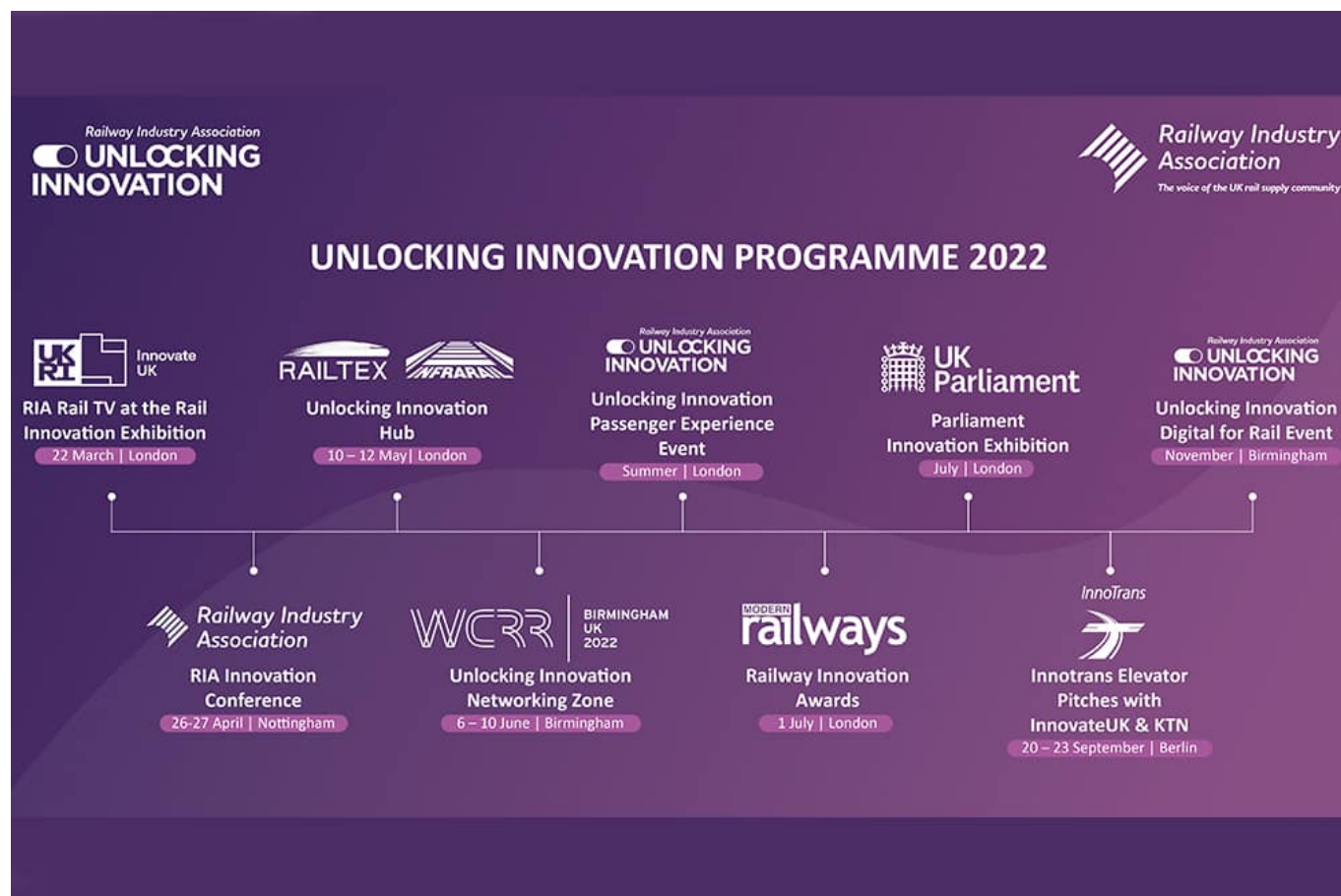


Launch of Unlocking Innovation 2022 programme

January 31, 2022



The Railway Industry Association (RIA) has launched its 2022 Unlocking Innovation programme, with a range of events and activities throughout the year.

Unlocking Innovation is RIA's leading initiative to bring together clients and innovators in rail and promote the work they do. Having run for more than a decade, this year Unlocking Innovation will focus on the theme of 'Getting Ready for Great British Railways', covering how the railway sector can prepare for the coming industry restructure.

David Clarke, Technical Director at the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: "I am very excited to present the 2022 programme for Unlocking Innovation, which is jam-packed full of exciting events and activities to support innovation across the rail industry."

"For more than a decade, Unlocking Innovation has been bringing clients and innovators together and promoting rail's role as a state-of-the-art, innovative sector that is delivering new products and services to benefit those who use the railways."

“Following the Coronavirus pandemic, and as the industry embarks on a major reforms, it is vital the sector is able to continue adapting and improving through innovation. So, our theme this year is ‘Getting Ready for Great British Railways’, focusing on how we ensure we grasp the opportunities and overcome the challenges posed by moving to GBR.

“I’d like to thank our strategic partners, Network Rail and UKRRIN, as well as all those we are working with in 2022, to deliver our Unlocking Innovation programme.”

The Unlocking Innovation 2022 programme will involve:

- InnovateUK’s Rail Innovation Exhibition on 22 March – where RIA will be hosting Rail TV sessions;
- The award-winning Innovation Conference on 26-27 April – RIA’s flagship innovation event;
- Railtex / Infrarail on 10 – 12 May – where RIA will be hosting the Unlocking Innovation Hub;
- The World Congress on Railway Research on 6 – 10 June – where RIA will host the Unlocking Innovation Networking Zone;
- The Parliamentary Innovation Exhibition in July – where RIA members will be able to exhibit to Parliamentarians and stakeholders;
- Modern Railways’ Railway Innovation Awards on 1 July – held in partnership with RIA;
- An Unlocking Innovation Passenger Experience event in Summer;
- Innotrans on 20 – 23 September – where RIA will be organising Unlocking Innovation Elevator Pitches with InnovateUK and KTN; and
- An Unlocking Innovation Digital for Rail event, in November.

David Rowe, Head of Strategy at Network Rail, said: “We’re delighted to be working with RIA’s Unlocking Innovation programme for 2022.

“Last year, we saw the number of professionals in rail saying they see the sector as ‘*extremely, very or quite innovative*’ increase by 12% from 2019 levels, showing that perceptions of our railway industry as innovative are getting better. But there is still so much more to do to promote new thinking and ways of working, including through support for Network Rail’s R&D Portfolio and the wide range of projects contained in it.

“We look forward to working with RIA on their strong programme of activities and events in 2022!”

Jo Binstead, Chair of UKRRIN, said: “Innovation is critical to any sector, which is why UKRRIN is working to bring academia together with industry to ensure new ideas can be turned into innovative products and services that have a real impact on rail customers.

“It is a really exciting time for UKRRIN – last year saw the launch of our new Technology and Innovation Hub with Unipart Rail and the opening of the new rail research building at the University of Birmingham. We’re looking forward to another great year working with RIA and partners to promote innovation in rail.”