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Connecting railway talents throughout the world: UIC Global Network of Railway Talents launched in Newcastle

16 – 17 July 2015, Newcastle (UK)

The first networking and collaborative meeting of the TALENT project attracted some 50 motivated and enthusiastic participants from 25 countries from Europe, Asia, Australia, Latin America – be they junior or senior railway professionals, academics and researchers, railway students, consultants,...

(Newcastle, 17 July 2015) The official launch of the UIC Global Network of Railway Talents which successfully started last night with a get-together dinner, continued this morning 17 July with a video welcome address from UIC Director General, Jean-Pierre Loubinoux. After a warm welcome to the “pioneers of the UIC Global Network of Railway Talents”, Jean Pierre Loubinoux stressed the importance of the meeting, stating:

“As the demand for rail is growing there has never been a better time to join the railway industry. We cannot miss this opportunity and UIC as the global association of railways has a key role to play in supporting all its members in their “war for attracting and keeping their talents” [...] “Transmission of knowledge is one of their [UIC members] key global challenges, as well as for the UIC which endorses it”[...]

“The railway sector does not only need to take all possible actions to attract new talents in the rail industry, but also needs to give serious consideration to employer branding, including international mobility, developing talent within the organisation and access to international networks to develop a global approach to individual careers.”[.....]

“With today’s event we want to grow the seeds for the creation of a strong and sustainable foundation for fostering international cooperation among the young and experienced talents in the railway sector, thus facilitating the process of knowledge, values and experience sharing between different generations of railway people, as well as to stimulate the active dialogue between cultures and generations.”

Nathalie Amirault, Head of the Expertise Development Unit at UIC, who presented the TALENT project further, said:

“Providing a sustainable solution that responds to the needs of a growing economy, rail offers society a competitive, environmentally friendly transport solution. Massive investments in rail are expected in the years and decades to come.

The economic globalisation and reform of the rail transport systems create new requirements for workforce development. Railways need talents able to operate on the global stage and to collaborate across functions as well as cultures.”

She continued by saying “With this project we are aiming at:

- *Providing a unique platform for international cooperation between various stakeholders, thus stimulating innovation*
- *Setting up new partnerships*

- *Facilitating the process of transfer of knowledge and best practice*
- *Contributing to a better image of railways*
- *Encouraging diversity management.”*

The morning session continued with two key note speakers, Mrs Janene Piip – Managing Director JP Research and Consulting from Australia and currently assisting the Australian government with talent projects in different sectors, including rail – and Mr Roy Rowlands from the UK Rail Industry Training Trust.

Mrs Janene Piip gave some insights into talent management, underpinning why it is critical for company competitiveness and sustainability. She said:

“Talent management is a ‘hot topic’, but what does the terminology really mean? Talent management is a systematic approach to identifying organisational positions that contribute to business success. There are three important components of talent management:

- *Attracting and selecting people from outside the organisation*
- *Identifying, developing and shaping the potential of new and existing employees*
- *Engaging, managing and retaining employees.*

Talent management should be viewed from the organisational as well as the individual perspective. Defining ‘talent’ and the philosophy around talent management allows organisations to be proactive rather than reactive in regard to talent management when business conditions change.[.....]

Relying on approaches that have worked in the past is not sustainable anymore as workplaces become more diverse and the global impacts of the interconnected world are realised.”

Mrs Piip has attended several events organised by UIC (including the world rail training congresses in Austria and Portugal, SIAFI training, etc.). As a way of developing her career and meeting people in the international rail environment, she recommends this approach as a highly beneficial way of networking with other peers with similar interest.

As Business Development Director at Rail Technology Magazine (RTM), a leading publisher within the UK rail industry, Mr Rowlands oversees the operational running and development of all activities within this vertical market.

Over 163,000 industry professionals engage with RTM and its portfolio of products. He also runs Gen Y Rail, RTM’s very own programme of educational and engagement events promoting careers in the rail industry to 11 – 19 year-old students across the UK. During his speech he addressed good practices in terms of engaging with young people to promote careers in the rail industry.

The morning closed with an active “speed networking” session.

This afternoon, the participants will take part in “world café workshops” to brainstorm on “how can we collectively make the railway sector irresistible for the best talents in the job market”.

Results of the workshops will be published at www.railtalent.org

CONTACTS

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