Railway Challenge Awards 2026

The Railway Challenge competition provides a unique opportunity for mechanical engineering undergraduates, apprentices and graduates to participate in a complex project to design and develop a miniature locomotive that is subsequently benchmarked against locomotives from other worldwide business and academic institutions.

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers is keen to assist in the development of engineers with both academic knowledge and its practical application; the Railway Challenge is a proven approach supporting this objective.

All awards are conditional on the team competing at the Railway Challenge competition finals weekend in 2026.

The Formula Student and Transport Challenges Awards Committee is pleased to be able to provide the following awards to support this objective:

1 x £2000 AWARD

Awarded to the best overall application for a team competing at the Railway Challenge finals weekend at Stapleford Miniature Railway, Leicestershire.

2 x £1250 AWARDS

Awarded to the next two best applications competing at the Railway Challenge finals weekend at Stapleford Miniature Railway, Leicestershire.

AWARD CONDITIONS

All awards are subject to submission of a suitable application and reference that will be assessed by the IMechE's Formula Student and Transport Challenges Awards Committee. The Committee's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

All recipient teams must attend and compete at the Railway Challenge Finals weekend in 2026.

All teams who receive an award shall submit a report detailing how the award has been utilised no later than Thursday 25th June 2026, followed by a post-finals weekend addendum outlining how each team member benefitted from the experience, no later than Friday 03rd July 2026. It is the RC Team Leader and Faculty / Business Supervisor's responsibility to ensure this is done; otherwise the University / Business organisation may be disqualified from receiving awards in the future. Submitted reports will be used in subsequent years as examples to other teams.

It is a requirement that ALL team members are members of the IMechE in order to benefit from the awards and all membership numbers must be submitted on the application form. Please note that Affiliate membership is free for students and the application form is available on the Membership Section at www.imeche.org

All teams in receipt of an award under this scheme will be required to display the Railway Challenge Logo in a prominent position on their locomotive and supporting display material at the event for which the award has been made.

Closing date for applications is 05th December 2025.