Improve our transport experience? There's a hackathon for that

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Held on Aug 29 to 31, the Commuthon is said to be Singapore's first commuter-experience hackathon. It was organised as part of SMRT's efforts to "enhance operational performance and customer experience", said the transport operator in a press release on Tuesday (Sep 2).

Taxi receipt management system Tapidata won the Open Category. Tapidata is a system for taxi commuters to receive digital receipts on their NFC-enabled mobile phone, which they can then forward to their supervisors.

The winning entries in the Trains Category include Your Move, a mobile app that uses rewards to influence commuters to move to the centre of train carriages, and Urbanite, a decision-making mobile app that helps users plan their routes even in the event of train disruptions.

In the Buses Category, bus dispatch scheduler RideWithMe aims to use crowdsourcing to solve long waiting times, overcrowding, inaccurate bus arrival times and navigation difficulties for buses.

Mobile app BetterUs won in the Taxis Category. The app aims to provide real-time matching of supply and demand by allowing commuters to indicate their location on a map so that taxi drivers can find commuters easily while reducing time idling or plying the roads.

Group shot of the judges and participants at The NUS-SMRT Commuthon held from Aug 29 to 31. (Photo: SMRT)

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Each of the winning teams won a S$500 prize. On top of the cash prizes, SMRT said the winning teams will be able to further develop their projects by tapping on a S$120,000 fund provided by SMRT. NUS Enterprise will offer guidance from mentors, access to validation workshops and hot-desking support.

“SMRT will be funding some of these innovations and we look forward to launching these in our network in the near future,” said Mr Lee Ling Wee, managing director of SMRT Trains. “We are confident these new solutions will work very well alongside our own initiatives to improve customer service touch-points and enhance the overall travel experience for all our commuters.”

“NUS Enterprise will continue to support the winning teams, as they bring their ideas closer to implementation,” added Dr Lily Chan, CEO of NUS Enterprise.

The Commuthon was attended by over 120 participants in 39 teams, the organisers said.

- CNA/av