PRESS RELEASE

Toyota Mobility Foundation Names Winning Innovators across Varanasi, Venice, and Detroit in Global Sustainable Cities Challenge

- $9 million global city challenge to drive safe, inclusive, and sustainable innovation in city mobility celebrates successful finale
- Winners proposed solutions to mobility challenges unique to their chosen cities
- Innovators to scale and implement their solutions for legacy impact

TOKYO (July 24, 2026) – Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) announces the full list of winners of its global Sustainable Cities Challenge (SCC), the organization's largest initiative to date. The news follows last week's conclusion of the Challenge's final of three sections, held in Varanasi, India, after the winners in the other two host cities—Detroit, Michigan, and Venice, Italy—were named earlier this year, as they shared their winning innovations and mobility solutions.

Since the Challenge was first announced in 2023, TMF, along with its collaborators, Challenge Works and World Resources Institute, fostered cutting-edge innovation through a hands-on process, first reviewing hundreds of submissions from around the world, selecting the most promising proposals, and then working with finalists to evolve their ideas into solutions that met the host cities' needs. Through close guidance, careful co-creation, and sustained engagement with city officials and local contributors, the convened stakeholders shared the mission to bring meaningful, lasting contributions to each city's quality of life through mobility.

In Detroit, that meant seeking a more sustainable way to move goods through busy markets. In Venice, the project asked: how can the city encourage residents to choose low-carbon transport? And in the historic old city of Kashi, along the banks of the Ganges River in Varanasi, India, an ever-growing number of annual visitors to the sacred site led forward-thinking municipal leaders to collaborate on novel approaches to charting the paths of millions of people more easily and sustainably.

In keeping with TMF's commitment to knowledge-sharing, the goal of the Sustainable Cities Challenge was twofold: support the development of new modes within the three host cities, while incubating innovative, workable, and impactful results for cities facing similar barriers. Inherent in SCC and in TMF's projects across the globe is a legacy mindset, built into programs from inception to completion. With the conclusion of the three-year, global SCC competition to identify, evolve, and prove the efficacy of these models, the innovators' work now shifts to scaling solutions in their respective cities.

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Please join us in congratulating the global winners of the Sustainable Cities Challenge:

Varanasi, India

The Challenge sought innovative solutions to ease pedestrian congestion and improve pedestrian and pilgrimage flows through one of India's oldest and most sacred cities, which welcomes millions of visitors each year. The winners deployed solutions ranging from AI to color-coded wayfinding signage to help local authorities mitigate overcrowding and visitors and residents navigate the city safely.

Varanasi Winners:

- **CITYDATA, Inc., in partnership with Nippon Koei** – CITYDATA.AI is a pioneering big data and AI company that delivers mobility intelligence to foster smarter, safer, more sustainable and resilient urban environments**.** The team's solution is CityFlow, a cloud-based solution that uses big data, computer vision, and generative AI to measure, analyze, simulate, and manage crowds in real time. Built on the Measure, Analyze, Simulate, and Intervene (MASI) framework, it delivers actionable insights using CITYDATA's patented sensors.
- **The Urbanizer** – The Urbanizer is a pioneering urban design, landscape design, and architecture firm based in India. They specialize in creating vibrant, sustainable urban spaces through a data-driven and human-centric approach. The team's solution is Jan Jatra, a people-first mobility solution blending local insights with colour-coded wayfinding, dynamic digital signage, and other tactical urbanism strategies to improve navigation and safety.
- **Honorable Mentions**: Behtarway, developed by **VOGIC AI,** is an AI-powered hyperlocal pedestrian navigation platform, while Nayichaal, developed by **Prameya Consulting**, focuses on improving accessibility and navigability for vulnerable populations in the old city of Kashi.

Venice, Italy

The core task in Venice was to lead residents toward greater usage of the city's mobility network. Already, the City of Venice had invested heavily in sustainable infrastructure, establishing almost 200 km of bike lanes, while putting 30 new electric buses (with 44 more on the way) on its roads, plus 32 hybrid waterbuses on its famed canals by the end of 2026. Now, the need was to facilitate greater public adoption of the existing infrastructure. In Venice, the Challenge's winners developed solutions promoting the use of low-carbon

transport by creating experiences designed to make the choice more accessible and rewarding. In addition, the challenge addressed a broader issue facing many European cities: how to accelerate the shift toward lower-carbon transport by making sustainable travel more attractive.

