

## **RAILWAYS IN FIRST WORLD WAR**

8th International Conference on Railway-history organized by the International Railway History Association / Association Internationale d'Histoire des Chemins de Fer / Asociación Internacional de Historia Ferroviaria and supported by

- UIC / International Union of Railways
- Service historique de la Défense (France)
- SNCF / French National Railways (France)

The Conference will be held at the National University of Public Service in Budapest from November 28th-December 1st, 2018.

We contend that the global academic and public understandings of the First World War must be considered seriously deficient until the wartime histories of the national railway systems of at least the major European belligerent powers have been subjected to rigorous academic scrutiny. The reason is that railway transport was fundamentally important both in the outbreak of the war (by enabling the mobilisation of millions of men within just a few weeks, and as the foundation of the Schlieffen Plan) and for the continuation of the conflict for over four years (there was no other means to cope quickly with the huge volume of long-distance shipments of equipment and food supplies to the trenches not to mention their central place on the home fronts). Contemporaries certainly appreciated this importance, which explains the appearance of several studies in the inter-war years, but there has been very little research indeed since 1945, notwithstanding the potential to cast fresh light on every major aspect of the conflict. Building on several projects that have now started on the wartime Belgian, British and Russian railways, we aim with this conference to develop a new multi-national collaboration between academia and the railway technology heritage sector which would help raise public as well as academic awareness and understanding and which would have the potential to continue beyond the conference to deliver the more developed histories on the field of transport history in wartime of various national systems that are so badly needed.

Main topics to be discussed will be:

- general role of railways for the preparation of the war, mobilisation and during the war including the relationship to national administrations
- the role of railways for military planning and strategic decisions
- the role of densities of railway networks and traffic conditions in different countries at war
- the role of railwaymen

- technological and technical questions: wear of the rolling stock, destruction of tracks, bridges, innovations aso..
- the relationships between the various means of transport, i. e. the role of lorries
- iconographic, artistic and psychological aspects
- changes in the relationship between rail- and roadtransport in the time of post-war recovery

Conference language will be English.

The conference is open to all who are interested in railway history and interactions between railways and World War I, in particular from countries that were involved in WWI, including museums, archives and other institutions operating in preserving the memory of war.

Please send in proposals of max. one page and a short curriculum vitae to:

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Deadline for submission of the proposals: **December 31, 2017**. The evaluation process of the proposals will be finished within **March 31, 2018**.

We offer up to 300 Euros for accomodation and travel expenses for contributors whose papers have been accepted by the Scientific Committee.

**MARIE-NOËLLE POLINO**

Chargée de mission Patrimoine groupe et Histoire publique

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