

University of Birmingham on track with Japan rail partnership

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Railways experts at the [University of Birmingham](#) are joining forces with [East Japan Railway Company \(Japan Railway East\)](#) to create innovative rail technology and new ways of staffing Japan's railways.

University of Birmingham Provost Professor Stephen Jarvis and Japan Railway East Senior Executive Officer, Shunzo Miyake signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a special ceremony at the University's UK campus.

Japan Railway East experts will join their counterparts in the Rail Innovation Cluster at the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) – working with start-up companies in the UK and Europe and conducting demonstration experiments in various technical areas.

The partnership will also establish an innovation hub at Takanawa Gateway City, which opens to the public later this year. There will also be an educational programme for railway personnel and joint research into railway-related fields, such as digital transformation (DX) and decarbonisation.

Provost Professor Stephen Jarvis from University of Birmingham commented: "The University of Birmingham is honoured to be signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Japan Railway East. Working

with leading international partners opens several opportunities for academia and industry to work together and showcase the impact of applied R&D, we look forward doing this with East Japan Railways.”

Shunzo Miyake, Senior Executive Officer, Director General of International Affairs Headquarters, Japan Railway East, commented: “We are honoured to take this first step in collaborating with the University of Birmingham, which has a British heritage as the birthplace of railways and the prestigious railway research institution BCRRE.

“British inter-city rail to London began with the London-Birmingham Railway, and Japanese railways began with the inter-city between Tokyo and Yokohama, where we currently operate, passing through Takanawa Gateway City. We hope this partnership would develop railway technology and generate innovation that will change the future of the rail industry and beyond.”

Professor Paul Plummer, Director of the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education, University of Birmingham commented, “It is great to build on strong international relationships through agreements that will improve our railways and the railway workforce. We are therefore delighted to be collaborating with Japan Railway East to develop and demonstrate technological advances. Education and upskilling are important to us, and we look forward to working with Japan Railway East to enable sustainable economic growth and wellbeing.”

The Rail Innovation Cluster encourages startup companies in the UK and Europe to innovate in the railway field – fostering innovation in railway technology by leveraging the University of Birmingham’s research and development capabilities railways and providing support through BCRRE’s international network.

BCRRE is one of the largest railway research and education institutions in Europe, located within the University of Birmingham. It is a leading partner of the UK Railway Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN), which works with the rail industry in the UK to deliver world-class research, education, and innovation to the world.

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