



## Call for Contributions

# Walk21 Kigali: Action for Walking

*Affordable, essential steps to improve walkability*

The 23<sup>rd</sup> International Walk21 Conference on Walking and Liveable Communities

16-19 October 2023

The University of Rwanda, in partnership with the City of Kigali and UNEP, is proud to host Walk21 Kigali in 2023, the first Walk21 conference on the African continent.

Together with experts from across Africa and around the globe, we will share insights and expertise on how to develop and implement walking policies and programmes that deliver walkable communities and safer streets, broader community participation and enhance the value of walking.

We are calling politicians, engineers, campaigners, academics and planners to share their experience and be part of the discussions and activities at Walk21 Kigali.

You are invited to discuss the affordable actions that are transforming the urban paradigm; helping deliver on safety, equity and climate goals and are attracting investment for urban development that supports people walking.

Join us as we explore what makes a successful national policy, local action or transformative project for walking.

**The Call for Contributions closes on 28 March 2023.**

**Contributions should be submitted through this link (Oxford Abstracts):**  
<https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/5838/submitter>

The event will be in-person only, however we hope to capture some sessions to live stream and share afterwards for the many people who we know are interested in learning from the event but are unable to attend.

## Introduction

In African cities, walking is the primary mode of transport for the majority, with up to 78% of people walking every day to access work, education, health care, markets, and public transport.

Until recently, walking, almost everywhere on the continent, received relatively minor policy attention and resource allocation. Walking infrastructure was lacking: most roads had no footpaths or crossings and were poorly signed and maintained. Walking was, for a billion people, difficult, unpleasant, and unsafe and it was children, the elderly, those with disabilities, women, and those with low incomes - who walk most - that disproportionately suffered.

Kigali is leading a growing number of enlightened cities in Africa, that are transforming the paradigm by valuing people walking as a solution to routine road safety challenges, equity imbalances and climate concerns and, at the same time, attracting local and overseas visitors and economic investment.

Supportive land-use, mobility and social policies underpin the principles of a walking experience in Kigali that is safe, accessible, and enjoyable irrespective of income, age, ability, or gender. The city planners work with the engineers to deliver affordable actions to improve walkability. They are supported by knowledgeable university professors, ambitious politicians, and a demanding local community. The result is a network of enjoyable streets that are walked by everyone.

Kigali's commitment to affordable actions for walkability is a template for any city wanting to re-define a successful future mobility system; which wants a safe, clean and reliable city that functions efficiently; and that is seeking to attract further investment to grow and be competitive internationally.

The global momentum for more walkable communities is growing. With the Pan-African Action Plan for Active Mobility and THE PEP Pan-European Masterplan for Walking in development, national governments in 108 countries are engaged in developing strategic direction for more walking in their jurisdictions.

Experts from around the world will gather in Kigali in October to share their expertise and identify the next important steps we need to take to foster communities that support and enhance the walking experience for everyone.

## Themes

You are invited to submit a proposal under the conference themes to be part of the programme and discussions in Kigali, so that can benefit from your experience, successes, and contemporary research.

The four conference themes are:

- 1. Improving road safety for people walking**
- 2. Planning for walking in low-income neighbourhoods**
- 3. Building walking policy actions to reach the SDGs and climate goals**
- 4. Financing and governance models for supporting walking infrastructure**

We welcome all creative ideas and opportunities to explore these themes to find innovative and constructive ways that thread an understanding of the evidence base into affordable actions with a showcase of delivered projects that have realised beneficial change.

### **1. Improving road safety for people walking**

The University of Rwanda is developing a centre of excellence in transport and logistics for conducting research, collecting local data and providing expert training for staff to improve the effectiveness and impact of road safety investments in Africa. Civil engineers, transport planners, the police, architects and urban designers are in collaboration with academics, NGO's and advocates to significantly reduce the risk of people walking in Africa and save lives. On the continent with the highest fatalities for pedestrians, join us to help form the safe system and environments that will save lives.

*Contributions are invited that share relevant walking research, data collection, training systems and other affordable actions that are reducing road danger for people walking.*

### **2. Planning for walking in low-income neighbourhoods**

More than 60% of the population in Africa live in low-income neighbourhoods often lacking access to basic services including water, electricity, and sanitation. But these neighbourhoods can also be very walkable. When improvements are made it is essential to retain this walkability and keep streets safe for everyone, especially children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

In Kigali these settlements are being given footpaths, street lighting, play areas and parks as part of the city's strategic plan to enable the whole city to function.

*Contributions are invited that demonstrate how low-income communities have been transformed to support people walking as a basic human right and the impact that has had on the quality of community life.*

### **3. Building walking policy actions to reach the SDGs and climate goals**

Walking is being talked up as an affordable, quick, and reliable solution to help reach several goals including the Paris climate targets. With the promise of new money for mitigation and adaptation Rwanda is exploring what are the most affordable actions that deliver an impact. SDG 11.2 is all about access to public transport but must be more than just proximity, investing in walkable catchments can deliver safer, more attractive access to public transport stops and stations.

*Contributions are invited that share how affordable walkability actions are delivering on SDG and climate goal commitments.*

### **4. Financing and governance models for supporting walking infrastructure**

Recent research in partnership with development banks has highlighted an opportunity for more packaged investment in walkability projects. As more money is being targeted to sustainable mobility systems that attract future economic growth the banks and national officials are negotiating the best models for supporting walking infrastructure. How can national policy support local and city action for walking?

*Contributions are invited that share what finance and governance models are supporting walking investments. This could include examples of walking infrastructure, behaviour change campaigns, land use planning, fiscal and regulatory incentives, public transport catchments or capacity building.*

## **Formats**

There will be a range of formats for in-person presentations and activities. The programme committee will be looking for creative ideas for sessions, so please feel free to make any suggestions you like!

