

Solowheel Iota wants to go places with wheels between your feet

January 28 2017, by Nancy Owano



A first-generation prototype

(Tech Xplore)—A self balancing scooter has turned to crowdfunding on Kickstarter. The rideable is called the Solowheel [Iota](#).

Jayde Marvynne Zamora in *Auto World News* described Iota as like a "[hoverboard cut](#) in half." It is a single wheel device with standing pedals.

Sean O'Kane in *The Verge*, also commenting on its looks, said, "the Iota actually has two [wheels](#) inside the central housing, making it look sort of like someone cut a hoverboard in half and glued the opposite ends together."

So how does the Iota maneuver itself? The campaign page said that "its patent-pending design includes a parallelogram-based turning assist mechanism. The page called out features such as "an intelligent rider detection system, folding pedals, lights and a convenient carrying handle." (It is foldable with a handle on top.)

Inventist's web site discussed the item in further detail: "The Iota is birthed from an extended look into the human dynamics of different standing positions and wheel arrangements. Adopting a lower, two-[wheeled](#) stance relative to the Hovertrax and Solowheel, we are able to find compromise between both worlds, making a device that is easy to learn and more versatile than the Hovertrax."

Hauling the item around—actually haul may be too harsh a word considering its size and weight—would take little effort. The Iota will have 8" wheels and weigh as little as 8 lbs. Riders will be able to move about on it for up to 8 miles, and charging it back up takes about 40 minutes. Speed? It's capable of going 10 mph.

Inventist, the company behind this rideable, is based in Camas, WA. The founder and president is inventor, Shane Chen. He reminds Kickstarter page visitors that Inventist has been around the block with transport devices such as this. The page said, "our self-balancing technology is the best in the industry, we only use high-quality battery packs and motors, and we use a full suite of electronic safety features. You can expect the

same level of quality from the Iota."

The company has been involved with and working on self-balancing personal transportation [technology](#) for a while now, said *Geeky Gadgets*. Inventist is known for the Solowheel and Hovertrax.

Price? The Kickstarter funding page lists \$445 with estimated delivery in September. There is also a range of other prices with details you can check out on the page.

Where are they now on this? "We have a working prototype and are now in the final stages of testing and fine-tuning."

The real question may be, please, would any adult really want to be seen in public on this thing. Well, lots first sprang for other transport boards and fun wheels so what are the chances that both kids and adults would go for Iota?

The answer is already clear. Out of a pledge goal \$50,000 the Iota has already gathered \$85,708 at the time of this writing with 26 days to go.

What is more, Chen has some reasons for why people would want this, calling it "perfect for 'last mile' commuting, hanging out around town, running quick errands or just having fun."

As important, Chen said you do not want a mode of moving around where you need to be "constantly watching the path of the wheels on both sides of your feet. The wheel on the right may hit a bump you just don't see, and then you may get precariously close to the edge of the curb on your left. If you hit something, you can make the vehicle spin, which could throw you off balance."

With the Iota, he said, "Because the wheels are between your feet, you

only need to scan the road directly in front of you."

More information: — [www.kickstarter.com/projects/6 ... i-personal-e-vehicle](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/6...i-personal-e-vehicle)

— www.inventist.com/

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