

ANNOUNCEMENT

Pre-Summit Research Day Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development: Re-shaping Mobility in the Wake of Covid-19

11-12 May 2021, Virtual meeting

Call for Extended Abstract

The International Transport Forum (ITF), together with the European Conference of Transport Research Institutes (ECTRI), the US Transportation Research Board (TRB) and the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS), are pleased to announce the holding of a Research Day on “Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development”. This Research Day will be held virtually on Tuesday 11 May and Wednesday 12 May 2021, in conjunction with the International Transport Forum’s 2021 Annual Summit.

Objectives

The objective of the Pre-Summit Research Day is to bring together top academics researchers and practitioners to present and discuss topics relevant to the Summit’s theme. It is critically important that research results are brought into practice, especially considering the pace with which our transport system is currently evolving. The Research Day offers a great opportunity to exchange ideas not only between researchers, but also with representatives from governments, cities, and other decision makers.

Submission of abstracts

The 2021 ITF Summit on “*Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development: Re-shaping Mobility in the Wake of Covid-19*” will discuss linkages between innovation in the transport sector in all of its dimensions (regulation; infrastructure design, MaaS; drones; air connectivity; IOT; algorithms etc.) and will cut across individual/passenger travel and freight logistics and supply chains. The 2021 Summit will also discuss the role of innovation in tackling the effects of COVID-19 that are now being felt across transport sector.

The Pre-Summit Research Day will limit its scope to four specific topics, with a special session dedicated to a discussion on how transport innovation can support Covid-19 recovery. In particular, in order to plan their actions for the coming years, policy makers need the input from researchers to provide knowledge and solutions on how to:

- Seize the opportunities offered by micromobility and active transport;
- Connect remote and rural areas with innovative sustainable transport solutions;
- Stimulate adoption of low-carbon vehicle technologies;
- Use innovation to promote sustainable urban mobility in post-Covid 19 recovery.

We therefore invite the submission of extended abstracts of up to 1000 words that address Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development on one of the above four topics. Further background on those topics can be found in the next page.

Abstracts shall be submitted by 29 March 2021 11pm (GMT) on https://trb.secure-platform.com/a/page/2021_ITF_Pre-summit_Research_Day

The work can be quantitative or qualitative and come from any of the academic fields linked to transport. Abstracts shall include a title, as well as the presenter's name, affiliation and contact details. Please also include details of any project websites and a mention to one (or more) of the four above topics connected to the research outlined in the abstract.

Given the overall goal of fostering research-policy linkages, abstracts should clearly reflect how the presented research can be used to inform policy development and implementation.

Selected authors will be invited to present their research at the Pre-Summit Research Day. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection process on 20 April 2021.

Contacts

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Background

Transport is considered as a key sector when it comes to sustainable development-. It can add to economic growth and enhance access to opportunities, but is also associated with a number of direct and indirect externalities such as traffic congestion, air pollution and road accidents. Overall, sustainable transport is essential in meeting several of the SDGs and Targets of the 2030 Agenda. But how can governments ensure that transport connectivity stimulates development and economic activity, while engaging with communities and being sensitive to the environment? In this respect, several issues would benefit from discussions at the Research Day:

- **Micromobility and active transport:** In most markets today, micromobility refers to shared scooters and bikes (both human-powered and those with electric motors, docked/dockless). E-scooters and dockless bikes in particular have appeared in cities in great numbers in recent years. These services have clearly resonated with consumers. As conventional bikes, they have the potential to better connect people with public transit, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and make the most of urban space, all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Yet, many of these services have faced resistance, backlash, especially from city governments. It is also not clear to what extent these new services help achieve sustainable development objectives and if they actually come to change the way urbanites move around cities. What are the future trends in adoption of these new forms of micromobility? What are the impact of micromobility on a broad set of outcomes (e.g. health, access, economic activity and emissions), and on different groups in society?
- **Transport innovation for rural and remote areas:** As innovative mobility solutions emerge in urban contexts, access to public transportation options remains a challenge in rural areas. In the context of urban-rural divide, governments need to find a new, cost-effective way to provide services that are flexible, yet offer wider territorial coverage, thereby to ensure that people living in these areas could move about with the same freedom as populations in large towns and cities. Demand-responsive transport is seen as one of the key options to meet public transport challenges in rural areas. These networks however, require advanced technical solutions in order to be able to operate efficiently. And technology indeed has helped to solve a lot of issues with regard to for example route planning, navigation, communication. Yet challenges remain. What are the key ingredients for a successful deployment: from operational, infrastructure, technology and regulatory perspectives? How to ensure that demand-responsive services are part of a broader, multimodal package of solutions, supplementing regular public transport services?
- **Low-Carbon Vehicle Technologies:** Governments around the world are increasingly intervening in automobile markets to improve fuel economy and reduce emissions of CO₂ from new vehicles. Electric vehicles (EVs) in particular are widely considered as a promising solution for GHG reduction and key to a low-carbon mobility future. However, the transition to a low carbon transport will not be instantaneous and any policy or technological change implemented now will take years to have the desired effect. Policies that support the electrification of vehicles should also consider that the overall reduction in CO₂ emissions will depend on the extent to which energy is decarbonised. What are the effects different incentives for reducing the generalised cost of driving low carbon vehicles? How can governments accelerate the development and diffusion of low-emissions innovations in the transport sector?
- **Transport innovation and Covid-19 recovery:** The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on transport sector, highlighting several key vulnerabilities of existing transport systems. Covid-19 also presents an opportunity to shape more sustainable, resilient and human-centric urban mobility. Many cities have put a focus on re-allocation of road space and promotion of alternative mobility options. Yet what are the likely impacts of COVID-19 on mobility patterns in the medium- to long-term? How transport innovation, such as MaaS and ITS, can support Covid-19 recovery and ensure that it's aligned with sustainability objectives? What is the role of new mobility services in shaping the post Covid-19 mobility landscape?