

Velo-city 2024
Call for Abstracts:
Academic contributions



Velo-city

2024 **CONNECTING**
THROUGH CYCLING

18-21 JUNE **GHENT**

Priority topics &
submission guidelines

Welcome to the Velo-city 2024 academic call for abstracts!

Following Velo-city's proud tradition of bringing together all relevant stakeholders around the topic of cycling, we invite you to share your research, expertise, data, or analysis and to bring an academic perspective to this edition's conference theme and its four subthemes:

Connecting through Cycling

- **Connecting people and communities**
- **Connecting regions, cities and neighbourhoods**
- **Connecting cycling with other modes**
- **Connecting industries and economies**

Your contributions will be integrated into the Velo-city conference programme in sessions making the link between academic research and practice and providing ample opportunity for knowledge exchange. We are looking for research to meet practice, and for practitioners to discover and understand the state of the art in cycling research. This year, the Programme Team is especially keen on hearing voices from all over the world so please help us spread the word about this call with your academic contacts from around the globe!

These guidelines will provide you with all necessary information on the call for abstracts priority topics, programme design, parallel session formats, selection process, timeline as well as submission rules. **Make sure you read them carefully before submitting your abstract through our online platform.**

In addition to this call for research-focused academic contributions, Velo-city 2024 releases a general call for abstracts for other types of contributions.

Should any questions arise do not hesitate to get in touch with us, we are here and look forward to hearing from you!

Your Velo-city 2024 Programme Team
programme@velo-city-conference.com

1. The Velo-city 2024 theme & priority topics

Main theme: Connecting through Cycling

Connection is everything. One place with another, one city with its region, one river bank with the other side. People with people.

The bicycle is the ideal mode of connection! It connects places, it connects people and it can connect different modes of transport and sectors.

Low-tech, low-cost, easy, and in constant connection with other cyclists and the environment: how can we use the bicycle to reconnect?

Subtheme 1: Connecting people and communities

What is the potential of cycling to bring positive change in society, for example through better accessibility and cheaper, healthier and more social mobility systems? How can cycling (even better) connect people, communities and population groups in a city? How can we use cycling to make mobility systems more equitable and tackle mobility poverty? How do we increase the number of people cycling by creating a more inclusive cycling culture that appeals to persons of all backgrounds?

Research topics

We suggest the following research topics that we consider especially relevant and would like to see in the conference programme, but also welcome other abstracts linked to the subtheme:

Research topics: Connecting people and communities

- **Transport poverty** – providing better **accessibility** for all individuals and communities.
- Empowering **young and old**: innovative approaches for **behavioural change**
- Building a more **inclusive bicycle culture** for all genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities
- **Bike as a service**: bike library, rental bikes, bike maintenance and repair...
- **From lycra to jeans**: cycle sport, recreational cycling and mountain biking as an opportunity to promote everyday cycling.
- Connecting **different cyclists and / or other road users to overcome bikelash**.

Subtheme 2: Connecting regions, cities and neighbourhoods

The purpose and overall cycling experience differs greatly between dense cities or rural areas. However, with the right conditions, bikes can be a mode of transport not only within cities, but also in between and to and from more suburban and rural areas around cities. It is not only about the hardware like e.g. bike lanes. We need more to enable safe and comfortable cycling, like politicians working together, building alliances and negotiating. Depending on local conditions, spatial layout and possibilities are very different. How can we ensure continuous and easily readable infrastructure throughout,

for example by harmonising standards and facilitating projects crossing administrative borders? How can we bridge physical “walls”, like ring ways, water and train tracks? How does the intensity of motorised traffic change the design of bike lanes along the way? How should we prioritise flows of different transport modes entering or connecting cities?

Research topics

We suggest the following research topics that we consider especially relevant and would like to see in the conference programme, but also welcome other abstracts linked to the subtheme:

Research topics: Connecting regions, cities and neighbourhoods

- **Feeling safe** on the bike: continuous infrastructure, created through projects with multiple stakeholders and crossing administrative borders
- **Traffic management systems and the right national frameworks** for better cycling conditions: Circulation plans, speed regulation, car parking policy, road charging, traffic lights...
- The importance of a coherent **cycling network**: infrastructure, lighting plan, communication, wayfinding,...
- **Big infrastructure projects**: From funding to practical guidelines for a smooth delivery (e.g. bridges, tunnels, underpasses, TEN-T)
- Connecting **the city with the suburbs, neighbouring towns, regions and countries** (including cycle highways)

Subtheme 3: Connecting cycling with other modes

For many people, a bike is not just a transport mode on its own, but is part of an entire chain of different modes to get from A to B. The rise of e-bikes has certainly increased the geographical range of many cyclists, but distance still creates practical limits for cycling as a solitary mode of transport. How can we enable lifestyles without private car ownership through the combination of walking, public transport, (shared) cars and (shared) bikes/e-bikes and e-scooters? What are the new challenges and needs brought about by this trend and how can we address them? How can the first and last mile be made more attractive through cycling? This includes for example sufficient bike parking at train stations, shared bike availability at the Park+Bike, pedestrian facilities, safe overnight parking options, MaaS for seamless booking and travel by (shared) bike, train and bus...

