

Railway Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter reaches 200 signatories

November 14, 2022



The Railway Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Charter, led jointly by the Railway Industry Association (RIA) and Women in Rail, has celebrated its 200th signatory, with the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) signing up to the Charter.

Anit Chandarana, lead director of GBRTT, said: “We are very proud to be the 200th organisation in the rail industry to sign up to the EDI Charter. EDI is one of the foundational principles for GBRTT so is core to the culture we are building within the organisation.

“We are committed to integrate and embed equality, diversity and inclusion into everything that we do within GBRTT and in the design, mobilisation and formation of GBR as well. This is one of our many commitments to making our industry more equitable, diverse and inclusive and we look forward to our partnership with Women in Rail to progress this further.”

The EDI Charter was launched in November 2020 and is open to all companies, clients and organisations working in the UK rail sector who wish to play a role in promoting positive change in our industry. The voluntary initiative has attracted organisations of all sizes and disciplines across rail, including government

bodies, major clients, operators, suppliers and SMEs.

The Charter aims to promote an inclusive culture within railway organisations, and ultimately build a more balanced and higher performing sector which attracts, develops and retains the widest possible pipeline of talent and skills.

Christine Fernandes, chair of Women in Rail, said “Women in Rail are delighted that we have reached a new target of 200 signatories that have signed up to the EDI Charter.

“This underpins the support and engagement we have from the industry and the willingness to want to make a change and difference. It’s incredibly encouraging that our 200th signatory was GBRTT!”

All signatories endorse the commitment to work together to endorse the Charter, which 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 provides 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.

The first annual progress assessment of signatories is now underway. Preliminary results show around 90 percent of signatories have either agreed an action plan or are in the process of agreeing one; and nearly all signatories have an internal EDI Champion confirmed. The results also show a positive correlation between how comfortable people feel championing EDI, and how the good EDI culture is perceived to be within an organisation.

Responding to the achievement, Darren Caplan, RIA chief executive said “RIA is delighted to see so many different organisations, from all parts of the sector, signing up to support a fairer, more equal and more diverse railway industry. Reaching 200 signatories – and across all types of organisations – marks a major milestone for our industry.

“We now look forward to seeing even more organisations signing up to the Charter in the next year and we will continue to report on the good progress being made.”

Image credit: Railway Industry Association