

**THE RAIL
INNOVATION
GROUP**

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WHO ARE WE?

Founded in 2016, The Rail Innovation Group is an independent non-profit organisation with a community across Great Britain focussed on rail's newest & future suppliers. It began in 2016 with a mission to welcome, and make life easier for digital & start up companies new to the rail sector - or even to find & attract those that haven't considered rail as a sector to do business in.

We see digital solutions to many of rail's challenges from customer services to operations to maintenance, by seeking out new suppliers & encouraging them into rail we will ensure we can operate an efficient, smart network for the future - one that passengers want to use! Our ever-growing network of advocates provide the insight, knowledge, & direct support at the grass roots to give that extra boost to our newest, & future, suppliers.

"The Rail Innovation Group offers a fun, friendly network of like-minded companies & professionals. Since joining as a Founding Member it's been amazing for our company, supporting us to expand & find new opportunities within & outside the railway."

Ben Craze
CEO & Co-Founder, Infinitive Group

The rail industry is complex...

We exist to support tech & digital innovators and SMEs to understand the complex structure of the railway industry & its procurement labyrinth so that they may consider it as a potential route to market.

We design our activities to be outward facing, actively welcoming suppliers that may not even have thought about rail as a route to market with no barriers to entry & a low entry cost for those that want to become members. We are there to support initial steps into rail before growing into the wider rail ecosystem - & we're more than happy to make these connections to our friends in other industry groups. Our activities are curated to provide this light-touch backing to start ups with few resources.

