

# HS2 signs landmark R&D agreement with the UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure & Cities

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HS2 Ltd has signed a ground-breaking agreement with leading infrastructure research centres in UK universities, which will enable it to access world-leading research capabilities, knowledge and facilities.

HS2 Ltd's agreement with the UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure and Cities (UKCRIC) will enable the project to draw upon key centres of British academic excellence to help drive new insight and technologies across the broad range of disciplines involved in building affordable, low carbon, modern infrastructure.

Co-ordinated by the Universities of Loughborough and Southampton, the agreement will enable HS2 Ltd to commission research from across the whole of UKCRIC for Britain's new high speed rail network. It will also provide a channel for the 15 academic institutions involved to put forward research findings that could be employed on the project.

Andrew Pestana, Innovation Strategy Manager at HS2, said: "HS2 is a major opportunity for Britain's

university and business sectors to collaborate at the leading edge of innovation to meet the challenge of delivering Britain's new high speed rail network. The project's size and 20-year delivery programme provides the perfect environment in which to develop solutions for High Speed 2 and the wider rail industry – both of which are crucial in helping Britain's transport network to decarbonise."

The agreement will first look to identify key areas for collaboration on low carbon concrete, such as alternative reinforcement methods, reducing embedded carbon in production, and re-use of materials.

Convenor of UKCRIC William Powrie, of the University of Southampton, said: "This landmark agreement will enable HS2 to harness the power of UK universities in civil engineering innovation to meet the challenge of providing a robust, long-lasting railway at an affordable carbon and financial cost. In addition to bringing high TRL research to bear to address known and immediate challenges, engagement with HS2 will stimulate blue-skies thinking and catalyse new research that will have influence and impact for decades to come. Researchers in universities that are not full members of UKCRIC will be able to become involved, and the potential to make a real difference is huge."

Sergio Cavalaro, Skills Lead for UKCRIC, said: "With this agreement, we will promote collaborations between HS2 and UKCRIC partners aimed at answering the myriad of challenges that must be addressed in the project. This ambitious and comprehensive endeavour acknowledges the complementary roles of research and training in providing the know-how to address such challenges, while developing the research-minded experts and embedding the skills that will enable continued progress in and beyond HS2."

*Photo credit: HS2 Ltd*