

Move Observatory Award



Advancing the next generation
of mobility thinkers.

CITY FUTURES
MIC ♦ HUB Research Lab

Move Observatory Award 2026

MIC-HUB and its City Futures Research Lab are committed to researching the relationship between mobility, cities and citizens. The launch of the Move Observatory Award 2026 marks an open call for bachelor's and master's degree theses.

Move Observatory Award

2026 Award for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Theses, Research, and Studies

Introduction

Today, the discipline of urban mobility faces the complexity of contemporary cities and the need to interpret phenomena through models capable of integrating technical, social, and cultural dimensions. The study of mobility and model theory applied to planning and road safety, does not simply represent space or flows. Rather, it aims to translate behaviours, perceptions and inequalities within urban spaces into analytical and design forms.

As Erica Thompson observes, mathematical and scientific models are tools that 'sculpt' reality, offering descriptions and simulations of the world that inevitably include some variables while excluding others. The central question then becomes what we choose to measure and how we interpret the data.

In the context of sustainable and safe mobility, this means considering the possibility of modelling not only flows and travel times, but also people's psycho-physical well-being, gender differences, vulnerable groups, and the quality of the urban experience. At the same time, it is necessary to examine the knowledge processes linked to data:

- Who produces it?
- Who can access it?

- Is it accessible and transparent?
- Who can benefit from data in advocacy processes?

In a reality where the digital and physical realms are increasingly interconnected, we must address the theme of **data justice** for an equitable production of knowledge.

Over time, urban road safety projects have emphasised the importance of developing an integrated system of interventions that moves beyond the logic of individual technical devices for reducing risk. The objective has gradually evolved into a comprehensive vision of safe mobility, focusing on protecting vulnerable road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists, children and the elderly, and ensuring equitable access to and use of public spaces.

Can we truly conceive of mobility without considering people? The systemic approach to road safety and spatial justice today requires the integration of technical and quantitative dimensions with ethical and social ones. This recognises that the city is an ecosystem of relationships, not just a set of networks and devices. From this perspective, the principles promoted by the international **Vision Zero** programme are a key reference point.

Themes

The Call is open to innovative works on 360° mobility, carried out in Italy or abroad, between **1 January 2025 and 31 March 2026**, within the framework of Bachelor's or Master's Degree Theses, Research Projects, and Studies.

The themes of the 2026 call are as follows:

1. Communication, Information, and Service Integration

- Digital systems and integrated platforms for the coordination of transport services.
- Communication and participation strategies to promote sustainable mobility behaviours.
- Data governance, data justice, transparency, and the ethical use of data in mobility planning.
- Education and training as tools for safety and inclusion.

2. Road Safety for Pedestrians and Vulnerable Users

- Strategies for **"30 km/h Cities"** (Città 30) and speed reduction policies.
- Integrated design for the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and micro-mobility.
- Data analysis and usage for accident prevention and risk assessment.

- Systemic approaches to safety: infrastructure, regulations, education, and communication.
- Spatial justice and safety as common goods.

3. Universal Accessibility and Equitable Mobility

- Mobility as a right of access to essential urban services (health, education, work, culture).
- Investigation of mobility demand with reference to gender, physical, and social diversity.
- Inclusive design and accessibility for people with disabilities, the elderly, and children.
- Accessible tourism and sustainable experiential pathways.
- Integrated infrastructure and multimodality for urban regeneration.
- Urban vitality, public spaces, and psycho-physical well-being in mobility systems.

4. Innovative Technologies and AI in Mobility Design

- Applications of **AI**, simulation, and predictive models for road safety and flow analysis.
- Urban Digital Twins and simulation models for participatory planning.
- Sensors, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Big Data for the dynamic management of mobility and public space.
- Ethics of models and data: what to measure, how to represent urban reality and social differences.
- Technology and humanity: is it possible to design mobility without considering the human experience?

5. Ethical, Social, and Cultural Dimensions of Mobility

- Interpreting mobility as a space for rights, relationships, and diversity.
- Gender differences and intersectional perspectives in transport planning.
- Psycho-physical well-being, time, and quality of life as indicators of mobility system effectiveness.
- Cultural representations and narratives of safety and risk in urban space.

Selection and Prizes

The Award will be granted following an evaluation by a **Commission** appointed by the

promoter at the end of the Call. During the selection process, the Commission will prioritise consistency with the core themes and the **innovative nature** of the submitted works.

- **Publication:** Works deemed of highest value by the Jury will be awarded publication.
- **Cash Prizes (sponsored by MIC-HUB):**
 - **1st Place:** €1,000
 - **2nd Place:** €500

How to Apply

Participants must send their application to **award@mic-hub.com** by the deadline indicated. The application must consist of the following:

1. A PPT/PDF file (maximum 10 slides).
2. The completed form attached to the Call.

Dates and Deadlines

- **30 June 2026:** Deadline for the submission of applications.
- **November 2026:** Communication of selected projects.

For further information: award@mic-hub.com