To further explore the problem statement identified in the Empathize assignment, "***People are overwhelmed by the variables that can affect their travels,***" members of Group 4 sought to generate a register of solutions for possible future development. We accomplished this through brain-netting[1] and group brainstorming ideation methods with consideration of information gained through prior interview and observation techniques. The following provides an overview of the collaborative ideation process and the revelations it yielded.

Activities supporting the ideation process were performed over the course of one week. The process started with a one-hour Zoom team discussion on Sunday, October 17, 2020 aimed at coming to agreement on how ideas would be generated and setting time constraints to ensure continual progress towards assignment completion. The team agreed to utilize brain-netting to initially spawn ideas, group brainstorming to expand and clarify ideas, and voting to identify the 25 most promising or interesting ideas. There was also agreement to leverage use of a shared workspace on Stormboard to document, share and track ideas. These decisions were based on the need to fulfill assignment requirements, accommodate the varied schedules of Group 4 team members, and ensure feasibility of ongoing collaborative ideation.

As described in the article ***Basic Type of Brainstorming[1]***, brain-netting is an exercise that involves the use of an electronic medium to collaborate and ideate. "*Individuals brainstorm individually and list their ideas on a collaborative network.*" This exercise enables, *"...the ability to collaborate over an extended period of time, and individuals do not have to be in the same location or contribute at the same time.*" Group 4 conducted a brain-netting exercise over a period of three days between October 17 – October 19, 2020, guided by a team-imposed requirement to pace idea generation, allowing time for review and hopeful avoidance of idea duplication. The team recognized that idea duplication may still occur and agreed to further mitigate this possibility by setting a minimum goal of 17 ideas per team member (51 total ideas) to increase the number of ideas accessible for later voting. Brain-netting was initiated by each team member adding ideas via virtual post-it notes of varying colors in a Stormboard, with each post-it note color representing a specific team member. The exercise was conducted independently, for varied time frames, and at varied times of the day. It blossomed as team members **1)** created new ideas inspired by the ideas of others and **2)** created additional unique ideas. Although a little short of the 51-idea goal, 47 ideas were generated through the individualized brainstorming activity.

On the evening of October 19, 2020, Group 4 team members held a Zoom meeting to perform collaborative review of the various ideas generated and start the voting process. The idea review process was conducted through a question, response, and discussion format. There were no boundaries in who could ask what or when, thus the review functioned in a free-flowing manner. Information exchanged during this activity was used to update the idea descriptions on the virtual post-it notes and weed out duplicates. Next, the team discussed the best way to vote on the ideas. With consideration of the 25-idea assignment requirement, the team agreed to an approach in which each team member would be given 25 votes to spread across the 47 ideas within a 10-minute period. Team members also agreed to a one vote per idea limit and that the ideas with the highest vote count would be documented as part of the final list for the assignment. The team set up the Stormboard to track the vote counts and ensure that each person adhered to the voting limits. As voting unfolded, the process was modified to allow use of multiple votes on one idea. At the end of this activity, 35 ideas received at least one vote. To further reduce the idea count, the team performed a collaborative reassessment of the 35 ideas – grouping similar ideas and assigning them the vote count of the idea with the most votes. At the end of this activity, there were 25 ideas. The team then worked together to create and document a title and description of each. This portion of the process required two hours and, if performed again, the voting step should be refined to eliminate the number of iterations. The most positive aspect of this activity was that team members complimented each other on the creativity of the ideas produced and avoided criticism and scrutiny. The most challenging aspect was staying true to ideation and not trying to solution.

The final step in this collaborative process was for Group 4 team members to identify the ideas that were most "promising" or "interesting." On Sunday, October 25, 2020, the team discussed this topic via a Zoom meeting - starting with a goal of aligning perspective and expectations around the meaning of "promising" and "interesting." The discussion revealed that each person interpreted these words in a different manner, resulting in use of an online dictionary to come to agreed definitions. As such, a team decision was made to identify five ideas with the first three

ideas being those that received the top vote counts. The final two were chosen through an expedited voting process of the next most voted for during the meeting.

<u>References</u>

[1]*"Basic Types of Brainstorming," in The Business Professor, updated July 9, 2014, last accessed October 23, 2020,* [*https://thebusinessprofessor.com/lesson/basic-types-of-brainstorming/*](https://thebusinessprofessor.com/lesson/basic-types-of-brainstorming/)*.*