

# The UniCycle pilot programme

NUS, Love to Ride and EAUC have been awarded £90,000 of Department for Transport funding to pilot a new behaviour change programme to get more students and staff cycling at universities in England. Six institutions are invited to join the first year pilot at a heavily subsidised rate of £2,500 (+VAT). This is a great opportunity to join a flagship Department for Transport initiative, and to help us to develop an impactful, scalable, state of the art behaviour change programme for the sector.

## 1.0 Introducing Love to Ride

[Love to Ride](#) specialise in getting more people cycling, and are experts in making use of smart phone technology to incentivise participation. Love to Ride work with over 5,000 organisations across the UK to encourage their staff to do more cycling, and have impressive results attributable to their work. They have recently started to work in the UK tertiary education sector, including the University of York, who engaged over 1,000 participants, and the University of Exeter, winners of Love to Ride’s 2016 National Cycle Challenge.



## 2.0 The UniCycle Project

The aim of the UniCycle pilot project is to replicate the success of Love to Ride’s programmes in the public and private sectors, encouraging students and staff to cycle more, helping the Department for Transport to reach its target of doubling cycling by 2025.

The project will utilise Love to Ride’s expertise and digital platforms, NUS’ experience of developing and scaling up behaviour change programmes, and their established networks of practitioners, and EAUC’s member network, and ability to communicate and disseminate information.

In September 2016 NUS research of 1,000 students in UK Higher Education found that just 4% reported cycling to and from university during term time, compared to 22% who said they drove, demonstrating the scope for change within the sector. Typically, 30% of

participants in Love to Ride programmes are new riders and, of these, 40% go on to ride at least once a week and 35% ride to work at least once a week.

Our pilot will start with a programme of research this summer, to identify barriers to cycling in higher education. The programme will include student and staff online surveys, on-campus focus groups and an analysis of existing good practice.

We will work with our pilot institutions over the summer to convene institutional project teams, including representatives from the students' union, and we will run an inception meeting at each of the pilot institutions. This will allow us to fine-tune implementation plans for each institution, as well as gain the necessary buy-in from key influencers across campus.

The pan-university UniCycle website will launch in June, allowing students and staff to register with their institutions and log rides manually or via the Ride Report app. The website will capture the cycling behaviour of all participants, and the data will feed in to the intra- and inter-university league tables. This competitive format, with related incentives for encouragement and participation, provides a framework for existing cyclists to encourage their course mates, housemates and colleagues to take part and change behaviours.

The UniCycle pilot team (Love to Ride or NUS) will promote the programme at welcome weeks of each of the six pilot institutions, as well as working with institutions and their students' unions to engage students and staff through existing communications channels and pre-existing sustainability-related programmes and initiatives, such as Green Impact. We anticipate that 3 of the 6 pilot institutions will run Green impact at the institutional level.

Throughout the year we will work with each institution to engage and challenge students and staff to participate, offering regular feedback and incentives. Towards the end of the pilot year (the pilot will run mid-May 2017 to mid-May 2018) we will undertake follow-up surveys with participants to quantify attributable behaviour change.

In May 2018 we will host a roundtable meeting for the participating institutions to review the pilot programme, learning what worked well and what could be improved. Each institution will also receive a bespoke report detailing the impact of the programme.

### **3.0 What our pilot institutions get?**

- Helping to shape a flagship DfT project;
- A tailored 12-month programme with proactive project management and support from our programme team;
- Support in engaging students and staff locally, including our attendance at welcome weeks;
- Students and staff in your institution can log bike trips, set goals and compete with other departments, halls and institutions through the website and app;
- Eye-catching local and national prizes to incentivise participation;
- Detailed analysis and reporting of student of student and staff travel behaviour;
- An end of programme bespoke report for your institution.

### **4.0 Prerequisites**

To be one of our six pilots, you must:

- Be a university in England;
- Have a clear commitment to promoting sustainable travel and, specifically, increasing levels of cycling amongst students and staff;
- Have a named member of staff who can contribute on average of 0.5 days a week to implementing the programme locally, and be our local 'Challenge Champion';
- Contribute £2,500+ VAT match funding to the pilot, which will cover the period May 2016 to May 2017. We can invoice for this this financial year (before 31 July 2017) or next financial year (from 01 August 2017) to suit local budgetary needs.

## 5.0 Return on your investment

Although this is a pilot project, we are confident that all our pilot institutions will experience some or all of the following benefits. As this is a grant-funded pilot, we will invest a lot of time and effort into quantifying the impact of our collective efforts.

- Reduced scope 3 carbon emissions from transport;
- Data about student and staff transport behaviour that will help with travel planning;
- Reduced absence and healthier / more productive students and staff (there is evidence that cycle commuters typically take half the sick leave of colleagues who drive or take public transport);
- Significant savings on Employer National Insurance Contributions through staff uptake of the Cycle to Work Scheme (typically £80 per purchase);
- A community-building initiative that students and staff can take part in together;
- Staff and students who cycle forge stronger connections with the local off-campus community through other organisations engaged in Love to ride (Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, etc.);
- Trip data to share with your Local Authority to help improve provision for cycling locally.

Department for Transport statistics demonstrate that investing in cycling brings huge economic, social, health and environmental benefits, which will help you meet any university social responsibility and civic objectives. According to LSE research, the average benefit-to-cost ratio of investing in cycling is 13:1, and the Gross Cycling Product per cyclist is £230 annually.

## 6.0 More information

For more information, please contact Jack at [unicycle@lovetoride.org](mailto:unicycle@lovetoride.org) and/or Jamie at [Jamie.agombar@nus.org.uk](mailto:Jamie.agombar@nus.org.uk).

To register your interest in being one of the six pilots, please contact [Jamie Agombar](#), Head of Sustainability at NUS. The deadline to express your interest is **Friday 12 May 2017**.

**LOVE TO RIDE BRIGHTON & HOVE**  
BRIGHTON & HOVE CYCLE CHALLENGE MARCH 2017

HOME MY PROFILE PRIZES RESULTS INFO Jack Windle

**Love to Ride Brighton & Hove**

Love to Ride Brighton & Hove is all about getting more people cycling. 2017 is the #YearoftheBike and there's a year-round programme of events and promotions to help you experience the joys and benefits of cycling.

In March we are running the Brighton & Hove Cycle Challenge, where you and your colleagues can win prizes for riding and encouraging others.

Get ahead by registering today! [Find out more here](#) and [register yourself and your workplace here](#) - it only takes a minute!

**FIND OUT MORE**

**Around the World Cycle Challenge**  
Sunday 25 June 2017

Around the World Cycle Challenge  
We need you and your wheels for an extraordinary attempt to cycle 40,075km around the world in just 12 hours! [Find out more here](#)

1 REGISTER, IT'S FREE

2 RIDE FOR 10 MINUTES OR MORE

3 RECRUIT FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES

4 WIN GREAT PRIZES