



Semi-finalist Announcement

Venice



TOYOTA MOBILITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES SEMI-FINALISTS FOR \$3 MILLION VENICE CHALLENGE TO INCREASE THE USE OF LOW/ZERO CARBON TRANSPORT MODES

- Ten semi-finalists chosen to participate in \$3 million Sustainable Cities Challenge
- Over 120 high-quality entries submitted from across the globe
- Semi-finalists will be awarded \$50k implementation grants to further develop their innovations for the city of Venice

VENICE, ITALY: The Toyota Mobility Foundation has announced the ten semi-finalists for its [Sustainable Cities Challenge](#) in Venice, Italy. Developed in collaboration with the City of Venice, [Challenge Works](#), and [World Resources Institute](#), the Challenge sought global innovators to present solutions to increase the use of existing low and zero-carbon transport modes in Italy's "City of Water."

As part of the two-stage, three-year \$9 million global [Challenge](#), Sustainable Cities Challenge, Venice launched in June 2024, attracting 126 innovator entries from around the world. Detroit, Michigan and Varanasi, India round out the list of three selected cities, each awarding \$3 million in grants.

The semi-finalists are:

- **Betterpoints Ltd:** BetterPoints works with businesses, public bodies and universities to change the way people think about how they move – for better health, cleaner air, and reaching net zero. They will use their app, BetterPoints Italia, to reward citizens for switching from cars to more active and sustainable modes of travel.
- **Bikeloop AS:** Bikeloop is a cutting-edge green tech mobility company specializing in creating smart, secure, and sustainable bicycle parking systems. Their solution will provide a comprehensive system for smart and secure bike parking integrated with

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We could move the low- to zero-carbon goal to the bullets: CHALLENGE TO INCREASE LOW/ZERO CARBON TRANSPORT MODES

And adjust the headline as above.

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value-added services, ensuring a safer and more convenient experience for cyclists in Venice.

- **Factual Consulting SL:** Factual is an innovation and strategy consulting firm committed to transforming mobility. They will use their platform RIDEAL, a digital tool to manage multiple mobility incentive programs and mobility budgets, to leverage Venice to nudge more sustainable mobility choices.
- **HCE s.r.l.:** HCE is a web agency that has been designing and developing cutting-edge projects for international brands and agencies for more than 20 years. Their solution will foster behavioral change, especially in home-to-work commuting, by integrating two approaches: supporting and facilitating sustainable mobility promoters’ initiatives and raising awareness among citizens.
- **Instant System SAS:** Instant System is a leading Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) provider, empowering over 100 cities and regions worldwide. Their MaaS platform integrates an intermodal trip planner with journey recognition, covering public transport, biking, and shared mobility. The platform provides a gamified mobility profile, nudging behavior change by simplifying access to Venice’s diverse mobility options.
- **Ioki GmbH:** ioki is the leading European tech-company for digital mobility and they offer data-based transport planning and innovative platform solutions. They will use a tailored approach to understand the mobility needs of Venice’s population to encourage a shift toward sustainable travel behaviors.
- **Kooling Technologies Limited:** Kooling is a London-based, deep tech company focusing on addressing urban mobility challenges. Their tool, Every Street, combines insight on individual mobility choices and aims to talk to people's hearts and understand the individual experience to breakdown urban mobility perceptions that creates value for citizens and visitors.
- **My House Geek Pty Ltd (BikeParty):** Bike Party is a digital platform for organizing group bicycle rides and measuring the usage of a city's active transport infrastructure. They work with cities and communities to form group bicycle rides around key destinations such as schools, universities, business precincts and public transport infrastructure to forge community connections and increase active transport participation.

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- Nudgd AB:** Nudgd is a startup dedicated to driving sustainable behavior change through innovative digital nudging solutions. The Smart Nudges platform integrates behavioral science with digital tools to encourage sustainable mobility habits. Through personalized, timely nudges embedded in apps, websites, and digital signage, it motivates individuals to choose low-carbon transport modes.
- UrbanTide Limited:** UrbanTide helps organizations unlock the value of their data, through their uMove platform which integrates diverse datasets and delivers AI-driven analysis to support scalable, data-driven solutions for sustainable transport and behavior change.

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The Challenge evaluated entries based on their potential to change citizen behavior by increasing active mobility, public transport use and usage of shared mobility.

