

ITE NEWS

Innovators and Startups: Pitch Your Next Big Idea at Transportation’s Original Six Minute Pitch

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Do you have an innovative idea that could be the next big thing in transportation? Are you a startup looking for opportunities to share your vision? Are you a graduate student with a specialized product? If so, you need to apply for the *Six Minute Pitch: A Transportation Startup Challenge*. Selected presenters pitch their cutting-edge, research-based concept for a transportation product or service in just six minutes. All transportation sectors are encouraged to apply. Previous competitions have included rail industry, pedestrian innovations, and freight.

The *Six Minute Pitch: A Transportation Startup Challenge* is a unique Young Member Council (YMC) session at the Transportation Research Board (TRB) 95th Annual Meeting in January

2016. Four presenters will be selected from the applicants to showcase their next big transportation idea to a panel of esteemed judges. Presentations are judged on the basis of the commercial viability of their concept, potential business plan, and on the demonstration of how the proposed idea meets a critical transportation challenge. Judges treat each presentation as an individual “investment” and must decide immediately after the presentation and discussion if they are in or out. The presenter with the most votes wins the competition!

While no actual investment is awarded at the Six Minute Pitch (per TRB rules), the opportunity to present at one of the most well attended sessions at TRB proves itself as a worthwhile experience. During the 2015 Pitch, potential attendees were turned away at the door due to the packed room of eager

attendees looking for the next big thing. In addition to the large number of attendees that may be interested in helping you with your idea, presenters have the opportunity to receive feedback from a distinguished panel of investors and successful entrepreneurs. Winners of the Six Minute Pitch are featured in TRB’s *TR News*, and other media outlets have covered the session winners in the past.

Confirmed judges for the 2016 Six Minute Pitch include:

- Sean O’Sullivan, of SOSV and co-founder and managing director of Carma;
- Chris Thomas, founder and partner, Fontinalis Partners; and
- Gabe Klein, visiting fellow at the Urban Land Institute.

During the three previous years, more than 100 ideas have been submitted, and from them 12 ideas have been presented. Now in its fourth year, the Six Minute Pitch has showcased many successful early stage transportation technology companies. The winner of the 2015 Six Minute Pitch was Transfix, a

“[Transfix is] a fascinating concept in a huge market that’s antiquated and needs to be updated. Impacts could extend beyond intercity trucking.”

– Gabe Klein, *Six Minute Pitch Judge*



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Attendees at the Six Minute Pitch during the 2015 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting.