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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota Announces Plan to Overhaul the Subway System

Top-to-Bottom Audit of MTA Organization to Identify Long-Term Transformational Change Within 30 Days

MTA to Propose Comprehensive Plan to Modernize the Subway Within 60 Days

Key Priorities Include Training Personnel, Improving Customer Communication, Implementing Working Processes and Engaging New Technology

Complements MTA Genius Transit Challenge -- Harnessing Innovative Technological Solutions to Modernize and Improve the Reliability of the Subway System

MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota today, at the MTA Genius Transit Challenge Conference, responded to Governor Cuomo's challenge by announcing he will conduct a top-to-bottom audit to overhaul the organization and present a plan within 60 days to modernize the subway system. The MTA, working with transit experts and top management consultants, will do a comprehensive audit of the challenges facing and limitations of the organization to identify strategies for short- and long-term transformational change. Thirty days later, the MTA will then put forward a detailed, long-term plan, in conjunction with the MTA Genius Transit Challenge, to overhaul the system, focusing on a series of MTA priorities, including changing and training personnel, implementing and executing processes that work, improving customer communication and engaging and implementing new technology.

MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota said, "Millions of New Yorkers depend on the MTA every day, and we must rebuild confidence in the authority with a complete overhaul of the system – identifying the root causes of our problems and taking immediate and decisive action to fix them. It is our responsibility to transport people as safely, quickly and efficiently as possible, and the current state of the subway system is unacceptable. In tandem with the Genius competition proposals, we will deploy a multi-faceted plan to restore confidence to the MTA and prove that we can deliver for our customers."

First opened in 1904, the New York City Subway is among the largest and busiest public transit systems in the world. Today, there are 472 stations spanning 665 miles of track, serving nearly 6 million riders a day—that's 70 percent of all subway rides in the United States. The system offers [24/7](#) service spanning four boroughs, which has enabled New York to grow and thrive for over a century.

Yet as ridership has soared, changes to its infrastructure have not kept pace. New York City Transit must innovate to accommodate a growing demand and to continue to be the economic engine of the city, state, and region.

The MTA also announced the Genius Transit Challenge, an international competition seeking innovative solutions to modernize and improve the reliability of the New York City subway system. The competition will award a "genius" prize of up to \$1 million for the best idea in each of the following categories:

Improve Signaling in the New York City Subway System: Accelerate deployment of modern train signaling technologies to the subway system, to increase the number of trains at peak periods and promote faster and more reliable service;

Rapidly Deploy Modernized Subway Cars to the Subway System: Obtain and deploy modern subway cars more efficiently, or refurbish existing cars in order to increase the New York City subway system's capacity and reliability, prevent car breakdowns, and reduce delays;

Increase Communications Infrastructure in the Subway System: Identify communications systems that will support rapid installation and deployment of modern train communications and control technologies in the subway system, to increase the subway system's capacity and reliability.

Judging Process

Proposals will be submitted and reviewed during a two-phase evaluation process. In Phase 1, applicants will submit an application for one or more of the three Challenge areas. Applications that meet all New York State requirements will be evaluated by criteria that may include their ability to fulfill Challenge objectives, their innovativeness, and their capacity for implementation.

An evaluation committee of subject-matter experts will select applications to proceed to Phase 2. In Phase 2, applicants will receive additional guidelines to inform their submissions, have an opportunity to refine their application(s), and be required to provide in-depth details and supporting materials for their application(s). The evaluation committee will score refined applications on criteria that may include their ability to fulfill Challenge objectives, innovativeness, capacity for implementation, and cost effectiveness.

The expert judging panel will select the winners for each category from the final group of applicants. Winners to be determined by the end of 2017.

Timeline

- [August 11, 2017](#) – Deadline for Phase 1 Applications
- September 2017 – Phase 1 Selections Announced
- Fall 2017 – Submission of Phase 2 Applications
- December 2017 – Winners Announced

Genius Transit Challenge Judging Panel

The panelists include:

- Joe Lhota, Chairman, MTA
- Ronnie Hakim, Interim Executive Director, MTA
- Janno Lieber, Chief Development Officer, MTA
- Phil Eng, Chief Operating Officer, MTA
- Sarah Feinberg, Former Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration
- Daniel Huttenlocher, Dean and Vice Provost, Cornell Tech
- Charles Phillips, CEO, Infor
- Kristina Johnson, Chancellor-elect, SUNY
- Greg Brown, Chairman and CEO, Motorola Solutions
- Nick Grossman, General Manager, Union Square Ventures
- Eliot Horowitz, Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer, MongoDB
- Balaji Prabhakar, Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Stanford University

For more information about the Challenge, visit MTAGeniusTransitChallenge.ny.gov.