

The Railway Industry Association and ITN Productions launch new programme highlighting innovation across the rail industry

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The Railway Industry Association (RIA) and ITN Productions have launched Part 2 of the bespoke industry programme to raise awareness and showcase innovation in the rail industry.

The programme, Part 1 of which launched at RIA's Annual Conference in November 2020, highlights key areas where UK rail can develop a competitive advantage through innovation in Materials, Automation, Data and Energy (MADE).

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The rail industry is a pioneer in new products and technologies, but more needs to be done to boost the sector's image and build up its conviction as a hub for innovation. **'Unlocking Innovation: M.A.D.E. with Rail'** unlocks, showcases and promotes new ideas within the rail supply sector.

Anchored by ITN Productions Industry News presenter **Natasha Kaplinsky**, the bespoke programme

features RIA executives and industry leaders and focuses on the essential themes which will allow UK rail to develop a competitive edge in innovation, by developing new supply chains that will build and benefit the UK economy, rail suppliers and ultimately, the customers who use the UK train network.

Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association, joins Natasha to discuss what the key areas, Materials, Automation, Data and Energy mean to the industry, from how the sector has supported the UK through the Coronavirus pandemic and the Government's plans for recovery, to what the industry is doing in the areas of decarbonisation and digitalisation.

In Part 2 ITN Productions Industry News reporter Julie MacDonald leads a report on the work being done to restore vital passenger rail services in Northumberland, halving commuting times and boosting the local economy by £470 million thanks to a unique partnership between the county council, AECOM and Network Rail that is designed to deliver faster infrastructure.

Also in Part 2, ITN Productions reporter Nick Thatcher reports on how the University of Southampton and the UK Rail Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN) are providing the rail industry invaluable access to support research and development.

'Unlocking Innovation: M.A.D.E. with Rail' Part 2 premiered with a special showcase opening RIA's virtual Innovation Conference on 28th April 2021.

Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association, said: "It is great to be working once again with ITN Productions for our third industry programme, celebrating the ingenuity, creativity and innovation that the UK railway industry contains.

"This year has clearly been a difficult one for rail companies of all types and sizes, who have worked really hard to keep the rail network moving during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is vital that we now highlight the great work being done by rail suppliers in the innovation space, developing new services and products in the areas of Materials, Automation, Data and Energy. And so we hope this programme shines a light on this fantastic work."

Nina Harrison-Bell, Head of ITN Productions Industry News (Interim) said: "We're delighted to be given the opportunity and platform to showcase the second part of **M.A.D.E with Rail** with the Railway Industry Association (RIA) highlighting the innovation across the sector and the companies driving the sector forward, ensuring a competitive advantage across the industry."

Photo credit: RIA