

Railway Industry Association next Unlocking Innovation webinars to explore Digital Railway

June 9, 2020



The Railway Industry Association (RIA)'s well-regarded Unlocking Innovation events will return on the week commencing 29 June with a series of webinars looking at the Digital Railway programme.

The event, themed *Digital Railway for the Future*, will involve a free, one and a half hour webinar from 2-3.30pm each day throughout the week, open to all:

- **Monday 29 June:** *A Digital Railway Programme Update* with Andrew Simmons, Chief Systems Engineer, Digital Railway, Network Rail;
- **Tuesday 30 June:** *The First Roll Out Project*, with Toufic Machnouk, Programme Director for the East Coast Digital Programme, Network Rail and Andy Stringer, Chief Engineer, Siemens Rail Automation;
- **Wednesday 1 July:** *The Long Term View*, with Pat McFadden, National Signalling Design Group Manager and Sue Millington, Programme Manager, Network Rail and Rob Morris, Managing Director, Siemens Mobility and a Sector Deal Industry Champion;
- **Thursday 2 July:** *Innovation Included*, with Andrew Simmons, Chief Systems Engineer, Digital Railway and a Network Rail R&D Portfolio representative;
- **Friday 3 July:** *Winning Work in Digital Railway* with speakers TBC shortly.

Further speakers will be announced soon. Each day there will be several 'elevator pitches' from innovators wanting to be part of the Digital Railway Programme.

David Clarke, Technical Director of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: “Digital Railway is a fantastic opportunity for the rail industry. With around two thirds of signalling equipment units becoming life expired over the next 15 years and conventional renewal being unaffordable, there is a significant challenge, but also a major opportunity, for the UK rail industry to digitalise its signalling systems.

“Our next Unlocking Innovation will appeal to both those already involved in Digital Railway, and those completely new to it, providing an overview of the opportunities available to businesses. We hope to see you for another great series of Unlocking Innovation events.”

David Rowe, Head of Strategy for Network Rail’s R&D Portfolio, said: “We’re looking forward to another great week of webinars engaging with the rail industry. The Digital Railway programme is a catalyst for innovation offering major opportunities to change the capability and performance of the railway for passengers and freight users.

“These five punchy sessions are set to give some great insights for innovation opportunities, from current delivery to the future approaches being developed under Network Rail’s R&D Portfolio.”

Professor Clive Roberts, Director, Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education and UKRRIN Centre for Excellence for Digital Systems Lead, said: “We’re delighted to be supporting the next series of Unlocking Innovation webinars, with their focus on how the UK can digitalise its signalling system.

“Digital Railway will be essential in making our rail network future-ready, so getting the industry engaged with the market is vital, if we are to deliver successfully over the coming years.”

The webinars will explore the major opportunities and challenges facing the rail sector in digitalising, highlight the advice and funding available to help suppliers collaborate with the rail sector on innovation, and provide SMEs with an opportunity to pitch to major rail industry players. The webinars are organised in partnership with Network Rail and the UK Rail Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN).

All the webinars are free and open to any business or startup that wants to look at rail as a market. Journalists are welcome to attend and report on the webinars.

[Register for all events \(selecting the webinar via the top dropdown menu\) here](#)

RIA’s highly regarded Unlocking Innovation events bring together the people with ideas and ambition to drive change within the rail industry. The events create a platform for large and small companies, academics and innovators with the aim of developing productivities that will drive invention in the industry.

Unlocking Innovation events also aim to create new supply chains, to build value and benefit the UK economy, rail suppliers and ultimately the customers, the rail users.

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