



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TECH FOR NEW YORK: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES
2017 NYC BIGAPPS WINNERS**

*Innovations benefit New York City immigrants, seniors and youth;
nesterly, PASSNYC, On Board, and Dollar Van NYC are the winners*

NEW YORK— Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York City Economic Development Corporation and Civic Hall Labs today announced three Grand Prize winners and one Judges Award winner of the 2017 NYC BigApps, the City’s premier civic technology competition. This year’s winners seek to improve quality of life for city immigrants, seniors and youth in the challenge areas of transportation, knowledge, and community resiliency.

“NYC BigApps is about New Yorkers helping New Yorkers. Every year, we ask our tech and creative talent to help solve pressing challenges. They step up and consistently exceed our expectations with innovative ideas for New York,” **Mayor Bill de Blasio** said.

The competition has awarded close to a half-million dollars in prize money and generated more than \$10 million in seed funding for tech projects since it started in 2009.

NYC BigApps competition asks developers, designers, students, and non-profit professionals to solve challenges facing New Yorkers. This year’s contest received a record 150 eligible submissions. At last night’s The Finalist Expo and Awards Ceremony, nine finalists presented to a panel of judges who selected this year’s winners:

nesterly (Grand Prize Winner): enables older households with spare space to connect with young people willing to exchange help around the house for lower rent through a digital platform.

PASSNYC Opportunity Explorer (Grand Prize Winner): offers a common application through which students will be able to both find and apply for over 200 NYC-based after-school, summer and weekend extracurricular programs.

On Board (Grand Prize Winner): a distributed passenger check-in system for New York City's paratransit network (Access-A-Ride). By creating a public, independent database of passenger pickups, On Board empowers transit advocates to assess and improve service schedules and quality, and ensures a safer, more reliable ride for thousands of New Yorkers.

Dollar Van NYC (Judges Award Winner): a multilingual app providing real-time access to over 500 licensed commuter vans that provide rides for as little as \$2.

Grand Prize winners will receive over \$30,000 worth of cash and in-kind prizes, which include \$15,000 in cash, admission into Civic Hall Labs' accelerator program, pro bono legal services from BakerHostetler, and discounted courses and workshops from General Assembly.

The Judges Award winner will have the opportunity to pilot their app on LinkNYC tablets throughout the five boroughs.

“Since 2009, NYC BigApps has pulled together hundreds of passionate New Yorkers to solve our city's most challenging issues,” said **New York City Economic Development Corporation President and CEO James Patchett**. “The competition has not just yielded impactful solutions, it has also spawned great companies and created new jobs. Congratulations to this year's winners, finalists, and participants for joining together in an effort that both improves the quality of life and economic opportunity in our city.”

“Once again, the BigApps Competition has proven there is no limit to what can be achieved when New York's sharpest minds use tech to tackle urban challenges,” said **Council Member Dan Garodnick**. “Congratulations to this year's winners – the City will be better off thanks to your innovative creations.”

“New York City is home to one of the most active and innovative civic tech scenes in the entire world, and Big Apps is one of the key reasons for this,” said **Council Member James Vacca, Chair of the New York City Committee on Technology**. “Technology can do so much to improve the lives of people in this City, and I'm excited to see the projects that this year's amazing winners develop.”

“This year's BigApps winners epitomize civic technology at its best and provide New York City with exciting new resources. The finalists demonstrated once again that New York City leads the country in innovation that puts people first, improves neighborhoods and makes cities more livable,” said **Andrew Rasiej, President and Co-Founder of Civic Hall Labs**. “Working together, Civic Hall Labs and EDC were able to make the competition accessible to all New Yorkers with a community improving idea and now through the Civic Hall Labs accelerator BigApps winners will have the resources and support to turn their ideas into reality.”

“The best solutions happen when people with a variety of backgrounds and skillsets work together. 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 served as a resource for New Yorkers to grow ideas and projects that will improve the welfare and wellbeing of our communities,” said **Elizabeth Stewart, Civic Hall Labs Executive Director**.

“Congratulations to this year's winners. We are thrilled to have had such excellent submissions and ideas and look forward to working with our Grand Prize Winners with their admission to our civic accelerator program.”

“NYC BigApps offers tech startups an opportunity to help government rethink how to address city challenges,” said **Miguel Gamiño, New York City Chief Technology Officer**. “Now, more than ever it’s important to find new ways to serve, protect and strengthen our immigrant populations.”

“It is inspiring to see this year’s Big Apps participants come together to develop thoughtful solutions for our senior constituency in New York City. We are grateful to everyone who dedicated their own time to improve the lives of other New Yorkers and we look forward to seeing these solutions implemented in communities across the city,” said **Donna M. Corrado, PhD, Commissioner of New York City Department for the Aging**.

“LinkNYC is proud to partner with the City and Civic Hall on BigApps, a competition that shows that the best ideas and solutions to our city’s challenges come straight from New Yorkers. LinkNYC is a platform for civic innovation and we look forward to working with the winners to pilot some of their ideas on Link tablets throughout the five boroughs,” said **Jen Hensley, General Manager of LinkNYC**.

“NYC is the ultimate city of immigrants, and immigrant New Yorkers comprises 47 percent of our city’s technology sector,” said **Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal**. “It is fitting that NYC’s innovators are finding ways to support their immigrant sisters and brothers in a time of xenophobic rhetoric and policies from Washington that don’t align with New York City values. Congratulations to this year’s winners.”

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

- **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, at home, at work, at school, and 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.

NYCEDC partnered with Civic Hall Labs, a sister organization to Civic Hall that collaboratively designs and builds technology for public good to produce the BigApps 2017 competition. Civic Hall Labs, in partnership with over 30 community organizations, anchored three challenges in the expressed needs of specific end users. Over the course of the competition, Civic Hall Labs facilitated seven design and product development workshops that drew over 500 developers, designers, subject matter experts, students, nonprofit professionals.

2017 winners were selected from a group of impressive finalists:

- **Border Buddy**—providing free legal services for travelers targeted by President Trump's Muslim ban. Travelers can register for Border Buddy to track their flight arrival information. Border Buddy will send a lawyer to the airport if a traveler has not contacted them more for than two hours after arrival.
- **Rapid Response**—providing technology for immigrant communities and advocates fighting mass deportation through participatory deportation defense programs.
- **Conductor**—aggregating transportation data from a variety of sources in order to give riders more accurate directions and information. Conductor delivers that information in a range of formats, making it accessible to different communities.
- **Kurtin**—increasing minority college graduation rates by providing fun, relatable, and interactive tools that help high school students gather the critical insights necessary to make informed college selection decisions.
- **Torus Teens**—an online platform that connects urban teens with out-of-school programs and resources to explore interests, build skills, and expand networks outside of the classroom.

The NYC BigApps competition is sponsored by Microsoft, Intersection, LinkNYC, BakerHostetler, and General Assembly. The final event was sponsored by Esri, First Republic Bank, AppNexus, and Civic Hall.

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. To get regular updates about next year's competition and events, visit www.bigapps.nyc to sign up for the newsletter. Follow on Twitter ([@nycbigapps](https://twitter.com/nycbigapps)).

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