



The Watford Group



RAIL
ACADEMY

56th WATFORD CONFERENCE

PARIS 2026

Conference programme

Presentations

14-16 October 2026
PARIS, UIC HQ

SMGG
Station Managers Global Group



WEDNESDAY 14 October 2026

08:30-09:30

Welcome Coffee

Opening and Welcome

09:30 11:00	Conference introduction	Simon Bergounioux Director of Architecture and Environment, SNCF Gares & Connexions (France) Maria Gusarova Senior Advisor - Stations, UIC (France)
	UIC and SMGG: Working Together for Better Stations	Fabrice Morenon Director of SNCF Hubs & Connexions, Chair of UIC Station Managers Global Group (France)
	Bridging Networks and Places: Station Design, Urban Integration & Decarbonising Heritage	David Hughes Senior Architect, Irish Rail, Chair of SMGG WG1 Station & Urban Design (Ireland)
	Multimodal hubs articulating high-speed rail and urban networks: let's anticipate!	Yo Kaminagai Chair of the UITP Mobility Hubs Platform (France)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	

11:00-11:15

Coffee Break

Session 1 – Urban Transformation and Station Led Development

Moderator: James Michel, President, Transportation Risk Mitigation LLC (United States)

11:15 13:00	Station Forecourts as Starting Points for Low-carbon Urban Transformation	Emilie Hergott Director of Conception and Realisation, AREP (France)
	The Chuo Shinkansen: Bringing Cities Closer, Driving Urban Transformation	Fumiaki Nakazawa Assistant Manager, Central Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	The Primordial Transit-Oriented Development Supported by Long-Distance Passenger Rail in the United States	James Abram Zumwalt Economist and Planner, David Evans and Associates, Inc. (United States)
	Takanawa Gateway City Phase I Development	Atsushi Izawa Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Railway Land Assets as Drivers of Urban Regeneration: The Case of Oimachi Tracks	Tatsuro Tanaka Assistant Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	The City Above the Tracks: The Next Frontier for Dutch Urban Development?	Dmitri Levin Architect, studioSK-Movares (Netherlands)
	How to Design Subway Stations as an Architect	Hans-Michael Földeak CEO, fbcc architecture (France)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	

13:00-14:00

Lunch

Technical Visits Presentations

14:00-15:00	Technical visits presentations
15:00-18:00	Technical Visits
19:00	Networking Reception at UIC HQ

THURSDAY 15 October 2026

08:30-09:00

Welcome Coffee

Session 2 – Connectivity Multimodality and Mobility Integration

Moderator: Andreas Heym, President, AHPD (France)

09:00 11:00	Transforming Urban Connectivity and the Hiroshima Metropolitan Area through the "Hiroshima City Network"	Yohei Fujikawa Assistant Manager, Railway Planning Division, West Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Impacts of the Eastern Kanagawa Line on Urban Transportation in Japan	Yuuki Kawachi Assistant Director, Japan Railway Construction, Transport and Technology Agency (Japan)
	Urban Transformation by Tokyo Metro: Creating the Next "New Normal" and "New Excitement"	Nao Fukui Senior Engineering Coordinator, Tokyo Metro (Japan) Maria Seya Assistant Section Manager, Tokyo Metro (Japan)
	Transforming Urban Connectivity through a Three-Dimensional Integration of the New Hiroshima Station Complex and Light Rail Transit ²	Teruta Kakinuma Assistant Manager, West Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Developing Multimodal Hubs in Economic Growth Areas: Two Key Dutch Examples	Edwin Megens Senior Architect, studioSK-Movares (Netherlands)
	Strategies for Urban Transformation around Railway Hubs	Raquel Alonso Martinez Architect, INECO (Spain)
	Urban Transformation Through Enhanced Connectivity and Station Space Renewal: The Continuing Evolution of Tokyo Station	Rika Yamaguchi Assistant Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Ochanomizu Station Redevelopment: Enhancing Station Functions in an Urban Environment and Achieving Harmony with the Surrounding Environment	Yasuhiro Koguchi Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	

11:00-11:15

Coffee Break

Session 3 – People Centred Stations Behaviour Safety and Inclusive Design

Moderator: Vanessa Perez, Senior Advisor – Passenger Department, UIC (France)

