

Y3A: Building knowledge for cycling futures

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Background

Cycling is a sustainable, efficient, and comparably inexpensive mobility solution that helps cities to meet the climate goals of the Paris Agreement, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission of the European Commission. Moreover, cycling contributes to people-friendly, safe, economically resilient urban and rural environments, and increased public health. Despite this potential, few cities and countries have taken the necessary steps to provide safe and attractive spaces to accommodate and encourage cycling. One reason for this is an unmet need, yet growing demand, for knowledge related to how to integrate cycling into contemporary urban and transportation planning offered by higher education programmes.

To foster this unmet need, Germany's Federal Ministry for Transport and Digital Infrastructure invested 11.6 million Euros to fund new professorships on cycling at seven institutions of higher education. Along with an objective to advance interdisciplinary research on cycling, each professorship is tasked with developing master's courses to fill the gap in knowledge on how to create and maintain sustainable mobility systems leveraging the benefits of and addressing the hindrances to cycling. As one of these newly endowed professorships, the Chair of Bicycle Traffic at the Bergische University of Wuppertal is presently developing a new master's programme. Our goal is to develop and launch an unprecedented international Master of Science programme on "Cycling Futures" with an inter- and trans-disciplinary approach, including the domains of urban planning, infrastructure design and engineering, architecture, social sciences and humanities, technical fields as well as law and policy.

We aim to teach talented students from around the world concepts of sustainable transportation and mobility while exposing them to different cities, cultures, and expertise on cycling. To meet this aim, we are building a consortium with international partners to develop a joint degree programme, which includes Lund University and the University of Amsterdam. Through this consortium, students will have opportunities to study at our partner universities to experience the local cycling practices and learn a variety of perspectives on how to conceive, promote, create, and manage the cycling cities of tomorrow.

Workshop Focus

With the purpose of gaining new insights on topics, methods, or partners that could be included in our study programme, the Cycling Futures team has organized a workshop focused around this question: *What training and knowledge do future cycling experts need?*

This workshop is for any person who is

- interested in helping to shape the focus and content included in educational opportunities for future cycling experts
- currently offering cycling-related coursework or workshops who wish to share their experiential knowledge and advice while gaining new insights
- interested in joining our mission and partnership
- aiming to hire cycling experts that can inform us about what skills and knowledge are important to them.

We will apply Liberating Structures-inspired approaches to stimulate interactive and lively discussions around key questions our team has asked ourselves along our path toward developing a preliminary plan for the Cycling Futures study programme. After presenting our tentative programme, we ask our participants to apply the collective answers to the key questions to reflect on what we are doing right and what missing pieces we need to bring into our curriculum to foster the expertise future cycling experts with the ability to promote and create transformative shifts toward cycling.

Agenda

1. Brainstorming Session: What do future cycling experts need to know? (30min)

The workshop will begin with a brainstorming session. Participants will work in small groups to answer one of the key questions below, then we will discuss and refine the answers to all of the questions with the larger group.

- Do we need cycling-specific educational programmes?
- What topics and knowledge must be included in a cycling-related coursework?
- What skills do cycling experts need to have (or have access to)?
- Is there anything that is unnecessary, irrelevant, or simply uninteresting for future cycling experts?

2 Presentation: Overview of the M.Sc. Cycling Futures (15min)

The preliminary curriculum planned for the M.Sc. Cycling Futures study programme is introduced to the participants through a short presentation, including an overview of the programme aims, semester plan and proposed list of courses.

3 Discussion and Feedback Session (30min)

The participants are asked to critically assess the proposed study programme and offer their feedback to help the Cycling Futures team build an educational programme meeting the wants and needs defined through the brainstorming session. What are the strengths of the proposed programme? What is missing in the curriculum?

4 Reflection (15min)

The workshop will conclude with a group reflection on why, how, and for whom we should develop and offer study programmes focused on cycling-related topics and expertise.

Outcome

Following this workshop, the Cycling Futures team will apply the input and feedback to finalize the framework of the new study programme.