OUR ROLE

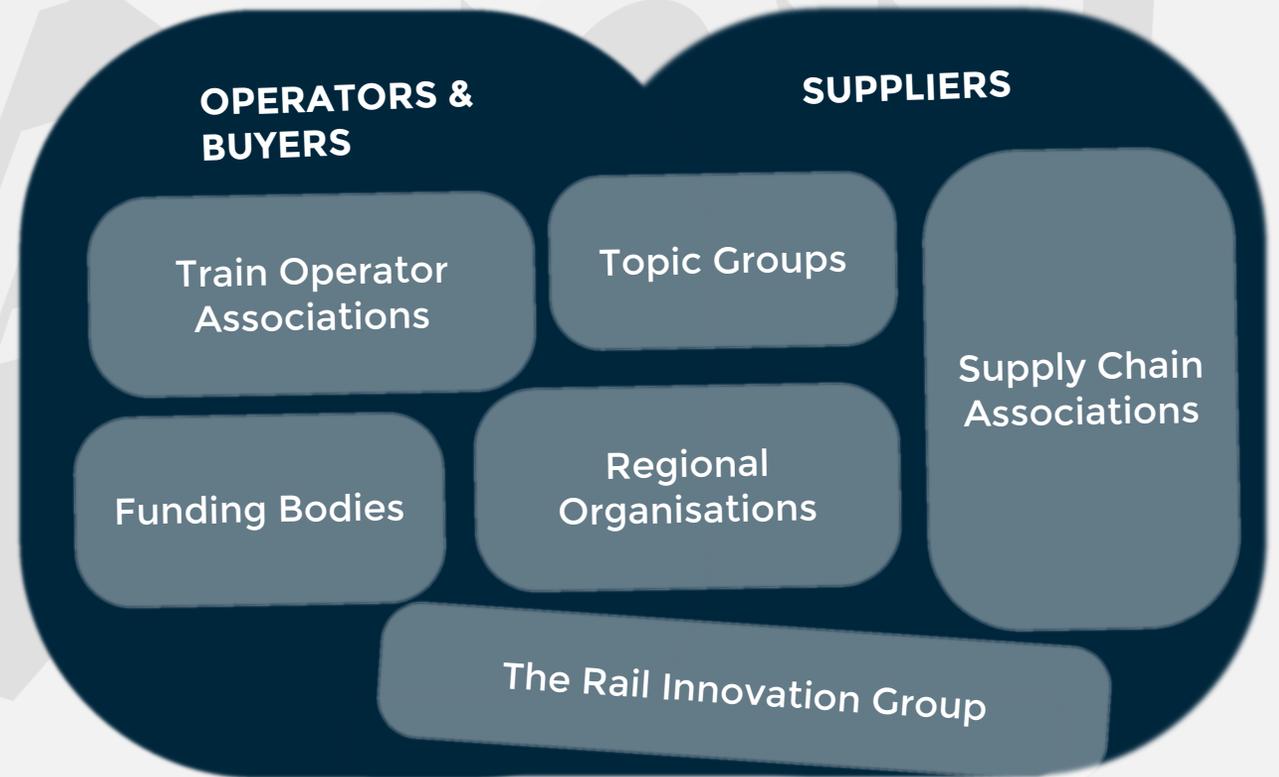
Changing Cultures

There's always a risk that people within established industries start to think that 'Innovation' is being done to them not for them or with them in mind. We break down these barriers by facilitating organic networking opportunities for people from rail to get to know and understand people in tech. By understanding each other, the two industries can better anticipate the development of solutions & their implementation, avoiding the pitfalls of working across unfamiliar processes & structures. To further these aims, we:

- 1 - Provide a neutral space for cross industry collaboration.
- 2 - Help rail adapt & prepare for future mobility services.
- 3 - Find & promote new types of suppliers.

Our Focus in rail's landscape

While our community brings people together from across the rail & tech sectors, our support is targeted at the grassroots.



OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Community

Our community includes a balanced proportion of people from rail companies, the public sector, consultancies, product developers, & importantly, people from larger companies who want to encourage new suppliers into the sector. We see this as proof of the ambition across the landscape to support and maintain the flow of new ideas, solutions, and suppliers.

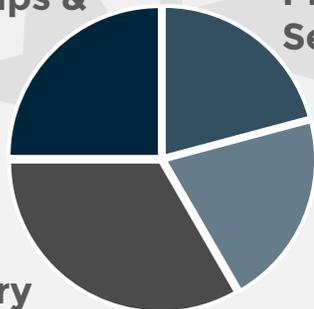
OUR COMMUNITY

Start-ups & SMEs

Professional Services

Rail Industry

Corporate Advocates



Members

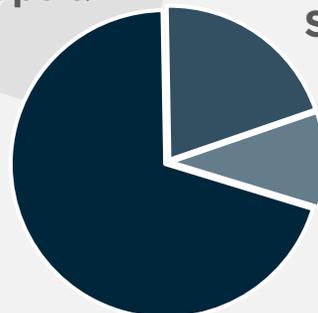
Our paid membership option provides the funds we need to keep doing our activities. Often, small suppliers desire additional support and guidance, for which we can provide through the membership programme. We are encouraged that some large corporate suppliers have also become members to further support our activities.

OUR MEMBERS

Start Ups & SMEs

Professional Services

Corporate Advocates



The Group is managed by our leadership team who volunteer their time to organise events, engage with stakeholders, manage our social channels, & represent the Group.

“We chose to engage with the Group because we saw the representation of the membership and thought it was a brilliant forum for us to get involved with to meet, collaborate with, and hopefully learn some new things from, this side of the rail industry. Since joining we've found the member calls, especially, have given us the opportunity to promote our own innovations and the social media publicity and exposure is invaluable.”

Mike Butler,
Head of Innovation, Nomad Digital

WHAT WE DO

Podcast – What Moves Us

Our podcast where we discuss recent policy & emerging trends that will impact the rail & wider transport landscape. Joined by special guests, our presenters are keen to highlight how public decisions can affect the investment & development options for small companies & the wider supply chain. For small suppliers, a podcast interview is an opportunity for them to reach a much bigger audience than they otherwise would.

Recognised Innovation Scheme

Our engagement across the rail sector has shown there is a desire to recognise those people ensuring that new ideas are adopted within the culture of the industry. The Scheme endorses both people & suppliers. Recognition by our peer group is a powerful endorsement to unlock potential opportunities in the future.

