

Alstom celebrates double win at the Young Rail Professionals Awards 2026 in the UK

- Honouring a 37-year-career in rail, Kathryn Lancaster, Communications Manager at Alstom has been presented with the Distinguished Service Award
- Alstom's record-breaking railway festival, The Greatest Gathering, was also named a winner

09 April 2026 – Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, is celebrating following a double win at the [Young Rail Professionals \(YRP\) Awards 2026](#) in the UK.

Kathryn Lancaster – Distinguished Service Award

Devoting almost four decades of her life to the rail industry, Kathryn Lancaster, Communications Manager at Alstom has been presented with the Distinguished Service Award. This accolade recognises an individual who has made a significant and lasting contribution to the sector through sustained commitment, leadership and service to others. It celebrates those whose work has had a meaningful impact on the rail industry and the people within it.

A stalwart of Alstom and its predecessor organisations since 1988, Kathryn's contributions have profoundly shaped the company's communications, and fostered a culture of inclusivity, collaboration and mentorship across the sector. No more has this been evident than in her organisation of Alstom's [The Greatest Gathering](#) in August 2025, the world's largest-ever railway festival.

The Greatest Gathering – Operational Excellence Award

In fact, Alstom's record-breaking event won the Operational Excellence Award at the YRP Awards. A new category for 2026, it recognises a team or organisation delivering outstanding performance in day-to-day railway operations. It celebrates those who consistently raise standards, improve reliability and ensure passengers and freight customers receive the best possible service.

Marking the bicentenary of the modern railway, Alstom's The Greatest Gathering took place at Alstom's 90-acre Derby Litchurch Lane Works in August 2025. More than 40,000 railfans came to witness in excess of 140 rail vehicles at Alstom's biggest rolling stock factory, while millions more enjoyed The Greatest Gathering virtually around the world. The three-day extravaganza also marked the first time in almost 50 years that Alstom's Derby site had opened to the public and has raised over £100,000 for good causes.

"It was a pleasure to see Kathryn recognised with an individual award and to see The Greatest Gathering celebrated on the evening as well. Having attended with Young Rail Professionals, I saw the great impact it had. These achievements are a testament to the dedication, collaboration and excellence shown by those delivering such important work for our industry," said Richard Harmer, Chief Executive Officer at Young Rail Professionals.

He added: “On behalf of Young Rail Professionals, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Kathryn and the wider team on their well-deserved recognitions.”

The Young Rail Professionals Awards 2026 took place on Thursday 26 March at Park Plaza London Westminster Bridge, with Alstom nominated for ten awards, including 21-year-old George Creed from Derby, who was named runner-up in the Apprentice of the Year category. Based at Alstom’s Derby Litchurch Lane Works, initially as a Supply Chain Apprentice, George recently commenced his new role as a Supply Chain Methods and Tools Engineer.

In 2025, Harry Bateman, Business Development Graduate at Alstom was named [Young Rail Professional of the Year](#), while Barry Calder, Infrastructure Engineering Director at Alstom won the Distinguished Service Award.

Alstom was a founding member of YRP back in 2009 when it was established to promote the rail industry as a great place to work, inspire the next generation of railway talent and develop young people to reach their potential. Their annual awards ceremony showcases and celebrates the achievements of young rail professionals and their mentors.

Fifty-seven-year-old Kathryn Lancaster from South Wingfield in Derbyshire has been based at Alstom’s historic Derby Litchurch Lane Works for her entire career. Alongside The Greatest Gathering, she has led communications for signature Derby projects, including the Electrostar build, the Cairo Monorail and Gautrain export orders, and the Aventura programme – the largest train manufacturing initiative in a generation.

“I am incredibly proud and deeply humbled to receive the Distinguished Service Award. Rail has been my working home for my entire career and I have been fortunate to work alongside some truly exceptional people who care passionately about what this industry stands for. This recognition really belongs to the colleagues, partners and volunteers who have supported me, challenged me and shared the same belief that rail is about people, communities and opportunity,” said Kathryn Lancaster, Communications Manager at Alstom and co-organiser of The Greatest Gathering.

She added: “The Greatest Gathering was a once-in-a-lifetime project and a real labour of love for everyone involved. To see it recognised for Operational Excellence is especially meaningful, because it reflects the teamwork, professionalism and pride that exists across Alstom and the wider railway family. Opening the factory gates of Litchurch Lane and welcoming the public back after so many years was incredibly special, and I hope it reminded people – especially the next generation – just how exciting, inclusive and future-focused our industry can be.”

Meanwhile, The Greatest Gathering has already secured a Project Team Award at the [RailStaff Awards 2025](#) and the organisers were given the Star Team Award at the [2025 Heart of Gold Awards](#). More recently, the festival was bestowed a Special Award at Modern Railways’ [Golden Whistles Awards](#), in association with the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators, and then took home Bronze for Festival or Event of the Year in the [Peak District, Derbyshire & Derby Tourism Awards](#).

Looking ahead, The Greatest Gathering has been nominated for Outstanding Contribution at the [Insider Made in the Midlands Awards 2026](#), with winners announced at the ceremony in Birmingham next month.

Elsewhere, Kathryn Lancaster has been shortlisted for the Adeline Ginn Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's [Women in Rail Awards](#). Alstom has been nominated for five accolades overall ahead of the ceremony held in London in May.

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