

Rail EDI Charter celebrates one year since launch, with over 170 organisations now signed up

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The rail Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Charter, led jointly by Women in Rail and the Railway Industry Association (RIA), is celebrating its first year of bringing organisations together to build a more balanced and higher performing sector.

In the year since its launch, the Charter has reached 174 signatories, covering organisations of all sizes and disciplines across rail, including Government bodies, major clients, operators, suppliers and SMEs from around the sector. RIA and WR have worked with the EDI Charter Working Group, made up of 11 individuals from signatory organisations, to deliver and promote the Charter within the industry.

The Charter involves several key commitments, including to:

- Appoint a member of the senior leadership team as an ‘EDI Champion’;
- Agree an action plan, monitor and report on progress made;
- Provide opportunities for training and education of employees, support the progression of diverse individuals into senior roles to improve diverse representation at senior and executive level of the UK railway industry;
- Create a culture that fosters inclusion and provide a safe space for all employees to talk openly, including at industry events and in meetings; and
- Make recruitment and progression processes accessible and attractive to all to attract, retain and develop people of all backgrounds, ages, genders and identities.

Kate Jennings, Policy Director of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: “It’s fantastic to celebrate a year of the rail Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter. In that time, we’ve delighted to see so many organisations, from all across rail, signing up to support a fairer, more equal and more diverse railway industry.

“In our first year, with the support of our EDI Group, we have raised the profile of EDI in the industry, discussed key issues including how we ensure inclusive opportunities for disabled colleagues, building inclusive leadership development and facilitated relationship-building within the industry with events, like our many Trailblazers events around the country.

“There is of course much more to do, and having organisations signed up from across the sector ensures we have a strong basis from which to build in the years ahead.

“And if you are an organisation yet to sign up, don’t worry – get in touch and join the many others who have committed to supporting EDI in rail!”

Christine Fernandes, Chair of Women in Rail, said: “It’s great that we have 174 organisations on board with the rail EDI Charter. Yet, there is clearly room for development and growth to increase this and there is certainly a job for us all as individuals to promote and advocate the Charter. We have had a strong first year and the focus of our next year will be to consolidate our discussions and provide robust support and direction to our members.”

The anniversary of the Charter was marked by a Trailblazers roundtable event at the RIA Annual Conference, where invitees discussed how to promote EDI, social mobility and skills within rail. Senior leaders from major rail suppliers were invited to bring along a younger person from their organisation or someone who has recently joined the industry, who they consider to be a future leader for the sector.

Read the full EDI Charter [here](#). The Charter is open to all organisations in rail – further details are available on the website on how your organisation can sign up.

RailDirector has been following the journey of the EDI Charter and each month has been speaking to the Working Group members. [Read the interviews **here**:](#)

Photo credit: Railway Industry Association