

# Communication & promotion

Communication and promotion is an essential part of any cycling policy. To have any impact, people need to know what you are doing and why you are doing it! Choosing the right messages for the right target group, delivered in the most effective way will make your campaign a success and get more people cycling!

## Identify your target

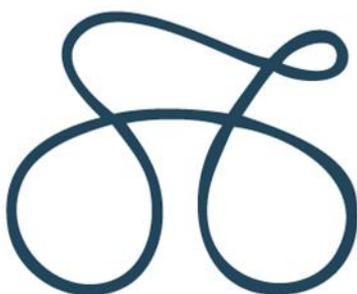
Cycling campaigns are more likely to be effective if they are directed at a specific group of people. A target group can be distinguished by age, gender, location, profession, socio-economic group or current cycling/non-cycling behaviour. The target group you choose will depend on the focus and location of your campaign e.g. for a campaign tackling congested cycle routes near the university an obvious target group is staff and students at the university.

In order to correctly identify the correct target group or groups for your campaign, do some research and consider the following:

- Does your campaign have a specific geographical focus? If so, who lives and works nearby? Examining GIS and household survey data could give you an insight into the age, profession and socio-economic status of local residents.
- What do you want people to do? Start cycling for the first time? Cycle more? Be more safety conscious? Respect pedestrians? Use a specific route? Be aware of new cycling facilities? Find out who currently DOESN'T carry out these behaviours – no point preaching to the converted! Surveys and interviews can help you find this out.

### Focus on Edinburgh – cycling to the MELA, a target-focused campaign

An international music festival was used to promote cycling along a newly improved cycle path in Edinburgh. The target group was identified by reviewing studies and local segmentation data and demographic information from the Scottish Government was used to provide context on local households to help guide the tone and style of communications and their dissemination. Read more about the campaign on the CHAMP website.



### CHAMP Fact

CHAMP city Kaunas produced a cycling website as a one-stop shop for information on cycling in the city – from policies to routes. The promotion of the website also served to promote cycling in the city. Read more about it on the CHAMP website

## Designing your campaign

Having identified your target group you now need to design your campaign with them in mind. Run focus groups with your target group and get their input. In particular, try to ascertain:

- What are their perceived barriers to carrying out the new behaviour? Try to answer these concerns within your campaign message.
- What kind of messages are most likely to be well received? e.g. focus on health, money saving, time saving or environmental benefits of cycling?
- Do they have a preference for different styling of a campaign? e.g. modern and trendy or more traditional?
- What media is most likely to reach the group as a whole? e.g. social media, newspapers, on-street advertising

### CHAMP Tip

Factor in that you will most likely need to obtain internal approval from the municipality for all campaign material and this can be a lengthy process.

Armed with this information you can begin to design the message and artwork of your campaign. This is best done within a working group which should ideally consist of stakeholders such as the municipality, local companies, members of the target group and cycling groups. For the best results employ a marketing expert but be sure not to lose ownership of the campaign message. Keep the message positive to reinforce the good image of cycling.

Marketing materials should be:

- Clear and concise in conveying the campaign message
- Eye catching
- Branded – e.g. so that people instantly recognise that the new signage on the route corresponds to the leaflet they were given
- Appealing to the target group

Consider borrowing ideas from similar campaigns in other cities or countries but always be sure to adapt them to local expectations and cultural norms.

Local celebrities can add weight to a campaign by backing it or being the 'message giver'. Be sure to choose people that your target group can relate to and consider how your choices might be perceived by others.



Photo: campaign poster in Ljubljana's coexistence campaign 'Pay attention in this area. Cyclists ride slowly and with consideration.'  
Source: City of Ljubljana



### CHAMP Tip

Social media tools need to be updated on a daily basis or interest is lost. This can be costly in terms of time, so be prepared to invest!

## Manage your campaign

Good project management will ensure your campaign runs smoothly. Prepare well, write a timetable (and try to stick to it!) and be sure to assign roles and responsibilities at the start of the project.

There's no such thing as too much communication! People need a lot of reinforcement and encouragement to adopt a new behaviour. For a campaign where individuals are testing new behaviour, keep regular contact and ask them how they are getting on. For general awareness campaigns keep a steady stream of campaign material and use any opportunity to let people know what you are doing.

### CHAMP Tip

Look out for ways to 'piggy back' your campaign onto an existing cycling or non-cycling event. It can be a cost-effective way to make a big impact.



Photo: Promotional materials were distributed alongside a bicycle repair workshop in Bolzano.  
Source: Ökoinstitut Südtirol/Alto Adige

Evaluate your campaign regularly to ensure that the (right) message is getting across. This can be achieved easily by street surveys - stopping cyclists and non-cyclists and asking them if they have heard of the campaign and their understanding of its messages.

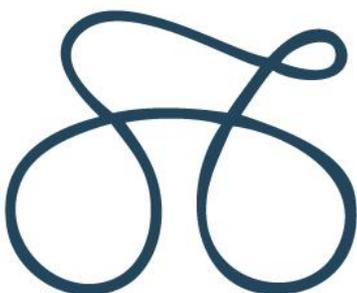
Do it all again! – repeat your campaign regularly to maximise impact. Be sure to make changes according to feedback.

### CHAMP Fact

The 'smart routes' campaign in Groningen encouraging cyclists to using less busy routes focused on the message of saving time, and posters and leaflets with fun cartoons were complimented by signage on the routes and promotion via social media and the website. The campaign was run during student induction week to maximize impact and achieved a 4% shift of cyclists to the smart routes. 79% of those surveyed were familiar with the campaign.



Photo: Fun campaign material aimed at students in Groningen



## Shout about what you are doing

Good media coverage of cycling activities can be invaluable at reaching an audience beyond your target group. Shout about what you are doing and take the message to the media to make the most of a free resource.

### CHAMP Tip

It can pay to stand out from the crowd, grab people's attention and capture their imagination. People will absorb your messages about cycling without even realising it!

Be prepared for negative media attention – arm yourself with facts and counter-arguments.

Other CHAMP materials that can assist you with communication and promotion are:

**Cooperation and partnerships** – how to make the most out of working with others

**Coexistence** – how to run campaigns promoting better coexistence of cyclists and other road users

**Optimising the network** – how to make the most out the cycling infrastructure that already exists

**Arguments to convince stakeholders** – some quick facts and arguments to encourage stakeholders to support cycling

**Cycle promotion at events and festivals** – a guide compiled by CHAMP city Edinburgh based on their experience of promoting cycling to an international music event

### Focus on Burgos – making the most of local media

Students at the University of Burgos were targeted in a campaign to raise awareness of cycling as a transport mode by being asked to submit a variety of media promoting cycling. 78 submissions were made including a travel diary which was closely followed by and reported in the local media. This was effective at spreading word of the campaign and cycling in general. 100% of people surveyed were satisfied with the campaign and 75% changed their travel behaviour in favour of cycling, resulting in a 1% increase in modal split after the campaign.



A bicycle ballet performed at the Edinburgh MELO. This innovative, eye catching form of cycling promotion was effective at gaining media attention.



The student competition in Burgos culminated in a prize giving ceremony attended by the local councillor and covered by local media