Semi-finalists will each receive a \$50,000 implementation grant to help teams refine and localize their solutions to drive the use and adoption of existing low and zero-carbon transport modes in Venice. "With these 10 semi-finalists now selected, we are excited to join forces with global innovators to explore sustainable transport solutions for the people of Venice. We understand that changing established behaviors and daily habits, especially in transportation, can be challenging. However, even small changes made by many can significantly reduce carbon emissions and enhance the livability of our cities. We hope that the outcome of this Challenge will inspire other cities worldwide to adopt similar practices, helping them overcome their own challenges on the path to a sustainable future," said Monica Perez Lobo, Director at Toyota Mobility Foundation Europe.

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Commented [T(10)]: @Victoria Antonova - can you confirm with Monica if this quote is good for her? (tagging @Alison Powell (TMNA) here too for tracking)

Director of Cities and Societies at Challenge Works, Kathy Nothstine, said, "Announcing the ten semi-finalists for Venice's Sustainable Cities Challenge is a significant milestone. Sustainable transport solutions are about more than technology – they're about understanding and meeting the needs of residents who benefit from these systems. This Challenge gives innovators the chance to test their ideas in a real-world context, exploring what truly impacts how people engage with transport in cities."

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"With the selection of these ten semi-finalists, it's exciting to see how innovators from around the world will respond to the Challenge and develop solutions to make Venice a more sustainable city," said Ben Welle, director of Integrated Transport and Innovation at WRI Ross

Center for Sustainable Cities. “The resulting innovations will directly benefit the people of Venice, and we hope these solutions can be applied to other cities worldwide, improving urban mobility on a broader scale.”

The Sustainable Cities Challenge is funded by the Toyota Mobility Foundation and has been designed in collaboration with Challenge Works and the World Resources Institute. Challenge Works is a global leader in the design and delivery of open innovation challenges that mobilize innovative thinkers to solve pressing problems and unlock change. World Resources Institute is a global research organization which works with partners to develop practical solutions that improve people’s lives and ensure that nature can thrive.

To find out more, visit the [Sustainable Cities Challenge website](#).

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About the Sustainable Cities Challenge

The Sustainable City Challenge is a two-stage, three-year \$9 million global opportunity for cities and innovators. The Sustainable Cities Challenge will be delivered over two stages:

- **Stage 1: Call to cities**

The Challenge sought cities who wish to host City Challenges in 2024 - 2025. In November 2023, ten shortlisted cities received a range of capacity building support to help them understand the issue they want to solve and attract innovators to provide solutions. By May 2024, three cities were selected to host City Challenges to find solutions for local mobility challenges.

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- **Stage 2: Call to Innovators via 3 City Challenges**

Working with Venice, Varanasi, and Detroit, the Sustainable Cities Challenge team supported by designing local City Challenges which launched between May and June 2024. Each City Challenge offers up to \$3 million in funding to innovators. Host Cities held open calls for entries from innovators via their City Challenge with the support of the Sustainable Cities Challenge team. Together, they selected their semi-finalists and finalists to test their solutions in 2024-2025. In 2026, final awards will be given to winners in each host city to continue to implement and grow their solutions.

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About Toyota Mobility Foundation

The Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) 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, non-profits, research institutions and other organizations, creating programs that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address mobility issues around the world.

In the past, TMF has led a range of Challenges, including the global **Mobility Unlimited Challenge, CATCH** in Malaysia, **InoveMob Challenge** in Brazil and STAMP Challenge in India. You can find out more about TMF and how it is governed at toyotamobilityfoundation.org

About Challenge Works

For a decade, Challenge Works has established itself as a global leader in designing and delivering high-impact challenges to incentivize cutting-edge innovation for social good. Challenge Works is a social enterprise founded by the UK’s innovation agency Nesta. In the last 10 years, they have run almost 100 prizes, distributed over £245 million in funding, and engaged with more than 13,000 innovators. Challenge Works believes no challenge is unsolvable, partnering with non-profits, governments, and other organizations around the globe to unearth the entrepreneurs and their innovations that can solve the greatest challenges of our time. Visit them at <https://challengeworks.org/>

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About World Resources Institute

World Resources Institute (WRI) is a global research organization with offices in Brazil, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Mexico and the United States, and regional offices for Africa and Europe. WRI’s 1,700 staff work with partners to develop practical solutions that improve people’s lives and ensure nature can thrive. Learn more: WRI.org and on Twitter [@WorldResources](https://twitter.com/WorldResources).