

1 Purpose

This document provides recommendations on how to inspire tomorrow's workforce, within the workplace and in your local community. At Network Rail, we believe that by inspiring today's youth through early engagement activities leads to a greater pool of talent in employees as well as encouraging diversity. This guidance aims to reach out to tomorrow's workforce about the opportunities that are available to them with Network Rail.

"Social value" is the term used to describe the benefits to society from a project or piece of work. This guidance note shows how to go above minimum requirements and deliver social value across the railway. Relevant volunteer opportunities can be found at the end of this guidance note.

Broader advice on creating socio-economic growth for local communities can be found in the *Supporting Britain's economic development NR/GN/ESD22*.

2 Addressing the skills gap

The { HYPERLINK

"https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495900/transport-infrastructure-strategy-building-sustainable-skills.pdf" } sets out ambitions to address the skills shortage and lack of diversity in the transport sector, with clear objectives to achieve by 2020. The TISS states;

"The future pipeline of road and rail projects and programmes present challenges, with both increasing levels of investment and a changing profile of skills required. The industry faces both skills shortages and skills gaps. Skills shortages are recruitment difficulties caused specifically by a shortage of individuals with the required skills in the labour market. Skills gaps are deficiencies in the skills of an employer's existing workforce, both at the individual level and overall, which prevent the firm from achieving its business objectives.

The issues of skills shortages and skills gaps are exacerbated by other issues such as the ageing workforce and low rates of staff turnover. Transport is not as diverse as it could or should be. A particular challenge facing the transport sector is increasing the female proportion of the workforce. Women represent just 20% of the rail industry as a whole and just 4.4% of railway engineering."

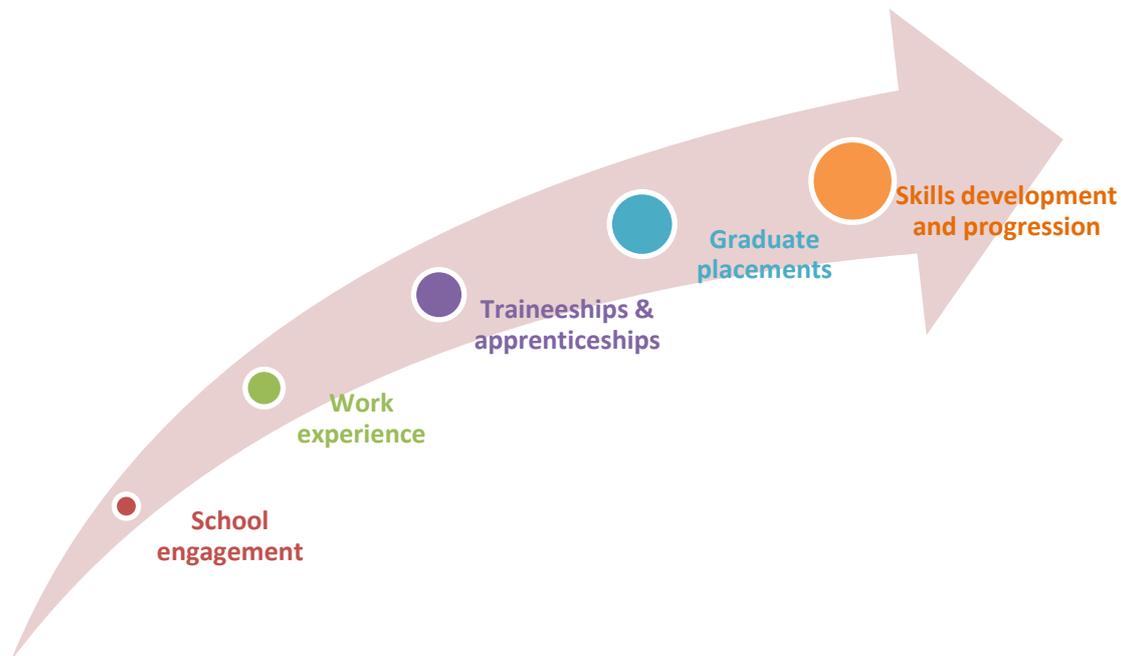
To address the challenges faced by the rail industry and to tap into the innovation and creativity of its entire workforce, Network Rail has set a target to achieve 20% gender diversity in the whole of its business by 2020. In addition this, Network Rail is supporting the government's ambition to recruit 30,000 new rail and road apprentices by 2020. This is recognised as both a huge challenge and opportunity, and one that procurement can play a significant role in helping to achieve.



