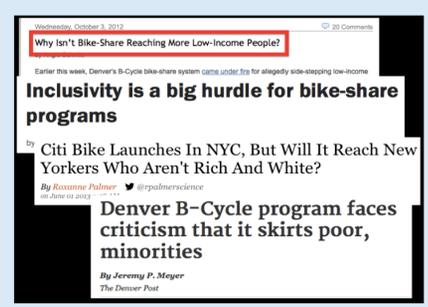


# Can bike share serve everyone?

Researching bike share access for disadvantaged communities in Vienna, Austria • Smarter Than Car • Stanford University Program on Urban Studies

## U.S. context

- Current bike share boom in the U.S. (30 cities opening bike share programs since 2008)
- Widespread criticism that bike share programs in the U.S. are not inclusive of low-income communities, people of color



**Citi Bike NYC:**  
0.5% of users are low-income

**Capital Bikeshare:**  
3% of users are African-American (general D.C. population: 51%)

**Citybike Wien:**  
65% of users have completed higher education

## Questions

Why are bike share users not more representative? What are the barriers to access that exist for some people benefitting from bike share? What are bike share programs doing to become more accessible to disadvantaged communities?

## How we found out

- Talking to stakeholders: Vienna city officials, staff of Citybike Vienna, community organizations, Citybike users, representatives of Capital Bikeshare, Citi Bike NYC, and Nice Ride
- Interviews & workshops with community members
- Online transportation survey of Vienna residents, both users and non-users of Citybike
- Literature review of research on the role and use of bike share



Meeting with Martin Blum, Cycling Coordinator for the City of Vienna



Workshop with students at the immigrant community organization interface

## What we found

Recurring barriers to access:

- Financial**
  - Cost of membership
  - Bank account requirement (credit card needed to register)
  - Security holds on cards
- Geographic**
  - Stations concentrated in city centers and higher-income neighborhoods
  - Lack of cycling infrastructure (bike lanes, signage) in low-income neighborhoods
- Cultural/Representation**
  - Insufficient promotion of discounts for low-income people
  - Advertising that reinforces the idea of cycling as an activity for a certain demographic (wealthy, white, male)
  - Negative perceptions of cycling, preference for car ownership
- Usability**
  - In some cases, Internet access required to register
  - Languages of station interface not available in major immigrant languages (Vienna)

## Case studies

### Citybike Vienna

- The oldest 3rd generation bike share
- City with tradition of social services
- €1 life-time membership fee



### U.S. case studies:

Capital Bikeshare Washington D.C.	Citi Bike NYC New York City	Nice Ride Minneapolis + St. Paul
200 stations 1800 bikes Government-run \$75/annual membership	330 stations 6,000 bikes Private operation \$95/annual membership	170 stations 1550 bikes Non-profit \$65/annual membership

## Community partner

Smarter Than Car: Non-profit think tank based in Beijing and Vienna



*"Smarter Than Car (STC) is a think tank dedicated to questions of Bicycle Urbanism and Future Urban Mobility. As an interdisciplinary group with open-source attitude STC engages in urban research and advocacy. STC believes that the bicycle is the key element for sustainable urban environments in an urbanized post-carbon world."*

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## What programs are doing

- Financial:**
  - Offering and advertising discounts for low-income users
  - Sharing liability with organizations in order to provide memberships to the unbanked
  - Eliminating security holds on cards
- Geographic**
  - Expanding into low-income & minority neighborhoods
- Cultural/Representation**
  - Offering materials in the major minority languages
  - Launching outreach programs aimed at introducing people to cycling as a form of transportation
- Usability**
  - Making registration possible without the need for Internet
  - Offering multiple language options at kiosks

## Food for thought

Do you think that bike share can meet the transportation needs of low-income communities?