

# “There’s never been a better time to be a woman in the rail industry,” according to Northern’s COO

March 13, 2023



The chief operating officer of Northern has used Women’s History Month to urge women across the North of England to join her on the railway, declaring: “There’s never been a better time to be a woman in the rail industry.”

Tricia Williams, who leads the team responsible for the safe day-to-day operation of trains, stations, engineering and control – and who has helped drive the organisation’s equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy for the past two years – said: “We’ve made great strides in creating a supportive and flexible environment that women and other people want to work in.”

“Our aim has been to create a culture where everyone feels included and valued and make Northern a great place to work for everyone.”

Dozens of volunteers from across the business came together to advise on matters relating to EDI and to ensure the organisation continues to foster inclusive culture.

Since 2020, they have helped to introduced workplace policies on menopause, domestic violence support, becoming a parent and transgender support.

Northern's flexible and agile working policy offers the benefit of working outside of the traditional 9-5 schedule and can include home working and compressed hours if their role allows, which can have a huge impact on wellbeing as well as work-life balance.

They have also introduced blind sifting meaning information on CVs that could indicate a person's background or gender is removed to ensure there is no potential unconscious bias and that recruitment focuses on the skills required for the job. The policy gained recognition nationally and across the industry.

Northern Power Women, a leading equality campaign group, has also shortlisted Northern as the 'Large Organisation of the Year' at its upcoming 2023 awards, which are being held in Manchester on Monday, 20 March. It is the second year running that Northern has been shortlisted for the award.

The group praised Northern for its commitment to developing an inclusive culture in the workplace by demonstrating a forward-thinking approach to recruitment, development and retention of talent.

Tricia added: "Of Northern's 7,000-strong workforce, just over 1,300 of them are female. We want that to change. My message to women everywhere is 'Don't Delay, Apply Today'."

Women's History Month is a global event held in March to celebrate the achievements of women everywhere.

Northern operates more than 2,500 services a day to more than 500 stations across the North of England.

*Photo credit: Northern*