



Invitation and Call for Proposals

Modern societies are experiencing striking technological, ecological, socio-economic and cultural as well as political challenges – with mobility questions at the forefront of these contentions. Actors and institutions across the globe increasingly recognize the need for systemic changes in the ways goods, people, ideas, policies and capital are set in motion – usually framed in the terms of “mobility transitions”. Green deal policies are drafted and “just transition” funds are set up, acknowledging that transition to carbon-free futures will require substantial resources to succeed, but also to avoid uneven and unfair socio-spatial effects on nations, regions, cities, and rural places. Existing research has already criticized mobility transition policies for their narrow normative assumptions, their reliance on large-scale infrastructures and technological innovations, and elaborated on the concepts of mobility justice and commoning mobility as a way of devising collective and collaborative means of shaping mobility transitions (Cresswell et. al 2021; Sheller 2018). It is therefore time to interrogate how and in which ways have “mobility transitions” been framed in different places at different times in their multifaceted histories.

This conference calls for historicising and decentring discussions on mobility transitions and connectivity infrastructures – e.g. by proposing a “transformation” lens. In contrast to the linear teleological thinking prevalent in transition scholarship, the concept of transformations emphasizes diverse paths taken from various standpoints to similarly diverse endpoints (Burawoy and Verdery 1999). Transformation does not necessarily depart from one point (usually understood as regressive) and ends into its destination (usually understood in progressive terms). On the contrary, it is an ongoing open-ended process which often involves disruptive, contested, controversial, messy pathways from one state to another. This may help to acknowledge the ever-changing nature of mobility modes in the past and present, path dependencies or persistences over time, and to account for technologies’ relation to political and economic regimes and discourses, narrations, art, pop culture and media representations of those transformations in the public sphere.

Understanding mobility, traffic and transport infrastructure, “ground-breaking” technologies and their everyday usages and routines from a transformation perspective also means considering the practical feasibility of its implementation and associated conflicts: Under what social conditions will the transformation of the mobility system and transport infrastructure be politically possible and accepted? And conversely: Do current and historical social change processes support the transformation of the transport systems of their own accord? And if so, will this transformation actually lead to ecological sustainability?

The conference aims to understand the notions of transition and transformation of mobility and infrastructures, emphasizing the need to understand current changes in the light of the historical transformations of mobilities, but also other fundamental social and economic-technical change processes, e.g., in the course of industrial revolutions, through colonial modernization, or after the fall of state socialism. Furthermore, the conference aims to highlight diverse and pluriverse visions on the departure points as well as desired and envisioned futures of mobility transformations, particularly welcoming subaltern voices, often overlooked because of gender, class, race, and otherness.

With this in mind, we invite specialists from the arts, social sciences and humanities, as well as engineering and technology, and wholeheartedly welcome contributions from any other disciplinary background. Alongside practitioners, artists and activists, we want to discuss the changing and conflicting interrelations between mobilities, infrastructures, technology, ecology, urbanism, across times and places, for a better understanding of past, current and future infrastructure and mobility transformations. We are looking for proposals for papers and sessions on one or more of the following topics / areas of study, although all contributions are welcome:

Tracks and topics

- Contestations around mobility and infrastructures
- Longue durée perspectives on green transitions
- Mobility and infrastructures in front of climate emergency
- Time, temporalities, transitions
- Mobility technologies: technical fix, technological pessimism, shock of the old, and resistances to it
- Global and regional approaches, including e.g. post-Soviet or Sub-Saharan perspectives
- Global Politics and Geopolitics of Mobility and Infrastructures
- Mobility Transition versus Mobility Transformations
- Imperial, Trans-Imperial and (Post-)Colonial Infrastructures
- Metaphors of Mobility – highway, railroad, route and network.
- Mobility in culture: literary, musical, artistic perspectives
- Arts and creativity towards Transformation
- Activism around mobility and infrastructures
- Mobilities on the margins and mobility justice: Race, gender, ethnicity, disability and othering

Proposals may cover individual papers, panels, artworks, posters, and other creative formats. We welcome relevant contributions from any academic perspective or discipline, from professionals, policymakers and practitioners in the transport, traffic, and mobility field, as well as artists and creative professionals, designers, engineers, and educationalists in the art and humanities. A limited number of travel grants will be available for participants without access to institutional funding, particularly from low-income countries.

The conference language is only English. The conference is in presence only. Keynote lectures will be streamed online.

