



Rail Professional
March 2019

1,279 years of experience repower Women in Rail's mentoring programme

In October 2018, Women in Rail (WR) launched its repowered cross-industry mentoring programme, inviting organisations and individuals from across the UK rail industry to join the 2019 intake

We were delighted to welcome 200 mentors and mentees, men and women from across the UK rail industry, to the event which kicked-off their mentoring relationship in January.

The purpose of our repowered cross-industry mentoring programme, which is now in its fifth year, is to continue WR's work of providing a support platform for men and women in our sector and creating an environment which fosters and nurtures our industry's talent. Thanks to its new format, the WR mentoring programme is now sustainable, transferable and scalable, and invites networking and creativity through an intranet and a series of workshops and events for its nine-months duration.

71 of our 100 mentee-intake this year have over ten years management experience, whilst our mentors have over 1,279 years of experience in the rail industry between them.

I was privileged to be able to meet some of those beginning their journey on the repowered programme, particularly those who are taking part this year as pro-bono mentees. This new initiative is made possible



Adeline Ginn from Women in Rail (left), Sarah Winckless MBE, Design and Delivery Lead for Moving Ahead (centre), and Bly Bennett, Moving Ahead's Programme Lead (right)

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through the support of companies who are funding free places for the benefit of women who are currently between employment, on care leave or from organisations who are not able to take part in the Programme. The new pro-bono fund is vital to ensure that as a charity we are able to support the continued development of those from across the sector who need guidance and support in their personal development, growth and confidence at a specific time in their lives.

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they believe the programme will continue to support and further their own professional development, through challenging them outside their comfort zone and generating new perspectives.

We are partnering this year with Moving Ahead, who were critical in pairing our mentees and mentors, and I was delighted to be joined by Sarah Winckless MBE, Design and Delivery Lead for Moving Ahead and Tay Bennett, Moving Ahead's Programme Lead at the kick-off event.

During an inspirational presentation, Sarah addressed the mentees, talking of

the 'commitment of one per cent of time' required to be on the programme, but that the one per cent would help to shape their 'thinking, decisions and actions for the remaining 99 per cent'. As an industry we all need to consider how we approach our own professional development but also ensure we offer support to others across the whole sector.

Ensuring there is continued professional development opportunities available across the whole of UK rail, and cross-industry, is vital as we continue to look to bridge the skills gap, redress diversity and promote inclusion.

As an organisation we pride ourselves on being able to provide tailored support and benefits to our members across the country, which is made possible through our seven UK regional groups.

It has been a busy couple of months, with February seeing the launch of Women in Rail London – a newly formed steering committee headed up by Leila Rahimzadeh. The group will look to bring together men and women from across the industry to support networking, mentoring and personal development opportunities.

To find out more about the upcoming events in your area, I would encourage you to visit the WR website: <http://womeninrail.org/>