

Photo credit: HS2 Ltd