



NYCEDC and Civic Hall Labs Launch *NYC BigApps 2017*

*Submissions Open for Civic Innovation Competition Focusing on
New York City Youth, Seniors, and Immigrants*

*Winning Technologies Will Receive Cash Prizes,
Accelerator Admission, and be Eligible for a Pilot on LinkNYC Kiosks*

NEW YORK, NY (January 12, 2017) — New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), in collaboration with Civic Hall Labs (CHL), today announced the official launch of NYC BigApps 2017 competition, which has started accepting submissions. This is the seventh *NYC BigApps*, the City's premier civic technology competition that has awarded close to a half-million dollars in prize money and generated more than \$10 million in seed funding for tech projects that help and support New Yorkers. This year's winners will receive cash awards, marketing and promotion, acceptance into a civic accelerator program, and will be eligible to be piloted on hundreds of [LinkNYC](#) kiosks across the all five boroughs.

The *NYC BigApps 2017* competition has three main challenge areas focused on improving the quality of life for New York City youth (13-18), seniors (65+), and immigrants:

Transportation: Leverage technology and public data to increase ease of use and expand travel options for youth, seniors, and immigrants.

Knowledge: Provide youth, seniors, and immigrants with better access to accurate, timely, and user-friendly information in order to make more informed decisions for their daily lives (i.e. at home, at work, at school, in public).

Community Resiliency: Build strong, resilient communities by fostering more inclusion and connection for youth, seniors, and immigrants where they live, learn, work, and play.

[Civic Hall Labs](#), a research and development nonprofit that collaboratively designs and builds technology for public good, partnered with [NYCEDC](#) to produce the BigApps 2017 competition. Civic Hall Labs, in partnership with a wide range of agencies and community organizations, has anchored each challenge in the expressed needs of [community end-users and the social practitioners who serve them](#), and will provide this year's participants access to design and

product development workshops and mentors between January and the end of April when submissions are due.

“The BigApps competition is fueled by the same entrepreneurial spirit and civic engagement that has always propelled New York City forward,” said **NYCEDC President Maria Torres-Springer**. “We’re proud to partner with Civic Hall Labs this year to solicit thoughtful solutions that will improve the lives of our city’s youth, senior, and immigrant populations. As we kick off our 2017 competition, we’re calling on all developers, designers, entrepreneurs, and residents to find ways in which technology can make New York City an even better place to live and work.”

“BigApps is key to New York City being the capital of technology innovation that focuses on helping people and improving our neighborhoods and our city,” added **Andrew Rasiej, President and Co-Founder of Civic Hall Labs**. “Civic Hall Labs is thrilled to be working with NYCEDC on expanding the competition and making it even more accessible to all New Yorkers.”

Council Member Dan Garodnick, Chair of the Committee on Economic Development said, “When some of New York’s sharpest minds use tech to tackle urban challenges, amazing things can happen. There is no limit to what can be achieved here, and I look forward to seeing the product of this year’s competition.”

“For the past seven years, Big Apps has been the key event in civic tech,” said **Council Member James Vacca**, Chair of the New York City Committee on Technology. “Big Apps is an excellent competition where the best minds in civic tech come together to create apps that make life easier for all New Yorkers. I’m especially interested in this year’s competition as it focuses on creating solutions regarding key issues for our youth, seniors and immigrants. I applaud the NYC Economic Development Corporation & Civic Hall Labs for their efforts in running this excellent competition every year.”

“No complex problem is solved in isolation, that’s why BigApps is so important. It brings diverse groups to the table to come up with creative solutions. As the producing partner for NYC BigApps, Civic Hall Labs will directly assist participants to grow ideas and projects that will improve the welfare and wellbeing of our communities,” shared **Elizabeth Stewart, Civic Hall Labs Executive Director**.

“LinkNYC was designed from the start to be a platform for civic innovation, and we are proud to partner with NYCEDC and Civic Hall for the BigApps 2017 competition,” said **Jen Hensley, General Manager of LinkNYC**. “One of this year’s winning apps will get the opportunity to be piloted on more than 600 LinkNYC kiosks across the City, which are used tens of thousands of times every week by New Yorkers and visitors from around the world.”

As part of the competition, there will be seven free product development workshops with interactive, hands-on learning experiences, expert speakers, and panel discussions. These workshops will offer training in design thinking, user research, and product development and help catalyze the ideation and prototyping process for applicants with little to no experience in

technology. This year's Grand Prize winners will receive cash prizes and admission into [CivicX](#), Civic Hall Labs' civic accelerator program. The competition's lead prize sponsor is Microsoft and there will also be a Judge's Choice Award where a winning app will have the opportunity to pilot on [LinkNYC](#) tablets throughout the City's five boroughs. LinkNYC staff will provide mentorship and guidance to BigApps participants who design their submissions with Link kiosks in mind.

NYC BigApps 2017 Key Dates

Product Development Workshops: **Every Two Weeks Starting January 24, 2017**

Submission Deadline: **April 30, 2017**

Final Pitch Event / Winners Announcement: **Late May 2017**

About NYC BigApps

Over the last seven years, the *NYC BigApps* competition has catalyzed the creation of new civic innovations by awarding nearly a half a million dollars in prize money, and generating more than ten million dollars in seed funding toward technology products that improve the lives of New Yorkers.

Past competitions have resulted in the development of viable, marketable tech products that solve for civic challenges, such as 2015 Winner [Addicaid](#)'s addiction recovery app, which received 300,000 downloads in its first year; 2015 Winner [JustFix.nyc](#), which built an online toolkit for New Yorkers in neglectful housing situations; and 2014 Winner [Heat Seek](#), which aims to tackle NYC's heating crisis and has partnered with advocacy organizations to install its sensors in buildings across New York City. To get regular updates and enter a submission to the *NYC BigApps 2017* competition, visit www.bigapps.nyc. Follow on Twitter ([@nycbigapps](#)).

About NYCEDC

The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) is the primary engine for economic growth in NYC, and is devoted to leveraging the City's assets to drive growth, create jobs, and improve quality of life.

About Civic Hall Labs

Civic Hall Labs is the Research & Development arm of [Civic Hall](#). Launched at the 2016 Personal Democracy Forum, Civic Hall Labs seeks to reimagine civic participation for the 21st century, expand the field of civic tech, and demonstrate a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to designing and building technology for the public good.

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