

Grant Announcement: ITNAmerica[®] and the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation Announce Matching Grants for Two Independent Transportation Network (ITN) Affiliates and Four ITNEverywhere Development Sites for Rural and Small Community Transport

New York's older population is growing rapidly, and by the year 2015 adults age sixty and over will make up 20 to 29 percent of the general population. This cohort will become 50% larger than the existing senior adult population. This major population shift presents a challenge to communities, government agencies, providers of housing and senior services, and others involved with older adults. Older adults express an overwhelming desire to live independently as long as possible. In most communities, maintaining mobility with alternatives to the personal automobile is critical to maintaining an independent lifestyle. People with disabilities may also have difficulty traveling, and public transport is not always sufficient to meet their needs. Everyone in the community will benefit from more options and increased safety. An increasing number of Americans are aware of the environmental impact of driving, and are seeking opportunities to reduce their carbon footprint. For others, the costs of solely owning and operating a car consume a disproportionate share of household income.

ITNEverywhere—4 matching grants of \$25,000 each

To meet the evolving transportation needs of communities across New York State, ITNAmerica through the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation will provide 4 communities \$25,000 each in matching funds to establish and incubate pilot sites of ITNEverywhere[®] — a research and development project designed to test how elements of a proven alternative transportation model (the ITN[®] affiliate model) may be used to serve smaller communities. The project will also study how to incorporate some additional innovative transport methods (currently outside the ITN model) which show promise in smaller communities.

ITNEverywhere takes the core business innovations of the original ITN model for seniors—personal transportation accounts, and a flexible approach to private resources, including traded vehicles, volunteer credits, cash, co-payments, and gift certificates—and expands them to include the population as a whole in conjunction with a suite of software programs designed to document, track and access multiple forms of unused private capacity.

In addition to the current ITNRides[™] software that supports sustainable senior transportation, the other facets of the ITNEverywhere transportation concept include:

- **ITNCommunityTransport[™]** — for small communities with little or no public transport
- **ITNRideshare[™]** — using empty seats in private cars for voluntary shared rides
- **ITNMyCar[™]** — using donated or traded vehicles from ITN to add a mobility option
- **ITNLite[™]** — providing small communities a simpler subset of the full ITNRides application

Proposed Collaboration

ITNEverywhere will be developed through an iterative process that meaningfully engages potential end-users from each test community and other pilot locations around the country to ensure the end results meet the core needs of communities sustainably. Collaborating with local participants, ITNAmerica will identify gaps in transportation systems and test innovative solutions for filling them.

In addition to helping shape this breakthrough work, each Community Group will benefit from its participation by receiving an assessment of their community's current transportation landscape (supply) and their residents' unmet transportation needs (demand). As a charter Community Group, each pilot group will receive priority for participation in the implementation phase, as well as the opportunity to join in any matching grant programs.

New York communities will benefit from participating in the research and development phase by receiving:

- An analysis of the current landscape of transportation resources, including estimates of ridership, price points, and profiles of user types;
- A summary of the market research conducted in the community;
- An assessment of unmet transportation needs raised during the market research process, segmented by distinct end-user groups; and
- An estimate of potential benefits from improved mobility via the new model.

While ITNAmerica and its team will be responsible for conducting the research, they will rely on local assistance and expertise in helping to identify the most promising strategies to engage the community in this process.

This assistance will take the form of:

- Forming a Steering Committee;
- Selecting a sponsoring agency;
- Providing a meeting facility with broadband internet access where project testing and meetings can occur;
- Identifying a local project manager to coordinate with ITNAmerica;
- Funding the initiative in the amount of \$25,000 in 4 payments of \$6,250



Community Selection Criteria

Communities that may benefit from this development effort are described by the criteria below. Appropriate communities with an interest in leadership and early adoption may enter immediate discussion with ITNAmerica's community outreach and research staff. The necessary criteria include:

- Community "will" – embodied in a project champion interested in and able to see the project through to completion
- Ability to raise at least \$25,000 to be combined with matching funds
- Population ranging from 5,000 to 180,000
- Limited or no existing public transportation system
- Limited or no existing shared-ride transportation services
- Destinations within community and in nearby areas, plus a demonstrated need for longer-range travel (to a larger city, airport, cultural center, etc.)

Independent Transportation Network (ITN)—2 grants of \$50,000 each

The Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation and ITNAmerica seek to bring the benefits of ITN to communities wishing to reach out to lower income seniors. To accomplish this end, ITNAmerica has two \$50,000 matching grants for communities with a population of 200,000 or more in a 15 mile radius. The funds will be awarded over two years to help start ITN affiliates that focus on volunteer recruitment to help serve lower income seniors. It will be necessary to raise additional funds. The grants may not be used as operating funds for existing programs. Every ITN affiliate forms an independent, non-profit corporation that becomes part of the nationally affiliated system. ITN service is available 24/7 for any purpose, in automobiles, through a combination of paid and volunteer drivers.

About ITNAmerica

ITNAmerica is the first national, non-profit transportation service for the aging population (www.ITNAmerica.org). Founded in 2004 to support the replication of the economically sustainable Independent Transportation Network® model in Portland, Maine (founded 1995), ITNAmerica now has affiliates in 16 communities in 12 states (as of February 2010). Communities or clusters of communities with a threshold population of approximately 200,000 and a density sufficient to support a sustainable system are eligible to become ITN affiliates. ITNAmerica provides software, information management, technology, marketing, training, public policy, and research support necessary for the community to build a senior transportation system that will scale with the aging population and expand or contract with the economy, without relying on taxpayer dollars for operating expenses.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout July and August. For more information, contact Ernie Ott, Community Outreach Manager, ITNAmerica, by email at Ernie.Ott@itnamerica.org, by phone at 909.792.6326 or by mail at 90 Bridge Street, Westbrook, Maine 04092.