Venice Winners:

- **BetterPoints Ltd**, based in Surrey, England, works with businesses, public organizations, and universities to change the way people think about how they move. The team is using their app, Bella Mossa, to reward citizens for switching to more active and sustainable modes of travel. Over 40 techniques, ranging from gamification to local rewards programs, are built into the app and program to support successful behavioral change. From October 2025 to February 2026, Bella Mossa replaced 45,000 car journeys and resulted in 1,570 kilometers traveled by bicycle by non-typical bicyclists.
- **Factual Consulting SL, in partnership with OpenMove,** is an innovation and strategy consulting firm based in Barcelona, Spain, committed to transforming mobility. The company's winning digital platform, Andemo, promotes sustainable mobility habits through innovative approaches, such as micro-incentives, which use small rewards or tokens to drive behavioral change. Andemo achieved 1,750 downloads during its pilot period, with 87 percent of users accessing the app an average of three times per day. In-app surveys found that 77 percent of users felt Andemo improved their overall travel experience in Venice, and 56 percent reported an increased awareness of sustainable mobility topics.

Detroit, Michigan

In Detroit, SCC focused on demonstrating clean freight solutions in Eastern Market, the heart of Detroit's food economy and a thriving commercial hub. The Challenge's goal was to identify solutions that reduce fossil fuel use, lower freight costs, and support cleaner, more efficient movement of goods. The winners approached this aim from complementary directions, from lightweight electric vehicles to power generation and battery charging innovations.

Detroit Winners:

- **Civilized Cycles** – A Detroit-based manufacturer of ultra-light electric cargo vehicles, Civilized Cycles is scaling its patented semi-trike as a practical alternative to gas-powered delivery vans. Since the finalists were announced, the company has been exploring applications for its semi-trike, most recently selling one to Detroit-based company Grounded EVs, where it will be used as a platform to build a mini-RV.

- **ElectricFish Energy Inc** – A distributed energy infrastructure company advancing fast-charging EV solutions, ElectricFish recently launched 400squared™, a 400 kW battery-integrated fast charger, and introduced its Turbo Charge program to enable seamless deployment at gas stations and fleet sites. Since being named a finalist, the company has been third-party endorsed by MotorTrend and received coverage in high-profile news outlets such as Axios.
- **Neology** – A clean technology startup developing power systems that can produce hydrogen and electricity from ammonia independently, Neology supports applications where clean, off-grid power is necessary. Since being selected as a finalist, Neology has conducted more than ten live demonstrations across Detroit, generating approximately 300 kWh of clean energy – enough to power an average U.S. home for 10 days - and producing approximately 20 kilograms of hydrogen from ammonia. These demonstrations serve as examples of opportunities for validation of transportation concepts offered by the Sustainable Cities Challenge.

Remarks:

Ryan Klem, Director of Programs for the Toyota Mobility Foundation: "Toyota Mobility Foundation has been honored to work in conjunction with local authorities to empower innovators committed to improving mobility in their cities. We look forward to seeing all that these innovators accomplish in the years to come. The work now moves to a crucial stage: evolving pilots into practical models with a potential for cities to learn from, adapt, and scale. These winners exemplify why innovation grounded in local knowledge can help shape the future of mobility."

Kathy Nothstine, Director of Cities and Societies at Challenge Works: "It has been incredible to watch the innovators involved in the Sustainable Cities Challenge grow over the past three years, unlocking solutions central to their cities' mobility landscapes. At Challenge Works, we believe that city-led competitions are critical for developing localized solutions with the potential for global impact. The challenge's winners across the world prove what we already knew: that sustainable mobility can be made a reality when built around human-centric design."

Benjamin Welle, Director of Integrated Transport and Innovation at World Resources Institute: "We congratulate all the winners across Venice, Varanasi, and Detroit as they work to further enhance mobility in their cities. Their progress will serve to benefit not just their local communities but cities everywhere seeking innovative solutions to shape sustainable urban mobility."

For more information, visit sustainablecitieschallenge.org

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Notes to Editors

All the winners are available for interviews. To schedule a time, please contact us at your earliest convenience.

For more information please contact:

- TMF@89up.org
- info@toyota-mf.org

About Toyota Mobility Foundation

Toyota Mobility Foundation (Chair Akio Toyoda) was established in August 2014 by 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.

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

About Challenge Works

Challenge Works is a global leader in the design and delivery of challenge prizes to spark innovation in science, technology and society. It is part of Nesta, the research and innovation foundation. Challenge Works has run over 100 challenge prizes, awarding over £370m on behalf of public, private and philanthropic funders around the world. Find out more at https://challengeworks.org/

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