

Press release

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Transforming transport through tech requires urgent action to address the skills gap

- *The UK needs a skilled workforce to decarbonise transport, deliver better services and pioneer new mobility.*

LONDON, 29 March 2023: techUK, the leading voice of the tech industry, today at its [Mobilise 2023 conference](#) launched a [new report](#) - *Driving the future of transport – Addressing the skills gap* - which sets out five recommendations for how government and industry can ensure that the transport sector has the digital and technical skills it needs to thrive.

The rate of innovation we will see within the transport sector over the next 30 years cannot be overstated. Across all modes – road, rail, air, and sea – new technologies and data systems are being developed and integrated to drive remarkable outcomes. This is being driven by the consumer need for data-enriched services to make informed decisions, the urgent to decarbonise and the push to remain competitive as digital transformation sweeps our economy at a staggering pace.

However, transport faces a significant skills challenge, and the opportunities will not be realised unless we have enough engineers, data scientists, developers, and technologists to make this change. As the transport sector innovates in order to solve complex challenges around efficiency, safety, reliability, it must also foresee the challenges in skills that are emerging concurrently. This report looks at the skills implications for three prevailing trends in the transport sector: new mobility, low or no carbon transport, and integrated transport.

In response to this, techUK has developed five recommendations for government that will drive measurable impact:

1. The Department for Transport should publish a policy roadmap for addressing issues identified within its transport labour market and skills consultation.
2. The Apprenticeship Levy needs to be reformed to transform its impact across transport and the wider economy.
3. The creation of a Digital Skills & Productivity Tax Credit to drive business investment in training and productivity-enhancing technology.
4. Government should lead the creation of a new digital skills for transport taskforce.
5. Government must work with industry to create a Transport Digital Champion Advisory Council.

This work comes in recognition that the opportunities to develop and integrate technology to decarbonise transport, and deliver better services and pioneer new mobility will not be realised unless we ensure people choose a career in the transport sector.

This report sets out the rationale behind these recommendations in detail and techUK looks forward to engaging on these widely across the industry and transport ecosystem.

Matthew Evans, Director of Markets, techUK said:

“The report published by techUK is an essential contribution to the debate around the future of transport to address the digital and technical skills gap faced by the transport sector. The five recommendations we have put forward offer practical ways Government and industry leaders can ensure the transport sector can innovate and evolve in a way that meets the needs of consumers, while also addressing the urgent need to decarbonise and remain competitive.”

Liz James, Senior Security Consultant, NCC Group & Vice-Chair of the Intelligent Mobility and Transport Council, techUK commented:

“In my cross-industry role chairing techUK’s Intelligent Mobility and Transport Council, it is clear to me that the success or failure of the high-level objectives associated with this industry depend upon the public sector, industry, and academia being well-resourced and able to adapt to the constantly evolving market challenges.

“The recommendations made in this report are aimed at addressing these challenges holistically, spanning from early years education through to retraining and cross-skilling mid-career. They recognise the urgent need to not just acknowledge the challenge but take action.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

The recommendations have been developed in extensive consultation with techUK’s members and stakeholders. They are designed to unite government and the transport industry in developing solutions that reposition the transport industry in the tech employment market, help employers invest in their people, and attract more people to the sector from an earlier age.

The full report can be [downloaded here](#).

Please see more information about techUK’s [Smart Infrastructure and Systems](#) and [Skills, Talent & Diversity programme](#)

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techUK is the technology trade association that brings together people, companies and organisations to realise the positive outcomes of what digital technology can achieve.

With over 950 members (the majority of which are SMEs) across the UK, techUK creates a network for innovation and collaboration across business, government and stakeholders to provide a better future for people, society, the economy and the planet.

By providing expertise and insight, we support members, partners and stakeholders as they prepare the UK for what comes next in a constantly changing world.