Research topics

We suggest the following research topics that we consider especially relevant and would like to see in the conference programme, but also welcome other abstracts linked to the subtheme:

Research topics: Connecting cycling with other modes

- **Inclusive** bike sharing (cargo bikes, e-bikes...) and micromobility (e.g. e-scooters)
- **From mobility points to multimodal hubs**
- The importance of **bike parking** in different sizes and formats
- **Public transport and bikes:** conflicts and opportunities
- How to achieve **independence from car ownership:** car-sharing, data as a step stone for multimodal planning, ticketing and MaaS, ...
- How could the bicycle sector learn from the **car industry** and benefit from existing technology and concepts, for example in marketing? Or should we avoid copying the recipes from the past?

Subtheme 4: Connecting industries and economies

How can cycling help economic actors to achieve their sustainability goals? Sustainable economic activity is only possible through investing in and partnering with carbon-reducing and less polluting solutions. How can cycling make us less dependent on fossil fuels, generate employment, tackle the climate crisis and alleviate health budgets? Which role can it play in creating new inclusive and green jobs in a range of diverse sectors and in the transition towards green economies?

Research topics

We suggest the following research topics that we consider especially relevant and would like to see in the conference programme, but also welcome other abstracts linked to the subtheme:

Research topics: Connecting industries and economies

- **Cycle logistics** – connecting different stakeholders (businesses, local and regional authorities,...)
- **Bike to work**, bicycle testing fleets, Bike leasing
- Involving the **private sector** (e.g. corporate mobility plans, funding)
- Towards a sustainable and low-carbon **circular bike economy**
- Job creation, **social economy**
- **Teaming up with other sectors:** Real estate, health, culture, sports, tourism...

2. Programme design and session formats

Velo-city 2024 Ghent will kick-off its conference programme on Tuesday 18 June and last until Friday 21 June mid-day. Selected abstracts will feed into around 50 parallel sessions that will mostly last 60 minutes each.

Academic contributions will be fully integrated into the Velo-city conference programme, either in specific knowledge exchange sessions making the link between academic research and practice, in poster sessions, or in other sessions where they fit thematically.

The contributions will take place in the following formats:

PANEL DISCUSSION

Room setup: Theatre seating

Panel discussion format sessions are moderated debates with maximum 3-4 experts on a given topic. Initial short input presentations of 5 minutes are given by each speaker at the beginning of the session to frame the debate. The moderated discussion with all speakers follows. At the end of the debate a Q&A session with the audience takes place.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION (Session proposal with max. 8 table hosts)

Room setup: Round tables

For this format, the audience is seated at round tables of about 10 participants. The session is built on in-depth discussions led by a host at each table. The person hosting the table is invited to set the scene by explaining a specific problem to be discussed and to lead the discussion. After 30 minutes participants change tables. The objective of the roundtable discussion is to elaborate on a specific topic or address it from different perspectives and to create a network of people interested in that topic. The audience is limited to about 100 participants.

FAST PEDAL TALKS

Room setup: Theatre seating

Fast pedal talks are characterised by a presentation style in which 20 slides with mainly pictures are shown for 20 seconds each (total of 6 minutes and 40 seconds). This format keeps presentations concise and fast-paced, allowing for a lot of new ideas to be presented in a short period of time.

MESS-UP SESSION: FROM FAILURE TO SUCCESS

Room setup: Theatre seating

Selected speakers openly discuss their professional defeats and share the lessons learned. The idea is to bring slightly more light-hearted content to the stage and at the same time to give participants a chance to see that mistakes happen – the important thing is to learn from them. Each speaker has around 5 minutes to present their story of failure and then afterwards discuss learning points with the audience for 10 minutes.

LECTURES

Room setup: Theatre seating

Lectures feature 3 to 4 presentations (12-15 minutes each). Presentations cover a wide range of topics and are combined with a Q&A session with the audience.

