

WhereIsMyTransport launches transit API following £1.165 seed funding

A new transport data platform from Cape Town-born tech company WhereIsMyTransport launches today following £1.165 million seed funding in the first closing of a £2 million seed round. The funding has come from investors including Goodwell Investments, Omidyar Network and Horizon Ventures.



Devin De Vries, WhereIsMyTransport co-founder.

The platform, a transit API, attempts to address the challenges of unreliable, inefficient and expensive transport across the country. Launching in cities including Johannesburg, Tshwane, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, George, and East London, the company predicts that by reducing uncertainty related to transport arrival times alone, the new platform could save the South African economy up to R1.4 trillion.

Saving time and money

The company believes that the new API, which collates scheduled and real-time transit data from public and private transport operators in the cities, has the power to improve the journeys of millions of commuters, saving up to eight million days worth of time that is usually wasted waiting for public transport. There are projects using the platform already underway in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.

Research indicates 68% of commuters travel to work via private taxis, which commuters often describe as cramped, slow and dangerous. By revealing the number of public transport options available to passengers, WhereIsMyTransport also suggests it could help the South African Government address the R59.4 billion currently lost on traffic congestion each year - according to the company's calculations.

The platform works by integrating transit data from formal and informal transport providers - such as city buses, metro systems or privately-owned buses and minibuss taxis - through one single open platform. This will allow city officials and developers to create journey-planners, insight tools, website widgets and messaging systems to reduce the uncertainty associated with transportation in South Africa (such as unreliable and missed services, identifying and notifying travellers of significant delays), better understand city infrastructure needs (e.g. if a city district is particularly poorly serviced by existing transit options) and reduce journey times (by providing real-time travel information and recommending more direct and faster routes).

The company hopes that this combination of analytics, communications and journey planning tools will reveal insights, opportunities and advantages to address the disparity between the transport options available for those on the highest and lowest incomes across the country.

African expansion

At launch, alongside seven South African cities, the platform also contains the data for the new Dar es Salaam BRT system and the Cairo Metro. Informal transit modes are being added to the platform, starting with the matatu system in Nairobi, Kenya, with this capability to be extended to other cities and agencies, in Africa and globally, over the coming months.

Devin de Vries, co-founder of WhereIsMyTransport, commented: "The platform that we are launching is the first open platform for integrated transit data in the emerging world. It creates a foundation for cities to bring much needed access and information about mobility to millions of people which could, in turn, result in huge savings for governments and transport providers."

Developers looking to utilise the transit API platform can sign-up and access full documentation and tutorials on the [WhereIsMyTransport Developer Portal](#). The portal also contains the latest information on which services and cities are currently in the platform.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>