

# PennDOT Announces Eighth Annual 'Innovations Challenge' for Pennsylvania High School Students

## Submission deadline is Jan. 31, 2025

By PEN DOT

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced today that high school students from around the state are invited to participate in the eighth annual PennDOT Innovations Challenge, which encourages students to use their problem-solving, creative and strategic-thinking abilities to solve real-world transportation challenges in a competition among their peers. The Innovations Challenge is open to all students in grades 9-12, regardless of their school's learning model.

On average, more than 350 unrestrained fatalities occur on Pennsylvania's roadways annually. PennDOT is committed to continuously improving roadway safety and deploys a multi-faceted strategy, which involves promoting behavioral programs and implementing infrastructure improvements. Nevertheless, the number of unrestrained fatalities remains high and changing driver and passenger behavior is crucial to solving this issue.

For this year's challenge, students are asked to develop a cost-effective, innovative solution that can help PennDOT more effectively increase awareness of seat belt safety and change behavior to improve roadway safety.

"Safety is the focus of everything we do at PennDOT, and seat belt safety is vital to reducing fatalities and moving toward zero deaths on our roadways," said PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll. "Hearing fresh perspectives from our youngest drivers on how to encourage seat belt usage and change behavior is a welcome prospect. I am excited to see what concepts the students develop."

Regional Innovations Challenge winners will be selected and invited to present their solutions to the PennDOT Secretary and a panel of judges, who will determine the statewide winner. For this year's challenge, four different organizations are providing a combined total award of \$6,000 to the statewide winning team.

These organizations include: the Transportation Policy and Education Foundation, an educational arm of the Associated Pennsylvania Constructors (APC) organization; the American Council of Engineering Companies of PA (ACEC/PA); the Mid-Atlantic Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (MASITE) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Pennsylvania (ITSPA) are providing a combined

For complete Innovations Challenge details, visit [www.penndot.pa.gov/innovation](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/innovation) and click on the blue Innovations Challenge tile on the right side of the page. The submission deadline is Jan. 31, 2025.

Subscribe to statewide PennDOT news and traffic alerts at [www.penndot.pa.gov/news](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/news) or choose a region under "Regional Offices." Information about the state's infrastructure and results PennDOT is delivering for Pennsylvanians can be found at [www.penndot.pa.gov/results](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/results). Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at [www.projects.penndot.gov](http://www.projects.penndot.gov).

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