Attending Industry Events

Our leadership is often invited to attend & speak at roundtable discussions, conferences & forums. We use these opportunities to advocate for the needs of small suppliers & communicate their challenges to a rail audience who may otherwise be unaware of the specific challenges faces by suppliers unfamiliar with rail.

Meet Ups

Our popular in-person events take place regularly through the year & are curated to provide networking opportunities to our community so that they can meet & learn from new connections in the rail or tech sectors. Our guest speakers give an anchor for discussions, whether they come from small suppliers or from leaders in the rail industry, covering the successful adoption of new solutions & the cultures that have enabled it.

Virtual Munch & Learn Seminars

As a nationwide community it's not always possible for us to get together in person. Munch & Learn virtual events allow our members & other invited speakers to present to an audience across the country (& internationally) in a more focussed format on a specific topic, recorded & published online.

Newsletter

As well as welcoming our new members, our monthly newsletter contains a Member News section which allows our smaller members to publicise their successes to our wide readership, an opportunity they may not otherwise have.

Member-only Calls

We facilitate a bi-monthly call for our members giving them a more intimate forum to discuss challenges, successes, insight or pose questions from their peers.

Thought Pieces

Where we believe, we can contribute to the debate through a deeper look into issues, we produce thought-pieces stating our take on various topics. Our recent focus on Parcels as Passengers, using the passenger rail network to carry express freight, has stimulated a cross-industry discussion and led to workstreams to deliver a proof of concept & potential trial operation.

Start Up Rail

Run in with the support of corporate partners, our outreach initiative designed to seek our new tech companies & provide insight & advice on routes into rail's supply chain. As the scheme is targeted at finding rail's next generation of suppliers, we must look in the most diverse places. Success in the Start Up Rail scheme will see the creation of a self-sustaining flow of new start up talent, inspired by the success of their peers.

MEET UPS

We host monthly networking **Meet Ups** to facilitate relationship building & share knowledge among attendees from the rail & tech industries.

We bring the community to dynamic company spaces to hear from our hosts, or guest speakers, about new tech & services, share our experience of successful projects delivery & consider lessons learnt.

Attendees include rail operators, infrastructure companies, planners, advisory organisations, large suppliers, train manufacturers, start up, small & large tech companies.

Speakers have included future mobility leaders, rail operators, heads of innovation, trade bodies reps, product developers, customer experience designers & small business leaders.



We sometimes host online **Munch & Learn** virtual sessions, inviting speakers relevant to the current business environment to share their experience of innovating in periods of diversity, demonstrating that there are opportunities even in an unsettled climates. Presenters have included HS2 innovation leads, rail operators, aviation professionals, creative design coaches, & research funding advisors.



RECOGNISED INNOVATION SCHEME

The **Recognised Innovation Scheme** endorses suppliers & people who have:

- contributed to our mission of promoting modern, efficient rail system.
- demonstrated an ability to create a seamless journey experience.
- adopted a customer-centric approach & committed to sharing that approach with the wider industry.

Recognition is reviewed against our definitions of innovation, drawn from our Founding Members:

Suppliers

☞ A simple solution, large or small, that breaks with tradition to solve a problem within the industry that can be adopted into business as usual. Examples in the use of technology are to:

Gain efficiencies in time, energy or costs or to improve the user experience.

In most cases, the problem will have been defined by the end-user but truly innovative products discover their niche.

Culture

☞ To approach problems with a willingness to challenge tradition & be open minded to new concepts that don't always have proven track record.

To cultivate & embrace diversity to derive benefits from new technologies or processes, or from using them in a better way.



MEMBERSHIP

We invite all those who are committed to our mission to apply to become a Member. With our high & links across industry, Membership is an excellent way to benefit from our network.

The 2024 annual Membership rate is: Start Up: £250 / SME: £750 / Corporate: £1500 – Membership Includes:

Access to our Advisors - We have experts on hand to give advice on:

- building your pitch to an operator.
- rail & station operations.
- equality & diversity.
- customer engagement (CRM).

Mentoring - We support Members with online or in-person counsel.