Available formats are:

- Topical discussion – a group of 15-minute presentations on a similar topic
- Roundtables - brainstorming and feedback on a critical issue to generate a set of ideas and actions, particularly good for street design or infrastructure challenges
- Pecha Kucha – 20 slides x 20 seconds to tell your story
- Workshops – focused topic discussion with colleagues with a clear output
- Walk Shops – on-street real-world experiments in walking
- Posters – share your emerging research in poster format

### **Topical Discussion**

This is a 15 minute oral presentation in a moderated session shared with other presenters to illuminate different perspectives and experiences on the same topic. The

presentations will provide the framework for the subsequent discussion and will be selected to encourage debate.

### **Roundtable**

A roundtable allows for extended discussion among a small group of colleagues. Roundtables are good venues for the hands-on exploration of case studies. Speakers are encouraged to provide insight into their topic and encourage questions and discussion taking advantage of the expertise and insights of other attendees to build ideas and possibly an output. Please note that a roundtable is an interactive format and that any presentations are limited to a certain length of time.

### **Pecha Kucha**

Pecha Kucha is a presentation format where there is a show of a maximum of 20 images, each for 20 seconds. The images change automatically while presenters are talking, so that the storyline of the talk is built around the chosen images. There will be no time to digress or get hung up on a detail but it can be a very engaging and exciting session. Remember, the images of your talk automatically change after 20 seconds. There will be 6 presentations per session. After the talks are finished, the presenters and the audience will have time for discussion.

### **Workshops**

At a workshop, a larger group of people deal with a specific topic or question. A workshop aims at working together with workshop participants targeting a common goal. Workshops are designed and managed by the proposer. Please note that a workshop is usually a more interactive format and presentations should be limited. You can propose a workshop in collaboration with a colleague working in the same field and build an agenda with multiple speakers and/or activities. Workshops can be 90 min, 3 hours or a full day.

### **Walkshops**

The street will be your laboratory. A Walkshop / Urban Laboratory is an opportunity to use the public spaces in the city to explore or carry out experiments, pilot programmes and deliver direct interventions. You can facilitate your own urban laboratory and the participants will follow you outside the conference venue to the real urban fabric and discover your experience, ideas and research. Explore the city and its perceptions of public space and experience the impact of your idea.

### **Posters**

Perfect for young researchers, a poster session enables you to bring current research work to share with delegates. Posters will be A0 in size and displayed during the event as well as online, with a scheduled presentation to attendees.

## Guidelines

Abstracts should be submitted through Oxford Abstracts by following this link:

<https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/5838/submitter>.

### Important deadlines

<b>28 March 2023</b>	The Call for Contributions Closes
<b>Early May 2023</b>	Notification of Acceptance
<b>End May 2023</b>	Confirmation of Participation

- The Call for Contributions to Walk21 is now open.
- The submission system will be online shortly.
- Proposals submitted after the closing date cannot be included in the assessment.
- After selection, contributors will be informed about the format, time, manner of presentation and embedding in the programme of Walk21 2023.

### Assessment and Conditions

Submissions will be assessed by a committee of international experts based on substantive quality; focus on the discipline; and the degree in which the proposal links to the themes of Walk21 2023.

Contributions must meet the following conditions:

- Matching one or more of the themes of Walk21 2023
- In the case of research or a project, the assertions and conclusions must be substantiated and verifiable
- Have news value, be innovative and stimulating
- Be written in clear and concise English
- Contain no more than 500 words

**Please note that if proposing several abstracts, it is essential that each proposal be submitted individually.**

By submitting a proposal, authorisation is given to University of Rwanda and Walk21 Foundation to publish and promote any information provided online and in conference materials.

Only in-person presentations will be possible at Walk21 in 2023. More information about tickets and potential scholarships to attend will be available shortly.

## Reviewing criteria

- The evaluation criteria will include: relevance to the conference theme; content quality and professional rigour; innovation and cutting edge; pertinence; originality; and, timeliness.
- We very much welcome abstracts with inter- and trans-disciplinary (scientific) approaches as well as contributions that involve diverse partnerships (e.g. city administrations, politicians, industry, planners, advocacy groups, artists). In the same way, submissions made by contributors originating from different countries will also be appreciated.
- Every abstract will be reviewed by at least four expert reviewers. The reviewing will be anonymous.
- The Reviewing Team consists of more than 40 international reviewers and is managed by the Walk21 Kigali organisation team. Reviewers originate from many different countries and have relevant and unique insight into the different themes. The reviewers provide the foundation for decision-making by the members of the Walk21 Kigali Programme Committee.
- The Programme Committee is responsible for making the final decisions on acceptance (including geographical, gender and quality considerations) and on format for delivery.

## Copyright

- By submitting your abstract and/or presenting at Walk21 conference you guarantee that you have the right to present and submit the content of your abstract, of data, pictures and photos. Please make sure to include all necessary sources in your presentation where relevant.
- Copyright in any abstract submitted will be retained by the author(s). If selected for presentation at the conference, it is mandatory that the author will permit the conference organisers to use the abstract (whether in whole or in part) as part of the programme outline, promotion and presentation of the conference before, during and after the event.
- Copyright in any digital presentation given at Walk21 2023 will be retained by the author(s), but it is mandatory that Walk21 are permitted to share your digital presentation as part of the conference proceedings. The conference proceedings will be published on the Walk21 database and website.
- All abstracts and presentations (whether in whole or in part) must not be re-published by any person and/or organisation other than the author or Walk21.

## Questions

In case you have questions or you would like to discuss your contribution, don't hesitate to contact the organisers at [kigali@walk21.com](mailto:kigali@walk21.com).