



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 31 January 2023

Rail Forum welcomes GCRE as our 30th anniversary collaborative partner

Rail Forum is delighted to welcome the Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) as our 30th anniversary collaborative partner for 2023.

Established in 1993, the Rail Forum is a not-for-profit organisation focussed on supporting the UK supply chain and wider industry.

GCRE are one of the latest additions to the Rail Forum membership, which today has over 360 members.

When it opens in 2025, the Global Centre of Rail Excellence will support world class research and provide facilities for testing and certification of rolling stock, infrastructure and innovative new technologies.

The partnership will see Rail Forum support GCRE's engagement with the rail supply chain, particularly in the field of infrastructure where the purpose-built site will fill a strategic gap not just in UK rail, but across Europe.

Head of Strategic Communications at GCRE, Andrew Johnson said: "The Global Centre of Rail Excellence will be a unique addition to European rail. It will meet the significant demand that has existed for many years across the continent for a purpose built, integrated site for world class research, testing and validation of new products, technologies and processes.

"Customers wanting to use our facility will come from across the UK and Europe and so it's vital that we have the right industry partnerships in place to support the significant commercial ambitions we have for the business – particularly in areas such as rail infrastructure.

"That's why our partnership with Rail Forum is so important. Their understanding and knowledge of the rail industry and its substantial supply chain is invaluable. Their diverse membership encompasses companies from all over the UK, from global corporations to Micro-SMEs, and as a business GCRE want to work with clients both large and small.

“Partnering with Rail Forum in their 30th year makes it even more special. I’m proud that GCRE will benefit from this unique relationship and from their significant experience.”

Chief Executive of Rail Forum, Elaine Clark said: “We are absolutely delighted to welcome GCRE as our 30th anniversary collaborative partner. When fully operational this unique facility will offer significant opportunity for the UK rail supply chain to both demonstrate and test products speeding up innovation and deployment to market.

“The Centre will also provide a fantastic ‘shopwindow’ to the world, allowing UK companies to demonstrate their products and new technologies to the export market. We are frequently told by suppliers that a barrier to export is not having their products in use in a live railway environment; GCRE will remove that barrier.

“During this partnership year we will be working with GCRE to bring engagement opportunities to the supply chain and helping to raise their profile across the industry.”

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About the Global Centre of Rail Excellence

The Global Centre of Rail Excellence is a major new rail innovation centre due to open in 2025. Spanning the former Nant Helen opencast site and Onllwyn Washery in South Wales, GCRE will be the UK’s first net zero railway. The facility will offer three core services – Rolling Stock Testing; Infrastructure Testing; Storage and Maintenance. It will include two 25KV electrified test loops, one a 6.9km high speed rolling stock track and the other a 4km infrastructure test track.

www.gcre.wales/

About the Rail Forum

The Rail Forum is a national industry body with strong regional connections including supporting the nationally and internationally important rail supply chain cluster across the Midlands; the Rail Forum has over 360 members providing products and services across all aspects of the industry. The Rail Forum actively supports the national rail agenda and strategy, encouraging collaboration, promoting members’ capabilities, leading a number of regional skills initiatives and supporting innovation and export priorities. The Rail Forum is owned and governed by its members with a Board drawn from member companies.

www.railforum.uk