

Rail Youth Promise

The Rail Youth Promise (RYP) is a sector-wide charter uniting organisations across the rail industry to increase the number of young people entering and progressing within the workforce. By sharing knowledge, resources, and best practices, RYP aims to broaden and modernise the talent pipeline, ensuring an inclusive, resilient and diverse workforce. Members collectively inspire and engage future generations, supporting their sustained participation and development through a structured framework.

RYP is part of a wider national commitment to inspire, prepare and support future generations into meaningful employment.

In this charter, “young people” refers to those aged 16–24, recognising the diversity of experiences within this group. While the RYP supports all young people, it places particular emphasis on those facing barriers to employment, including those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds.

One-third

of the rail workforce is over 50, with more than 75,000 employees expected to retire by 2030 (NSAR, 2023)

Membership and Participation

Organisations can join the RYP as **Signatories**. Signatories commit to delivering RYP commitments and adhering to the RYP framework. Membership benefits include access to a platform for collaboration, sharing resources, and learning from other members.

For the charter to be successful, your organisation will need to:

- Appoint a senior leader as the RYP sponsor
- Communicate your commitment internally and externally.
- Use data to inform action planning and measure and report progress.
- Share resources and best practice.

The Five Pillars



The Rail Youth Promise framework is structured around **five pillars** that guide how the rail industry engages and supports young people – removing barriers, driving inclusion, showcasing opportunities and continuously increasing impact.

1. INSPIRE

Inspire the next generation to see rail as a dynamic and rewarding career choice and equip young people with the skills and confidence to succeed.

1. Promote the breadth of opportunities across the rail sector.
2. Work with schools, colleges and trusted partners to equip young people with the skills to access those opportunities.

Examples

- Participate in targeted outreach activities for young people Aged 11+ to build early interest and understanding of the rail industry.
- Work with schools and further education colleges to embed essential skills within activities and curriculum-linked interventions, provide coaching on essential skills to marginalised groups, run employability workshops.
- Create and expand taster days, work experience opportunities, and interactive workshops which link with potential entry pathways providing a clearer picture of career possibilities in rail.
- Connect with older youth and those not in education or training by working with trusted partners to provide insight days, application support, and direct access to employment or apprenticeship schemes.

HIRE

Create fair, accessible and ambitious entry routes into rail careers that reflect the diversity of young people's backgrounds, aspirations and abilities.

1. Set ambitious targets to increase the number of young people entering rail.
2. Expand entry-level opportunities, including Foundation and Level 2 apprenticeships, as routes into long-term careers.
3. Adopt inclusive, evidence-based inclusive recruitment practices and remove unnecessary barriers to entry.

Examples

- Make entry routes and progression pathways clear, accessible and easy for young people to navigate
- Provide constructive feedback to all interviewees to support their development and future success.
- Expand work placement offering through trusted delivery partners or intermediaries

LEARN

Provide young people with the skills, support and safe environments they need to thrive in the rail industry.

1. Support the development and delivery of new and reformed apprenticeship standards.
2. Ensure safeguarding and wellbeing through mandatory training, informed by Railway Children, NSPCC guidance and legal review.

Examples

- Equip managers and supervisors to support young people effectively including supervision, mental health awareness and generational inclusion.
- Work with educators, providers and delivery partners across the RYP hubs to align learning with real rail roles.

GROW

Enable young people to progress, stay and succeed in long-term rail careers

1. Create visible progression pathways from entry-level roles into skilled, professional and leadership positions.
2. Use data to identify and address gaps in social mobility, representation and progression.
3. Support key transition points (e.g., apprentice-to-employee, supervisor to first line manager roles, and returners) to reduce dropout and early attrition.

Examples:

- Streamline and accelerate training pathways to reduce time to competence and remove barriers to entry and progression for young people.
- Embed youth voice in decision making by involving young people in governance strategy and service design.
- Deliver structured mentoring and coaching for early career professionals
- Build strong early-career communities to connect, support and signpost opportunities for young people.

CONNECT

Reduce travel barriers so young people can better access opportunities.

1. Remove transport cost (rail costs as a minimum) for all interviews, work experience, internships and apprenticeships within the railway.
2. Commit to supporting and contributing to rail card and concession reviews to enable rail to become a viable, sustainable and affordable method for young people to gain meaningful employment nationwide.

What happens next?

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