WORKSHOP (Session proposal with max. 3 speakers)

Room setup: Round tables

In a workshop format, participants actively engage and collaborate to find solutions to a concrete task. The scope can range from developing a plan, elaborating on specific infrastructure options, taking on different roles in decision-making or consultation process, etc. The format allows space to create which leads to a stronger learning experience. The audience is limited to 100 participants (max 10 per table).

TWO-WAY TRACK DEBATE (Session proposal with max. 4 speakers)

Room setup: Theatre seating

This format takes a central theme or question, preferably a slightly divisive one, and has speakers debate for and against. At the outset, the participants are polled to measure their opinion on the topic. Following the debate, they are polled again to see how many are now in favour or against. An additional perspective can be added by asking the speakers to switch roles at some point during the debate. A clear topic suggestion with speaker suggestions for both camps has to be given in the abstract.

FIRESIDE CHATS (session proposal with maximum 3 speakers)

Room setup: Theatre seating

An informal yet structured interview between a moderator and a guest. It's a unique opportunity to uncover the speaker's personal stories, ideas and vision. Includes Q&A with the audience. Please add the names of the suggested moderator and guest.

MASTERCLASS (session proposal with maximum 3 speakers)

Room setup: Theatre seating

Masterclasses are given by an expert on a particular discipline or subject. The presenter and the audience can go deeper into the subject of their interest providing a direct learning experience to the audience.

OPEN FORMAT (session proposal)

Room set-up: Theatre seating or round tables

Do you have an innovative idea and would like to organize a session in a different format than any of those listed above? Pitch your idea to us keeping in mind these different features:

Session length: 60 minutes

Room set-up: Theatre seating or round tables

POSTER

Poster presentations will make research contributions visually interesting and accessible to Velo-citizens, and encourage discussions between researchers and

practitioners. Each poster will be pitched in a short engaging style, followed by several rounds of discussions on the posters.

3. Selection process & timeline

The Velo-city 2024 Ghent programme will be designed by a Programme Team composed of designated experts from ECF and the City of Ghent based on the evaluation of the academic abstracts performed by a scientific reviewing team according to their area of expertise. Every abstract is evaluated and rated by at least two different experts according to the following criteria:

- **Alignment with the conference theme/subtheme**
- **Level of innovation and knowledge gain**
- **Interdisciplinary awareness/ applicability beyond original disciplinary boundaries**
- **Practical relevance/contribution to sustainability**

Abstracts making a clear link between research and practical application are encouraged. We also explicitly invite research contributions from the global South.

After the review, the Programme Team will build sessions on the topics around the conference theme and subthemes. Selected abstracts will be assigned to relevant sessions paying particular attention to geographical and gender balance to represent the diversity of the sector. An International Programme Committee composed of selected experts advises the Programme Team along the process to ensure alignment with our sector's priorities.

Timeline

Abstract submission deadline: 3 November 2023

Abstract evaluation by the Scientific Committee: 17 November – 12 December 2023

Abstract allocation during the Programme Committee meeting: Mid-January 2024

Publication of the preliminary programme with session titles: End of February 2024

Notification on abstract status: End of February 2024

Deadline for speaker confirmation and registration: 20 March 2024

Programme publication with speakers and sessions: End of March 2024

Deadline to submit the final presentation: End of May 2024

Velo-city 2024 Ghent: 18 - 21 June 2024

4. Submission rules

Applications for abstracts must comply with the following rules:

1. Please consult the **themes and subthemes** to ensure the relevance of the abstract and choose the most relevant one applicable to your abstract.
2. Be aware that **only one person per abstract will be able to present** and be granted with the speakers' ticket fee.
3. A selected speaker is not allowed to designate a substitute in case he/she is not available. It is up to the Velo-city Programme Team to make such a decision if relevant.
4. Abstract Format:
 - a. The **abstract title** should be limited to 20 words (this will not be included in word count).
 - b. The maximum word count is 300 **words**, written in **English**.
 - c. Do not include tables or pictures.
 - d. The decision on the session format will be confirmed by the Velo-city Programme Team who is tasked to design the programme with the submitted abstracts.
5. **Submission:** Abstracts must be submitted through the Velo-city 2024 website.
6. **Acceptance of abstracts** into the conference programme will be based on the evaluation by the Scientific Committee and the Velo-city 2024 Programme Team.
7. Speakers will receive a notification on the evaluation of their respective abstracts via the email specified during the abstract submission.
8. Speakers of the accepted abstracts will be required to confirm their attendance and finalise their registration by the end of March 2024 prior to their final inclusion in the conference programme.
9. The Velo-city organisers do not cover travel and accommodation costs but speakers do enjoy a 25% reduction on the full conference fee.
10. Selected speakers commit to help promoting the Velo-city 2024 Ghent edition.