Social Media - we'll help to spread positive news of innovation in rail.

Website Listing - Members are featured on our website & appear in our online Innovation.

Newsletter - Submit your news to be shared with our readers who are subscribed to our regular newsletter.

Meet Ups - Priority access to our events & option to host & share what your company has to offer.

Member-only Calls - join our exclusive call for members to share insight & gain knowledge from your peers.

Podcasts - we invite Members to join us as guests on our podcast - What Moves Us - to discuss how their business is helping to change how we move.

Thought Pieces - Help influence the future of the rail industry by giving your insight to our high-profile publications.

Online Seminars- Share your work or product demo at one of our Munch & Learn online seminars.

Promoting our Members - We are often contacted by event organisers & industry stakeholders, keen to hear from companies innovating rail.

Conferences - We support our members at various events through the year, from nominating them for speaker slots to offering a friendly face & stand promotion at trade fairs.

Publication of Articles - Members are entitled to write original thought pieces to contribute to the Group's aims, we'll publish them on our channels.

Recognised Innovation - Submit your product for endorsement through our peer-reviewed scheme.

"One Big Circle first joined Rail Innovation Group in July 2019 to become involved with the innovators & explorers of the rail industry, to engage with & learn from them. Being part of Rail Innovation Group has helped accelerate our work within the rail industry & we are delighted to be part of such a dynamic & exciting group."

Emily Kent, Co-Founder, One Big Circle

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

We continue to seek to build long term Strategic Partnerships with larger organisations/Tier 1 companies. This not only enables us to support small companies on a sustainable footing through our varied programme, but also - importantly for partners - means that we can tailor what we do to complement your values as a business, as well as your innovation aspirations - giving you access to a grass roots network of suppliers new to the industry, and the opportunity be part of the government's commitment to expand the support opportunities for small suppliers entering the rail supply chain.

Strategic Partners can leverage from our community & network.

Our community & wider network has the skills, technology & creativity that can be harnessed by proactive large organisations. We are keen to help both small suppliers & larger organisations by building the network & making these connections.

Building a long term partnership means that we can develop bespoke, tailored programmes to support our Strategic Partners.

We want to work with our partners to respond to their supply chain & wider community ambitions. Our Members bring the digital skills, tech knowledge & creativity to help our partners lead innovation to prepare for rail's role in the future mobility network.

Partnering with The Rail Innovation Group will help support our core activities. It will continue to demonstrate to potential new rail suppliers that the rail industry is receptive to their innovations & that there are clear routes to market through larger enterprises.

Our partnership with Hitachi helped them discover new suppliers close to their regional operational sites. We developed a targeted set of events to help the company find new suppliers developing technologies to support their work in specific focus areas.

CONTACT US

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Visit: [railinnovationgroup.com](https://www.railinnovationgroup.com)

Follow: @railinnovate

Podcast: [What Moves Us](#)

START UP RAIL

Start Up Rail is our programme to discover new start up & small suppliers across the UK.

We have identified from engagement with larger rail suppliers that there is a shortage of start up & digital companies throughout the UK ready to supply into the rail sector.

Our Start Up Rail programme offers regional events hosted in tech hubs to stimulate the development of rail-based start-up communities.

Companies wishing to support a one off Start Up Rail event at a location of their choice will reach new communities & encourage innovation into their supply chain.

We actively seek to partner with private & public sector organisations to deliver the programme.



Partner Return on Investment

- Secure new suppliers before competitors.
- Save time & internal resources.
- Strengthens future bids.
- Realise the creativity of start ups.
- Demonstrate your company's commitment to local economies.
- Exposes your staff to new creative business cultures.
- Meet procurement targets.
- Use our network to seek out suppliers in new locations.
- Take part in a high-profile industry wide collaboration.
- Build resilient digital supply chains.

"There are a huge number of exciting opportunities across the sector. The Rail Innovation Group's Start Up Rail programme will help to unleash the potential of UK tech communities to meet national challenges & promote global opportunities for even the newest UK businesses."

UK Minister of Business & Industry

