

Velo-city 2024
General Call for Abstracts



Velo-city

2024 CONNECTING
THROUGH CYCLING
18-21 JUNE **GHENT**

**Priority topics &
submission guidelines**

Welcome to the Velo-city 2024 call for abstracts!

Following Velo-city's proud tradition of interactive and engaging presentations, we invite you to share your story, best practice or failure turned into a success, expertise, data, innovation or analysis to reflect upon our main 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 sectors**

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

This year the Programme Team is especially keen on hearing voices from all over the world. We would be grateful if you could help us spread the word about this call with your contacts from around the globe! Moreover, we would like to encourage you to think about presenting your content in innovative ways such as sharing lessons learned from failures or organizing a fiery debate where opposing arguments are put forward – let the audience decide the winner!

In addition to this call, Velo-city 2024 releases a separate call for abstracts for academic sessions, curated by the ECF Scientists for Cycling network, open to academics and researchers, that will be integrated into the Velo-city conference programme.

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
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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, sustainable and in constant connection with other cyclists and the environment, let's use the bicycle to reconnect!

Subtheme 1: Connecting people and communities

Cycling is a gift to society. It is one of the best modes of transport to connect people, communities and population groups in a city. Its democratic strength is remarkable with the potential to bring positive change through better accessibility and cheaper, healthier and more social mobility systems. To increase the number of people cycling, we need to build an inclusive cycling culture that appeals to people of all backgrounds. Moreover, to tackle transport poverty, focusing on the bicycle is one of our best options.

Priority 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 and rural areas. However, with the right conditions, bikes are an ideal mode of transport not only within cities, but also in between and to and from more suburban and rural areas around cities. Spatial layouts and possibilities are very different. How can we ensure continuous and easily readable infrastructure throughout?

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? At the same time, we should not forget that it is not only about the hardware. We need more to enable safe and comfortable cycling: it is about politicians and stakeholders working together, building alliances and negotiating to achieve tangible results.

Priority topics: Connecting regions, cities and neighbourhoods

- **Feeling safe** on the bike
- **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 tips for a smooth delivery (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 it can also be 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 distances have their limits. The combination with walking, public transport, (shared) cars and (shared) bikes for the first or last mile or to enable car-free living becomes increasingly popular. This trend brings along new challenges and needs: sufficient bike parking at train stations, shared bike availability at the Park+Bike, pedestrian facilities, safe overnight parking options, MaaS for single booking of bike, train and bus...

Priority topics: Connecting cycling with other modes

- **Inclusive** bike sharing (cargobike, e-bike,..) and micromobility
- **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 go **car-less**: car-sharing, data as a stepstone for multimodal planning, ticketing and MaaS,..
- Can cycling learn from the **car industry** and benefit from existing technology and concepts?

Subtheme 4: Connecting industries and sectors

Cycling is a solution to many challenges and can help many stakeholders reach their sustainability goals. Sustainable economic activity is only possible through investing and partnering with carbon-reducing and less polluting solutions. More cycling will make us less dependent on fossil fuels, generate employment, help tackle the climate crisis and alleviate health budgets. It can play a key role in creating new inclusive and green jobs in a range of diverse sectors and thus contribute significantly to the transition towards green economies.

Priority topics: Connecting industries and sectors

- **Bicycle logistics** - connecting businesses (B2B), authorities
- **Bike to work** - bike test fleets, bike leasing
- Involving the **private sector** (e.g., corporate mobility plans, funding)
- **Towards a circular bike economy** (sustainability, climate change)
- 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 it will last until Friday 21 June mid-day. Selected abstracts will feed into around 50 parallel sessions that be held in the formats listed below. Parallel sessions will mostly last 60 minutes each. Most sessions will be built with abstracts for single presentations from the call for abstracts. Some formats, however, require full session proposals. **If you choose the formats two-way track debate, masterclass, round table discussion, workshop, fireside chat or open format, you will be asked to provide more information on the speakers in your session and how you plan to organise the session. Session proposals with no geographical and gender diversity will not be accepted.**

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 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 maximum 3 speakers)

Room setup: Round tables

In a workshop format, participants actively engage and collaborate to find solutions to a concrete problem. 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. Please make a clear topic suggestion with speaker suggestions for both camps (2 per camp).

STORYTELLING & TESTIMONIALS

Room setup: Theatre seating

Storytelling sessions invite maximum 3 speakers to tell stories that help illustrate or enhance relevant topics from the conference theme and subthemes. They should reflect the authentic experience of an individual, a team, or a community, but be told like a traditional story. The narrative should contain a beginning, middle, and end, characters and themes that hold interest, like adversity and triumph. Stories should be about 15 minutes long, with time for Q&A session afterwards.

FIRESIDE CHATS (session proposal with maximum 3 speakers)

Room setup: Theatre seating

An informal yet structured interview between a moderator and a guest. It is 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)

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

2. Selection process & timeline

The Velo-city 2024 Ghent programme will be designed by a Programme Team composed of selected experts from ECF and the City of Ghent. The decision about the inclusion of an abstract will be based on the result of the evaluation done by an international expert reviewing team according to their area of expertise. Every abstract will be evaluated and rated by at least three experts against to the following criteria:

- **Alignment with the conference theme/subtheme**
- **Level of innovation and originality (content and format)**
- **Prospect of transferability**
- **Focus on process and measurable results**

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 advise 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 international reviewing team: 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: End of 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. If you choose the formats two-way track debate, masterclass, round table discussion, workshop, fireside chat or open format, all speakers in your session proposal will 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 the abstract 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 international expert reviewing team 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 finalize 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 reduction of 25% on the full conference ticket fee.
10. Selected speakers give the organisers the right to share their presentation slides and use extracts in ECF publications (with reference to the source).
11. Selected speakers give the organisers the right to record their speech in audio and/or video format to share it with Velo-city participants and to use extracts in ECF publications (with reference to the source).
12. Selected speakers commit to help promoting the Velo-city 2024 Ghent edition.

We look forward to reading your abstract. Should you have any further question do not hesitate to contact us!

Your Velo-city Programme Team

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