

# Rail Alliance upgrades membership package to offer exclusive content to its SME Community

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In response to the growing concern and uncertainty of the current situation regarding COVID-19, Rail Alliance remains focused on providing support, guidance and opportunities for its SME Community made up of close to 670 members.

In light of the difficult circumstances facing the rail industry, Rail Alliance is providing all Community members access to exclusive, online, digital content, free of charge. This has been rapidly implemented so that SMEs can utilise the platform to engage digitally, utilise content that is otherwise paid for, and learn and apply skills and training to working remotely.

Rail Alliance wants to ensure that it continues to support the SME Community and continues to help companies navigate the complex rail landscape in particularly difficult circumstances. Due to its position within the University of Birmingham, Rail Alliance is able to reduce barriers to participation at this time and allow all community members the opportunity to use online content without charge.

Rail Alliance has a number of webinars available to view online right now, including a number of sessions planned around decarbonisation, digitalisation and many more.

To emphasise this offering and encourage members to remain connected, Rail Alliance will be hosting its first webinar on Thursday 2 April which will explore:

- the online platform;
- how SMEs can get the most out of online conferences;
- information on upcoming virtual events; and,
- how Rail Alliance can drive supply chain and business concerns to Government, Network Rail and all other relevant stakeholders.

As part of a wider plan, membership packages will be categorised as Gold, Silver and Bronze in order to offer membership programmes tailored to business needs.

Gold membership reflects the traditional package previously offered by the Rail Alliance which includes access to all of networking events in addition to the online portal.

The Silver package is a new level of membership that can be taken advantage of by those organisations preferring to only access the online platform including webinars and recorded events with the additional option of purchasing tickets to attend networking events, if they choose to.

Bronze replaces the freemium option and provides companies an online presence on the Rail Alliance website directory and a subscription to the newsletter to keep-up to-

date with industry news and events. A short video explaining the packages can be viewed using the following link: [www.railalliance.co.uk/rail-alliance-new-packages/](http://www.railalliance.co.uk/rail-alliance-new-packages/)

Alex Burrows, Managing Director Rail Alliance and BCRRE says: “The Rail Alliance continues to be dedicated to meeting the needs of its Community and recognises this as an evolving set of needs and requirements. This move ensures that all members gain maximum value from being part of this proactive and engaged cluster of rail businesses.

“We recognise that every company is in a difficult position right now and we want to extend our support to any organisation in our community that needs it and try to get through this testing time together as best we can.

“While we recognise that the current economic and social climate is very challenging and uncertain our ability to remain agile as an organisation and rapidly adapt to these trying circumstances in a way that effectively serves the needs of the Rail Alliance Community is a testament to the team.

“We are working on a number of initiatives that will engage the whole Community, allowing businesses to raise their concerns and questions, providing tools for learning and development, remain the point of contact to connect businesses together and establish new relationships and projects.”

For more information on the membership options and how to join the community, please go to [www.railalliance.co.uk](http://www.railalliance.co.uk). A new platform of online content and events will be announced in the next few days.

- Rail Alliance: The Rail Alliance is part of the Birmingham Centre for Rail Research and Education (BCRRE) – an integration that has strengthened the links between the two organisations and builds on connections with the wider railway sector. Not only does this ensure that research and teaching draws on real-world situations, it further reinforces relationships with SMEs for the benefit of the railway supply chain. As the rail sectors largest dedicated B2B rail community organisation, the Rail Alliance is all about bringing customers, suppliers and supply chain opportunities together. Its broad spectrum of members extends way beyond rail and positions the Rail Alliance as the go-to organisation for B2B diversity, ingenuity and innovation. [www.railalliance.co.uk](http://www.railalliance.co.uk)
- Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE): BCRRE is the largest specialist railway research, education and innovation centres in Europe with more than 170 researchers and staff and is part of the School of Engineering at the University of Birmingham.  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/railway/index.aspx>
- UKRRIN: The UK Rail Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN) is designed to create powerful collaboration between academia and industry, aiming to provide a step-change in innovation in the sector and accelerate new technologies and products from research into market applications globally.  
[www.ukrrin.org.uk](http://www.ukrrin.org.uk)

*Photo credit: BCRRE*