3 Employment and skills initiatives

There are a variety of ways to encourage people to join the rail sector, and a wide range of opportunities available. The most successful employment and skills programmes are those that are well-structured and have clear progression routes, relevant skills development and links to future career opportunities. Pastoral support is also an integral part of these programmes, to ensure the participants are well-supported – particularly with programmes that involve rotations around multiple departments or companies.

The diagram below shows the natural progression pathway, and the opportunities available within employment and skills initiatives. Details of how to deliver these programmes can be found in section 4.



The following under-represented groups should be targeted when advertising opportunities to join employment and skills initiatives.

- 16 – 18 year olds
- 19+ and not in education, employment or trainings (NEETs)
- Females in male-dominated roles
- People with disabilities or learning difficulties

- People from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (BAME)
- People living in areas of social deprivation – which can be identified via the Office of National Statistics for { HYPERLINK "https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015" } { HYPERLINK "http://www.gov.scot/simd" } and { HYPERLINK "http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/welsh-index-multiple-deprivation/?lang=en" }.

To ensure potential candidates have access to a fair and open recruitment process, entry-level vacancies should be advertised with the local Job Centre Plus and any local jobs clubs, centres for employment support, and further education colleges where appropriate.

4 Opportunities to inspire tomorrow's workforce

- Choose a local school to partner and work with them during design and construction to promote careers in the railway – this could include mentoring or careers support programmes, career assemblies, STEM 'speed dating' events, design workshops and site tours;
- Implement a work experience programme, traineeships and/or returnships programme to provide local young/unemployed people with real, practical experience of the rail industry;
- Create apprenticeships, year-in-industry placements and graduate placements on your programme/project or through your supply chain – remember to consider opportunities across all disciplines including construction, maintenance, project management, finance and administration;
- Work with primary schools to support early interventions and initiatives that challenge gender stereotypes and encourage all children to experiment with railway-themed activities
- Support schools with careers guidance through programmes like the { HYPERLINK "http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance" } good practice
- Deliver science clubs to local schools so pupils can see first-hand the link between science lessons in school and the technology that surrounds them every day;
- Work with the Careers & Enterprise Company to identify 'employment cold spots' and target areas of social deprivation
- Organise Network Rail 'mock interview' days for students who may already have an interest in the company to become a strong candidate at assessment centres;
- Read and promote the government's { HYPERLINK "https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-infrastructure-skills-strategy-building-sustainable-skills" } to support employment and skills across the rail industry to create a skilled, diverse workforce.

5 Example activities and volunteering

Using volunteer leave to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) careers to young people is one of the most important and effective ways to inspire tomorrow's workforce. Some suggested volunteering opportunities are displayed below, and case studies providing real examples are available on the { HYPERLINK "[Become a STEM ambassador by visiting \[stem.org.uk\]\(https://stem.org.uk\)](https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/home-2/environment-and-sustainable-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Deliver careers talks and STEM workshops in all-girls schools

Offer a practical STEM experience to secondary school pupils with the Engineering Development Trust's (EDT) Go4SET

Inspire young people by discussing the challenges of the rail industry with the EDT 'Stations of the Future' project

Host CV skills workshops to those in further education to develop job prospects

development/social-performance/inspiring-tomorrows-workforce/" }.

Network Rail employees:

You are entitled to up to 5 days of volunteer leave. This can be taken to support any UK registered charity, or it can be used to support any of the following community engagement activities:

(i) Community Safety (ii) Early Engagement or (iii) Community Rail

For more details, visit { HYPERLINK "<http://connect/volunteering>" }.

To view all environment and social KPIs and how they are to be reported, please refer to the *KPI Guidance Note NR/GN/ESD22*.