

## **Fortaleza City Hall and Toyota Mobility Foundation Launch Innovation Challenge for Public Transport**

FORTALEZA, BRAZIL

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The City of Fortaleza, Brazil, through the Science, Technology and Innovation Foundation (Citinova), in partnership with the Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) and the World Resources Institute Brazil (WRI Brazil), is launching an innovation challenge to develop sustainable and accessible solutions for public transportation in the state capital of Ceará in Northeastern Brazil. The initiative seeks to benefit especially the most vulnerable population and promote a better-performing and more resilient mobility system.

Fortaleza has faced significant challenges in urban mobility. Since 2014, the city has seen a 50% reduction in the use of public transportation, with passengers migrating to ride-hailing services and other alternative modes, according to a survey by Empresa de Transporte Urbano de Fortaleza (ETUFOR). This change directly impacts the low-income population, raising costs and increasing congestion on the roads. In addition, the environmental sustainability of the transportation system is a priority for the city government.

In 2024, to help improve urban mobility in Fortaleza Citinova launched an innovation challenge overseen by TMF and WRI Brasil. The result was the award of a grant to seek solutions. The challenge will be launched in phases and will include technical support and funding to test and validate proposals that can reduce risks and improve mobility in an inclusive manner. The first phase is expected to be launched in March.

### **Strategic partnership and social impact**

The mayor of Fortaleza, Evandro Leitão, highlighted the importance of the initiative to reduce inequalities and offer more opportunities to all residents. "The great mission of our administration is to promote a fair life for the poorest population and reduce social disparities, always seeking innovative solutions with low environmental impact," said Leitão. "This partnership with the Toyota Mobility Foundation is a great

opportunity to join forces and expand transportation options for Fortaleza residents, ensuring greater reliability, efficiency and accessibility.”

For Odilon Aguiar, president of Citinova, innovation and technology are essential to transform urban mobility and reduce inequalities: “We are aware that if we improve urban mobility, we improve people’s lives. This partnership with TMF comes at a very special time, and we will strive to make our public transportation a success story in urban mobility for our residents and for all Latin America.” William Chernicoff, senior manager of Global Research and Innovation at the Toyota Mobility Foundation, emphasized the potential of the challenge to serve as a model for other cities in South America. “Mobility, in all its forms, is fundamental to helping people maximize their potential and achieve their dreams. Time, cost and access to transportation affect economic opportunities and families,” he said.

### **About Citinova**

The Fortaleza Science, Technology and Innovation Foundation (Citinova) works to stimulate creativity, disseminate scientific knowledge and encourage the development of innovative technologies that result in concrete solutions to urban challenges and improve the population's quality of life.

Its mission is to integrate science and technology into the city's development, promoting innovative solutions to urban problems, encouraging digital culture and citizenship, and promoting the Smart City program. Through strategic initiatives, Citinova seeks to consolidate Fortaleza as a hub of innovation and sustainability, contributing to collective well-being and the modernization of public services.

### **About the Toyota Mobility Foundation**

The Toyota Mobility Foundation (hereinafter referred to as “TMF”) is committed to contributing to a sustainable society by leveraging the technologies and expertise gained from our various projects and working with a diverse range of partners to promote activities aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Toyota Mobility Foundation (Chair Akio Toyoda) was established in August 2014 by the Toyota Motor Corporation (Toyota) to support the development of a more mobile society in which everyone can move freely. The Foundation underscores Toyota’s ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and respect

for people. It utilizes Toyota's expertise and technologies to support strong mobility systems while eliminating disparities in mobility. TMF works in partnership with universities, governments, nonprofits, research institutions and other organizations, creating programs that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address mobility issues around the world.

"TMF aims to create a truly mobile society that will help people live better lives no matter where they are," said Chair Akio Toyoda.