



# UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION CENTER RESEARCH BRIEF

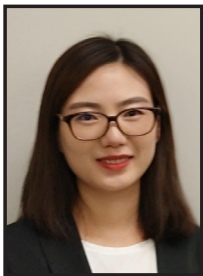
**PROJECT TITLE:** PacTrans Workforce Development Institute (WDI)

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Ying Jiang (UW), Yin Hai Wang (UW), Shane Brown (OSU), Billy Connor (UAF), Kevin Chang (UI), and Ali Hajbabaie (WSU)

**INSTITUTION:** MULTI-INSTITUTION EDUCATION PROJECT

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE:** AUGUST 2020

**SPONSORS:** THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM, OSU, WSU, UI, UAF, WSDOT



## **Background**

With support from WSDOT, other transportation agencies, and the former form of the Region 10 University Transportation Center (UTC), the Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) Department at the University of Washington (UW) had operated a very popular continuing education program called TRANSPEED, which brought transportation engineering's professional training and continuing education to governmental agencies and private firms. It generated huge national influence by conducting 50 workshops annually that serve over 1,400 students. Although the TRANSPEED program was popularity and far-reaching, it was badly hit by the most recent financial crisis. However, with the recent technology development and applications in transportation practice, such as Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs), smart cities technologies, the demand for continuing education and workforce development is getting even stronger. In order to fulfill the gap, in 2016, a new dialog started between transportation agencies and PacTrans to re-establish a new workforce development program to address the critical workforce development needs of transportation agencies and companies in the Pacific Northwest.

By firstly reviewing the state of practice training technologies available and critical needs of current working professionals in the first year within our dedicated area of Region 10 (i.e., Idaho, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington). It has been concluded that courses offered in the training market for transportation professionals should be diversified with new technologies that (may not have been) included in a traditional (academic) curriculum, specific domain working courses, basic statistical and analysis

courses, as well as communication and writing skills.

## **Research Project**

Based on the continuous efforts in the first year, the objective of the second-year project is to further developed the Pacific Northwest Transportation Consortium (PacTrans) Workforce Development Institute (WDI), with solid demand responsive and flexible program platform in catering workforce development needs in the Pacific Northwest, which includes Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. To further ensure and strengthen the advantages of developed WDI in dealing with Region 10's specific workforce development needs, the first sample certificated program will be testified and improved by building up an assessment and updating system with solid evaluation indicators and methods. The trial offering of the first developed training program will be testified with our working professional partner from local agencies/companies in Region 10, such as state DOT and transportation consulting companies. Feedback information of the trial offering with partners from different states in Region 10, with regarding the learning experiences and evaluation of the program structure, course contents, course effectiveness, instructor evaluation, etc., will be further utilized in the course and program modification and development.