11:15 13:00	Beyond Mobility: People-Centered and Carbon-Conscious Station Design	Manuela Triggianese Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment (Netherlands)
	Smarter Train Stations Through Triangulated Biometric Evidence	Baicu Liviu Gabriel CEO, GLB TRANSARK (Romania)
	Beyond Signage: How Wayfinding Shapes Passenger Experience	David Danner Head of Operations, Mijksenaar BV (Netherlands)
	Society Central	Chris Nijkamp Policy Advisor, Bureau Spoorbouwmeester (Netherlands)
	Railroad Bridge Drainage Improvements at Metra Stations - Chicago	Robert Burns Civil Engineer 2, Metra Rail (United States)
	Railway Pedestrian Crossings: One Unsolved Dilemma?	Juan Ramirez Architect & Managing Partner, OPTA Arquitectos (Spain)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	

13:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00-17:00

Technical Visits

18:00

Networking Reception at SNCF G&C and AREP

FRIDAY 16 October 2026		
08:30-09:00	Welcome Coffee	
Session 4 – Identity Heritage and Reinventing the Station		
Moderator: Barbara Schroeder, Rail Transit Program Manager, Benesch (United States)		
09:00 11:00	Adaptive Reuse of Railway Assets: Expanding the Role of a Historic Timber Station through Sustainable Architectural Design	Gendai Oku Senior Staff, JR East Design Corporation (Japan)
	Community-Based Station Development on Rural Railway Lines: Efforts to Sustain Stations as Community Assets	Atsushi Saito Assistant Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	From a Regulatory Requirement to Urban Reconnection in a Rural Centre: The Example of Issoire (France)	Simon Bergounioux Director of Architecture and Environment, SNCF Gares & Connexions (France)
	Restoration and Reuse of the Former Harajuku Station Building	Yoshiaki Kawasaki Senior Staff, JR East Design Corporation (Japan)
	Designing Stations for the Next Century: How a Timber Traverse and 150 Years of Railway Heritage Are Shaping the Future of Dutch Stations	Iris Van Huijstee Architect, studioSK-Movares (Netherlands)
	Luna Azul: A New Overnight Limited Express Train Created through the Adaptive Reuse of Existing Rolling Stock	Tomoyuki Inoue Assistant Manager, East Japan Railway Company (Japan)
	Three Train Stations, Three Forms of Growth for the City of Logroño	Maria Cruz Gutiérrez Contreras Logroño integración del ferrocarril 2002, SA (Spain)
	DB InfraGO AG's renovation program through 2031 and 2035	Mary-France Jallard Grätz Head of Project Management, Development Projects, Property Development and Planning, DB InfraGO AG (Germany)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break	
Session 5 – Stations as Civic Places Development Identity and Placemaking		
Moderator: Tomonari Hitsuka, Director, JR East Design Corporation (Japan)		
11:15 13:00	Rail Infrastructure as City-Making: Lessons from Riyadh Metro Line 3	Borja Aróstegui Architect, IDOM (Spain)
	PHS as a Catalyst for the City: From Vision to Reality	Marije de Jager Projectmanager, Movares Nederland (Netherlands)
	Railway Infrastructure and Urban Transformation: From Transport Interchanges to Civic Assets with East West Rail	Trevor Wilson Head of Buildings & Station Architecture, East West Rail (United Kingdom)
	How Can Art Become Infrastructure? Art, Identity and Place-Making at Old Oak Common	Chris Fox Lead Architect Old Oak Common station, HS2 (United Kingdom)
	Seibu Blue Art Station	Marina Yamakawa Staff, SEIBU RAILWAY Co., Ltd. (Japan) Mito Takaichi Manager, SEIBU RAILWAY Co., Ltd. (Japan)
	Climate-Adaptive Stations	Chris Nijkamp Policy Advisor, Bureau Spoorbouwmeester (Netherlands)
	Collective Discussion / Q&A	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
Session 6 – Special Closing Session by the Conference Hosts		
14:00 15:00	UIC Closing Words - UIC Rail Academy	Bertrand Minary Director of Passenger Department, UIC
	The Heritage Value of Railway Stations as a Driver of Attractiveness	Alain Resplandy-Bernard Director General, SNCF Gares & Connexions
15:00-16:00	Closing of the Conference	
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-18:00	General Assembly	
19:00	Candlestick Dinner at Poinçon	