

The 'All Aboard' Technology Competition Launch

Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport:

I am at the Milton Keynes Technology [Academy] with some of the students because we are launching today our 'All Aboard' Competition. We're turning to 14 to 18 year olds and say: look, on our buses we need audio-visual systems. The bus operators tell us that the conventional systems are all too expensive. We think that young people can think out of the box, understand technology, understand disability and come forward with ideas that we can then use for a much less expensive system and it would have the effect of really changing people's lives.

Victor Okang:

I think this competition is a good idea because currently there are too many bus companies that can't afford the price of having audio and visual aid on buses whereas with this competition so many people around the country can go together and greatly reduce that [the cost] to under £1,000 per bus.

Angus Huntley, Volunteer Campaigner for RNIB:

I think it's an excellent idea. I am totally blind and I get around through using a guide dog. I think accurate information is key to enable me to move around independently so in terms of buses I need to know what number it is, where it is going and when it is going to be.

Emily Davison:

I think the competition itself is a good idea to enable young people to get into the concept of inventing new ideas for buses that would be easily integrate-able. But I think the main thing that I would like to see happening with this competition is more audio announcements rolled out over the UK because I think, essentially, it will really help people with sight loss to mobilise in and around the UK.

I think it is a really great way to encourage people to use public transport independently and with the knowledge that they will be able to know where they are going safely and have a genuinely good journey.

James MacColl, Campaign for Better Transport:

Visually impaired partially sighted people rely very heavily on public transport and in a lot of cases might not be able to drive or have access to a car. So it is really important that they can use buses and other forms of public transport easily but in a lot of cases there aren't the facilities available to enable them to use these kinds of transport which can result in them being stuck and not being able to get to where they need to go. So it is important that there are solutions available to help these people.

Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport:

So, I am incredibly excited because we are asking these young people here and many others to do something incredibly important that can really change the lives of people who have a visual impairment, a hearing impairment, other kinds of disabilities and who need an audio-visual system on our buses in order to live independent lives.