

Guidance Notes for the Preparation of a Report for Railway Challenge Awards

All teams in receipt of a monetary Award from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers for the 2026 Railway Challenge must produce a report outlining the use of the award by **Thursday 25th June 2026**. This **must be followed up by Friday 03rd July 2026** with an addendum outlining how the team members benefitted from the experience including attendance at the Railway Challenge Finals weekend at Stapleford Miniature Railway. **It is the Team Leader's responsibility to ensure this is done; otherwise the team may be disqualified from receiving awards in the future.**

These notes are for guidance when submitting reports following attendance at the Railway Challenge event for which an Award has been received. An important consideration in preparing the report is "What information and details will the IMechE Awards Committee require in order to assess whether or not good use has been made of the award?"

The format of the Railway Challenge Award Report is open to the compiler's discretion, however the top page must conform to Appendix A. It is clearly beneficial to include certain factual information about the event and the experiences of the team, consequently, attention should be paid to the advice below which suggests a minimum requirement. The report should not be a wholly technical report, photographs can provide added interest to the committee.

The following information must be provided on the top cover of the report

- Name of University
- Event attended
- Dates of event attended
- Results achieved at event:
- Names, Roles and Membership
- Amount of award

A recommended top cover is shown in Appendix A.

The report will be seen as a product of the Railway Challenge Team rather than of an individual. The recommended approach is that a member of the Team should accept the responsibility for preparing and submitting the report, bringing together and collating inputs from the individual Student/Apprentice Team members (it is important that the relevant tasks are allocated amongst the Team at the beginning of the project and that these are followed through the duration of the event). It is recommended that the Report author is a team member who is not in their final year, and as such has time following the event to prepare the report.

The report must contain:

- A summary of the expectations identified in the application, and a reflection of their achievement throughout the project. The expectations should have been set out in the original application. This should reflect mostly on what the team expected to achieve in

terms of developing the engineering competencies of the team members and how the team dynamics supported this;

- A summary from each member of the team detailing their personal view of the experience;
- A thorough review of the whole project, from inception to the preparation of the report. Clearly it will concentrate upon the event, however the Committee are interested to seek out the team assessment of the design / development processes, and how the team grew and integrated;
- An appropriate level of technical information should also be included in the report, so as to put the overall report into context. Such information could be whether the locomotive was new for the event or modified as a result of experience gained at a different event / year and if modified, what was changed and why;
- A clear assessment of what has been achieved in both material and non-material terms, including consideration of the benefits gained by working as a Team rather than as individuals;
- A critique of the lessons learnt from undertaking the project, consider topics such as:
 - How could you develop your group dynamics to make next year better? What did you learn?
 - Identify any factors in the planning and the execution of the project prior to the event which either greatly enhanced or hindered overall progress (what went right and what went wrong);
 - Reflect upon the event itself and identify any factors which contributed, both positively or negatively, upon the team's participation on the event;
 - Do you have any advice to other teams regarding attendance (e.g. logistics, tools, etc.), which will aid future competitors?
- Provide a final breakdown of costs associated with undertaking the Railway Challenge Project;
- Show how IMechE funds have been utilised and how the Award helped you;
- Identify how the overall costs were covered, where shortfalls were shown in the original application, and identify how the funding was obtained. This will include personal, university and sponsor contributions. This may be summarised in an attachment to the report;
- Any constructive feedback to IMechE which may be considered for incorporation into the event;
- A statement from the Faculty Advisor/Team Supervisor on team preparation, how the team performed, benefits of attendance and what problems occurred and how they were overcome **must** be included at the end of the report. The Faculty Advisor/Team Supervisor should sign the report to confirm it is a true reflection of events.

You will appreciate that the Committee needs to be kept in touch with changes in the real value of the awards, so your opinion on potential alternative financial inducements would be appreciated in order that consideration can be made for improvements in the future.

In preparing the report it should be noted that the Awards Committee would rather receive an interesting informative report, than a lengthier report over-burdened with unhelpful detail.

These guidelines are provided to help you achieve this objective and to ensure consistency of content.

Teams should try to keep their submission within 5 pages including illustrations (excluding the top cover, any financial breakdown and the faculty advisor/team supervisor's statement). Reports should be grammatically correct with specific attention to readability, punctuation and spelling.

Completed Reports to be submitted by 25th June 2026, and addendums by 03rd July 2026 via email to panda@imeche.org

IMechE Formula Student and Transport Challenges Awards Committee
October 2025

Railway Challenge Event Report**1. University/Organisation and Team Name**

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2. Event Attended

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3. Date of Event & Results Achieved

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4. Names, Roles and Membership

Name	Role	IMechE Membership No*

5. Amount of Award

£

*A condition of receiving an IMechE Award is that all team members are members of the Institution.