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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Transit Tech Lab Seeks New Solutions to Transportation Challenges

*Port Authority, NJ TRANSIT, Amtrak and City Agencies Join MTA in Regional Innovation Effort*

*Learn more at [transitinnovation.org](https://transitinnovation.org); Apply by November 30, 2019*

Today, the [MTA](#) and the [Partnership for New York City](#) announced the second round of the Transit Tech Lab, an accelerator program that allows the MTA and other public transportation agencies to explore innovative, private sector solutions to challenges they face in operating the region's subway, bus and commuter rail services. The program has quickly put New York at the forefront of the emerging field of transit tech, which promises to transform customer experience, reduce commuting times and make it far easier to effectively manage complex transit systems.

Entrepreneurs with products that improve accessibility, enhance traffic coordination, or create new sources of revenues are invited to submit applications for the second year of the Transit Tech Lab by November 30, 2019. Growth-stage companies with market-ready technology are encouraged to learn more and apply at [transitinnovation.org](https://transitinnovation.org).

Last year, the program received almost 100 applications. Six companies were selected for the eight-week accelerator program, which is held in the spring, and four have proceeded to [piloting](#) their products with the MTA. The program proved so successful that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, New York City Department of Transportation, New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, NJ TRANSIT and Amtrak are participating alongside the MTA this year.

Experts from public agencies, academia and business will evaluate submissions and select the most compelling companies to participate in an eight-week accelerator to achieve "proof of concept"—meaning their product demonstrates potential to solve one of the problems targeted by the MTA or another agency. Where this milestone is achieved, companies will move on to a formal pilot project that deploys their product for testing in a participating transit system.

The program is part of the Transit Innovation Partnership that was established by the MTA and the Partnership for New York City, a business organization, in 2018 to support Governor Cuomo's plans to bring New York's mass transit system into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is run by Rachel Haot, former Chief Digital Officer of New York City and State.

#### 2020 Transit Tech Lab Challenges:

**Accessibility:** How can we make New York's public transit system more accessible?

Today, New York's transit system can be challenging for disabled customers: only 25% of subway stations are wheelchair accessible and information is often communicated exclusively via visual signage or audio announcements. As reflected by the 2020-2024 Capital Program, the MTA is committed to improving accessibility for all. With this Transit Tech Lab challenge, the MTA is seeking technology that can enhance accessibility to better serve customers with special needs, including those with auditory, visual, mobility and mental impairments, the elderly and child caregivers. Potential technology includes wayfinding, mapping and Augmented Reality tools.

**Entrepreneurial Revenue Generation:** How can public transit generate more revenue outside the farebox?

Increasing recurring entrepreneurial revenue for public transit would make transportation agencies less dependent on fares, taxes and bonds and enable transit agencies to invest more in maintenance, operations and service. This Transit Tech Lab challenge seeks solutions that will enable the transit operators to capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunities, deriving more value from their expansive assets. Opportunities include digital marketplaces for assets, customer loyalty programs and digital retail.

**Traffic Coordination:** How can transit agencies reduce traffic by increasing coordination at the curb?

Record traffic in New York City costs \$20 billion annually in lost productivity and excess costs. The Transit Tech Lab seeks solutions to coordinating traffic at the curb among passenger cars, for-hire vehicles, public buses, commercial trucks, tour buses, bicycles and pedestrians. Potential opportunities include dynamic pricing for parking, real-time mapping and reservations and last-mile freight distribution networks.

"As we look to make unprecedented investments in service modernization, it is imperative that we utilize every avenue possible to open the MTA to the most creative technologists in mobility. The Transit Tech Lab is a proven partner for evaluating and introducing technologies that address some of our most critical challenges and it has generated millions of dollars in value at no cost to the MTA," said Patrick J. Foye, Chairman and CEO of the MTA.

"The public and private sectors must collaborate to address New York City's complex transportation challenges," said Kerry McKelvey, Amtrak's Vice President of Marketing. "By working together and leveraging technology we can find innovative solutions to better serve this great city and the Northeast Corridor."

"The Port Authority is committed to upgrading its facilities to 21st century global standards. We're excited to join Transit Tech Lab in its second year. With the Lab's assistance, we seek to utilize private-sector innovation and cutting-edge solutions to improve accessibility and reduce traffic and curbside congestion at our airports," said Rick Cotton, Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

"NJ TRANSIT is excited for this opportunity to join the Transit Tech Lab," said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett, "especially considering the pilot program's highly-successful first year. With our Capital Plan set to be released this spring, NJ TRANSIT must be more strategic and more aggressive in harnessing innovations from the private sector to improve our organization and the service we provide. That's exactly what the Transit Tech Lab will help us do."

"DOT is excited to be a part of this year's Transit Tech Lab," said New York City DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg. "In the rapidly evolving transportation field, we are seeing extraordinary technological advancements in transportation. With growing demands for street space from multiple road users on New York City's streets, we look forward to seeing the creative and innovative ways in which participants can help DOT improve curb management and keep New Yorkers moving."

"The Taxi and Limousine Commission looks forward to building on our efforts to reduce congestion by working with the Transit Tech Lab on solutions that can reduce traffic and improve the lives of drivers, passengers and all New Yorkers," said Jeff Garber, Director of Technology and Innovation for the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.

"The future of our city depends on public transit. Thanks to the Governor and MTA's leadership and commitment to innovation, our public transit system is improving. With the Transit Tech Lab, we're excited to build on that momentum and make our city the global leader in mobility by attracting the most innovative companies from around the globe to improve transportation in New York," said Rachel Haot, Executive Director of the Transit Innovation Partnership.

After companies apply, transit agency specialists and private sector experts will review Lab proposals. Venture capital evaluators include:

- Reilly Brennan, General Partner, Trucks Venture Capital
- Ken Bronfin, Senior Managing Director & Head of International Investments, Hearst Ventures
- Hilary Goshier, Managing Director, Insight Partners
- Maria Gotsch, President & CEO, Partnership Fund for New York City
- Nick Grossman, Partner, Union Square Ventures
- Dylan Hixon, Principal, Arden Road Investments
- Linda Kirkpatrick, Executive Vice President, U.S. Market Development, Mastercard
- Brian Yormak, Partner, Story Ventures

#### ABOUT THE TRANSIT INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP

The Transit Innovation Partnership is a public-private initiative created by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Partnership for New York City with the mission to make New York the global leader in public transit. An advisory board of leaders from academia, business, civic organizations and government guides the Transit Innovation Partnership, which brings together diverse stakeholders to realize public-private programs that improve public transportation through technology and process innovation. Learn more at [transitinnovation.org](https://transitinnovation.org).