

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION
for the
Blind and Visually Impaired

CONFIDENT LIVING WITH VISION LOSS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND INNOVATE@BU ANNOUNCE
COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGE**

Brookline, MA, (October 1, 2019) – The Massachusetts Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired (MABVI) and Boston University Innovate@BU have announced a partnership to develop a challenge open to BU students and alumni to solve community transit problems that will benefit society at large—and particularly for seniors and the blind and low vision community.

The goal of the Community Transit Design Challenge is for Boston University students and alumni to develop and design new human-centered tools to improve transportation accessibility solutions for the aging and visually impaired communities, which will ultimately improve transportation for everyone, while competing for a \$10,000 grand prize. Ultimately, the challenge hopes to find solutions to help older adults who are losing their vision better connect to their communities.

“We each have a role in creating a more inclusive space for everyone to live and work and thrive, said Sassy Outwater-Wright, Executive Director of MABVI. “We have the duty to ask tomorrow’s designers, engineers and social scientists to start thinking about that today and to start building smarter solutions. MABVI is proud to partner with BU to solve some of the most common problems facing older adults who are blind or have low vision. Accessibility in design today creates a more inclusive future.”

“Our students and alumni are no strangers to Boston’s public transportation challenges. We are thrilled that this collaboration will give our community the opportunity to view transportation challenges from another perspective and to use their expertise to build better, more accessible solutions for all.” said Gerry Fine, Executive Director of Innovate@BU.

The competition will launch with Round 1 applications opening in October 2019. Round 1 finalists will be chosen in October and from October to December, 5-7 teams will be awarded \$500 to work on crafting a more specific application with mentors for Round 2. Round 2 will run from January to April 2020, with 3-4 teams competing for a \$10,000 prize and a chance to pilot their solutions. Successful teams will be paired with Mentors during Round 2 of this program as well. More details and the application can be found at:

<https://bit.ly/bumabvii>

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About Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Founded in 1903, [Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) is one of the oldest social service organization in the country supporting adults and seniors who are blind or low vision. A division of MAB Community Services, Inc., MABVI is a leading provider of integrated medical, social, and rehabilitation services for adults and seniors with vision loss. MABVI empowers individuals and offers them the tools they need to accomplish their goals by helping to remove barriers and increasing access to services. MABVI partners with numerous medical, elder services, and community agencies to create high-impact, cost-effective services for over 1500 for blind and low vision people across the Commonwealth.

About the Boston University Innovate@BU

Boston University [Innovate@BU](#) is a University-wide initiative to enable all BU Terriers to become drivers of innovation in their own lives, careers, and communities. Through its physical home on campus, the BUild Lab IDG Capital Student Innovation Center, Innovate@BU provides experiential learning programs that foster an entrepreneurial mindset by teaching innovation, communication, and collaboration skills.

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