The conference has special focus on the all four T2M journals – *Mobilities*, *Transfers*, *Journal of Transport History* and *Mobility Humanities*. Special sessions in relation to them and publishing opportunities will be organised. Part of the papers will be transferred as proceedings in Special Issues of the T2M journals.

Key Dates

- 29 February Deadline for the submission of special session proposals
- 24 March Deadline for the submission of individual abstracts and special sessions
- 15 April Notification of acceptance for abstracts and sessions
- 01 May Submission for travel grant
- 01 June Notification of acceptance for travel grant
- 01 June Early bird registration opens
- 01 July Early bird registration closes
- 01 August Submission of full papers and posters
- 23–25 September Conference

Submission formats

Papers: Individual submission of a paper consists of an abstract (300 words) and a brief biography (100 words), including contact information. Papers will be grouped thematically by the programme committee and may become part of a 7/7, debate, or panel session.

Sessions: A full, pre-organised **7/7**, **debate**, or **panel session**. A session submission should include a title, a summary of the session theme and the method chosen for facilitating discussion (300 words), as well as abstracts for each contribution/presentation (300 words). A short biography of each presenter is also required (100 words), with contact information.

7/7 sessions: This means seven slides and seven minutes for each presentation (max 7 papers). The sessions will have plenty of time for discussion. This will be supported by having a chair who might also act as a discussant. Presenters shall focus on their main argument in order to avoid overly complex presentations.

Debate sessions: Debate sessions have a maximum of five presenters. Each gives a five-minute focused input to the topic, and this should be followed by a discussion involving the audience. Led by a chair.

Panel sessions: Panels consist of a chair, three to four paper presenters, and one discussant (optional). Panels should include time for audience discussion. Each presenter has 20 minutes (15 min + 5 min for questions); papers are grouped thematically.

Posters: This is a great way to discuss early or exploratory work and present it as a Poster at the conference. A submission consists of an abstract (300 words) and a brief biography (100 words), including contact information. The full poster is due by 1st of August 2024.

After **acceptance**, all abstracts will be published on the conference website. You also have the opportunity to submit a **full paper** (5,000 words). We strongly encourage the submission of full papers, which will be shared with all conference delegates. Authors whose contributions are accepted will have until **1 August 2024** to submit their full paper. Papers may be published in a restricted area for conference participants on the conference website and/or as part of the T²M archive. Consent from authors will be sought in all cases.

Submit your paper, session proposals, and /or poster, as well as any further inquiry to t2m@leibniz-ifl.de

Registration

All participants must register and pay the registration fee via the conference website (details to follow), with only one submission per person.

Individual fee is for regular researchers. Reduced fee is for PhD students, researchers from the Global South, and retired scholars.

Early Bird registration before 1 July 2024

- Individual fee: 260 Euros (for T2M member: 200 Euros)
- Reduced fee: 230 Euros (for T2M member: 170 Euros)

Registration after 1 July to 5 September 2024

- Individual fee: 360 Euros (for T2M member: 270 Euros)
- Reduced fee: 310 Euros (for T2M member: 220 Euros)

The registration fee will cover the costs for the conference materials, coffee/tea breaks, two lunches (Monday and Tuesday), a welcome cocktail (Monday), one dinner (Tuesday), and social events.

Please email the Organising Committee t2m@leibniz-ifl.de with the subject heading “2024 T2M Inquiry” if you have any questions or concerns.

Follow all news on the T2M website: <https://comode.leibniz-ifl-projekte.de/> and become a member via the T2M website: <https://t2m.org/>

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Conference organisers:

Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL) in cooperation with Lancaster University, Leipzig, Germany.

Programme committee:

Carlos Lopez-Galviz, Jinhyoung Lee, Claire Pelgrims, Pierre Barrieau, Jorgen Burchardt, Wladimir Sgibnev, Lyubomir Pozharliev, Karol Kurnicki, Cotten Seiler, Massimo Moraglio, Peter Adey.

Local organising committee:

Constantin Blome, Wladimir Sgibnev, Lyubomir Pozharliev, Karol Kurnicki, Maria Petrova, Egor Muleev, Stella Marie Köhler, Bohdan Novoshytskyi.

The T²M conference will serve also as the **final conference of the CoMoDe Project**
[Contentious Mobilities: Rethinking Mobility Transitions through a Decolonial Lens]