



18th International NECTAR Conference
Munich, Germany, 13 - 15 July 2026

Call for papers for the thematic session of Cluster 3: Freight & Logistics

Transitioning to Sustainable, Resilient and Just Freight Transport

The global movement of goods sustains households, economies, and industries, yet it also generates disproportionate burdens. In cities, freight contributes to congestion, pollution, and safety risks; in rural areas, derailments, spills, and infrastructure disrepair are persistent concerns. At a time of accelerating uncertainty—from climate change and supply chain disruptions to growing labor precarity and economic volatility—freight systems must adapt not only for resilience, but for environmental sustainability and just transitions. Meanwhile, cities and countries are setting ambitious goals to cut carbon emissions, improve urban livability and community health, and safeguard economic security. Meeting these goals requires a profound transformation in the freight sector, also extending into the aspects of just and fair transport for different stakeholders.

This transformation extends beyond technology. While electrification, automation, and intelligent transport systems will play critical roles, achieving sustainable and equitable freight systems also demands spatially reconfiguring logistics networks, modal shifts and demand management strategies, regulatory reform, cross-sector collaboration and governance models that center democracy and inclusivity. By aligning freight planning with broader resilience, sustainability, health, and equity goals, we can ensure that goods movement strengthens communities rather than undermines them.

We invite theoretical, empirical, and practice-oriented contributions that address the transition to sustainable, resilient, and just freight systems.

Topics of interest include, but is not limited to:

- Pathways toward zero-emission freight transport and logistics decarbonization

- Spatial planning for freight (e.g. compact logistics, last-mile innovations, and urban distribution centers)
- Environmental justice and community health impacts of freight exposure
- Just and fair transport for different stakeholder groups
- Modal shift
- Policy and regulatory frameworks for a transition to sustainable freight transport (e.g., land use, indirect source rules/zero emissions zones, pricing)
- Supply chain resilience and freight system adaptation under uncertainty (pandemics, tariff shocks, climate risks, crisis and war)
- Resilient and sustainable freight transport procurement in an uncertain world
- Community engagement, co-creation, and participatory approaches in freight planning
- Role of AI, big data, and digital twins in planning and managing freight transitions
- Political economy and freight: implications of automation, on-demand/gig economy, workforce displacement, deregulation, world systems, and strategies for a Just Transition
- Integrated people and goods movement in 15-minute Cities and on Complete Streets
- Circular economy: reverse logistics and waste reduction
- Interdisciplinary approaches: integrating public health, labor, planning, dual use (military and civilian) and supply chain management perspectives

Deadline for abstract submission

The deadline for abstract submission is January 31, 2026. Abstracts (max. 500 words) should be submitted electronically, using the form available on the conference website and following the instructions found there: <https://nectar26.eu/>

A copy of the abstract should also be sent to the cluster co-chairs: Jonas Flodén (jonas.floden@handels.gu.se), Nicolas Brusselaers (Nicolas.Brusselaers@vub.be), Travis Fried (tfried3@uw.edu), Sandra Maria Monteiro de Melo (sandra.melo@ceiia.com)

Criteria for acceptance

Criteria for acceptance are scope, scientific quality, NECTAR membership and the possibility to fit the presentation in a coherent conference session. The number of participants of this thematic session will be limited to 8.

Venue

NECTAR 2026 will be hosted by the Accessibility Planning Research Group at Chair of Urban Structures and Transport Planning, Technical University of Munich (TUM), in collaboration with the NECTAR Board and its thematic clusters.

Participation and NECTAR membership

All practical details will be communicated through the conference website. In order to participate in the conference, a consecutive and current two-year NECTAR membership is necessary (2024-2026). Non-

members can find details of how to join the association on the “Membership” page of NECTAR’s website:
www.nectar-eu.eu/membership

Important dates

Abstract submission: Jan 31, 2026

Notification of acceptance: Apr 1, 2026

Confirmation of attendance: April 30, 2026

We look forward to seeing you in Munich!

Jonas Flodén

Nicolas Brusselaers

Travis Fried

Sandra Maria Monteiro de Melo

NECTAR is a European-based scientific association. The primary objective is to foster research collaboration and exchange of information between experts in the field of transport, communication and mobility from all European countries and the rest of the world. It is a multidisciplinary social science network bringing together a wide variety of perspectives on transport and communication problems and their impacts on society from an international perspective. For further information on NECTAR, use the link: <http://www.nectar-eu.eu>.