

15 September 2011

**Government and rail industry announce investment to accelerate innovation**

The Technology Strategy Board ([www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)) and RSSB ([www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk)) are to invest up to £4m to accelerate business innovation in the UK's rail industry.

The aim of the *Accelerating Innovation in Rail* funding competition is to support the development of technologies that are able to address the challenges facing the rail industry, as well as meeting customer requirements in both UK and international rail markets. It marks the start of a long-term strategic partnership between RSSB and the Technology Strategy Board.

Theresa Villiers, Minister of State for Transport, said:

'Innovation is vital if the rail industry is to meet the challenges it faces. The government is delighted to support this partnership between the Technology Strategy Board and RSSB to boost rail industry initiatives which encourage the rapid development and adoption of business innovation across the whole UK rail sector. This joint competition for funding will help accelerate and support this, for the benefit of British companies and to help grow the economy.'

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, added:

'The rail industry is strengthening its approach to innovation, and we are pleased to be able to work with RSSB to support business-led innovation in UK rail. We are seeking proposals for business-led collaborative research and development projects that will develop innovative technologies to address the key challenges facing the industry today – cost, carbon, capacity and customer satisfaction.'

Len Porter, Chief Executive of RSSB, said:

'RSSB is delighted to partner the Technology Strategy Board in this exciting initiative. The rail industry has made a decision to invest in innovation, and on its

behalf, I welcome the government's commitment to working with industry to promote it. There are clear benefits from the partnership; the rail industry will get more value out of its investment and the development of ideas to make rail transport even more efficient, effective and sustainable, as well as being able to generate export opportunities.'

This competition forms part of the Technology Strategy Board's programme of investment in business-led innovation in transport and is in partnership with the rail industry, represented by the Technical Strategy Leadership Group, an RSSB-facilitated cross-industry expert body. The aims of the competition are to identify capability and build capacity in innovation, to identify strong market opportunities and to encourage collaboration within the rail industry and with other sectors.

The competition opens on 7 November 2011. The deadline for compulsory expressions of interest is 14 December 2011 and full applications must be submitted by 29 February 2012. Full details of the competition are available at:

<http://www.innovateuk.org/content/competition/accelerating-innovation-in-rail.ashx>

**-Ends-**

Notes to Editors

1. Additional supportive quotes:

Steve Yianni, chair of the Technical Strategy Leadership Group said:

'The rail industry recognises the important contribution from innovation in the drive for value for money. As chair of TSLG, I welcome this partnership and funding competition as one of the ways we can enable and accelerate innovation together.'

Francis How, Technical Director at the Railway Industry Association said:

'The Railway Industry Association is pleased to support the launch of this competition, recognising that innovation in the rail sector is a vital ingredient in addressing the challenges and opportunities that the rail industry faces.'

2. The **Technology Strategy Board** is a business-led government body which works to create economic growth by ensuring that the UK is a global leader in innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. For more information please visit: [Technology Strategy Board website](#)

3. The vision of the Technology Strategy Board is for the UK to be a global leader in innovation and a magnet for innovative businesses, where technology is applied rapidly, effectively and sustainably to create wealth and enhance quality of life. Our approach to accelerating the pace of innovation in the UK is captured in our strategy document, Concept to Commercialisation, published in May 2011. This builds on our first strategy, developed in 2008, and sets out new directions, taking into account the challenges and exciting opportunities that lie ahead. To see the new strategy please visit: [Concept to Commercialisation](#).
4. The Technology Strategy Board's [connect](#) platform provides an effective and powerful way to collaborate online, network and share knowledge with other innovators. It provides a place to work together securely and share information & knowledge. Users can utilise the online tools to work collaboratively, discuss ideas and find events. The networks offer up-to-the minute news on funding, events, articles and publications, plus information about all 15 Knowledge Transfer Networks. Through the networks, users can find potential business partners, entrepreneurs, collaborators, other innovators, researchers and academics.
5. **RSSB** manages the rail industry's research and development programme, which covers 'systems' issues across the railway, engineering interfaces within the railway, and interfaces with other parts of the community and society. RSSB is also instrumental in supporting the development of a future vision for the railways through its Technical Strategy Leadership Group, and assessing how that vision can best be delivered. For further info: [www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk).
6. The **Railway Industry Association (RIA)** represents UK-based suppliers to the railway industry. Its 160+ member companies include manufacturers, maintainers, contractors, consultants, leasing companies and providers of specialist services. For further information please visit: [www.riagb.org.uk](http://www.riagb.org.uk).
7. The **Technical Strategy Leadership Group (TSLG)**, is an RSSB-facilitated cross-industry expert body made up of senior executive staff, charged with developing and championing implementation of the Rail Technology Strategy, supporting communication, managing strategic research, identifying opportunities, barriers and actions. TSLG has a remit to address future opportunities over a 30-year horizon. For more information please visit: [www.futurerailway.org](http://www.futurerailway.org).
8. **Media enquiries only** should be addressed to the press offices at the Technology Strategy Board or RSSB:  
  
**For the Technology Strategy Board:**  
Nick Sheppard, Media Relations Consultant  
Mobile: 07824 599644, Email: [nick.sheppard@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:nick.sheppard@tsb.gov.uk) or  
Claire Cunningham, Media Relations Manager  
Tel: 01793 442901, Mobile: 07554 115745 Email: [claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk)  
  
**For RSSB:**  
Matt Clements, Industry Communications Manager  
Tel: 020 3142 5332, Email: [matthew.clements@rssb.co.uk](mailto:matthew.clements@rssb.co.uk)  
or others in the press office can be contacted via [pressoffice@rssb.co.uk](mailto:pressoffice@rssb.co.uk), tel: 020 3142 5331
9. Companies and other organisations seeking information about Technology Strategy Board funding competitions should visit the Competitions page of the Technology Strategy Board website – Competitions page, email [competitions@innovateuk.org](mailto:competitions@innovateuk.org) or phone the Competitions Helpline at 0300 321 4357.
10. To see all press releases from the Technology Strategy Board please visit: [Press Releases](#). To see all press releases from RSSB, please visit [Press Releases](#). To subscribe to the Technology Strategy Board's RSS newsfeed please visit: [RSS newsfeed](#).