



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy

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Introduction

In front of you lies a book containing a selection of some of the finest examples and practices Dutch cycling has to offer. In fact, it was a huge challenge for the team and editors compiling this book as there are many examples to choose from.

With this book we want to inspire and provide you with insights, background and learnings of famous and perhaps less-famous examples. Besides motivating you, we want to offer some perspectives that may help you in taking first steps in implementing similar examples in your locality. Having examples or icons has proved crucial in the uptake of post-war cycling in the Netherlands. “Build it and they will come” is the famous one-liner and metaphor for the success of the first cycling lanes. First pilot projects attracted cyclists, that in turn catalysed the development of cycling networks and cycling culture. The rest, as they say, is history...

Well, there is more to that. Just building infrastructure will not guarantee success. In fact, just building infrastructure could backfire and kill grassroots developments before they have a chance to grow. “Bicycle infrastructure is not about bicycle infrastructure, and cycling is not about cycling.” There is more to that. Making bicycle infrastructure a success and getting cycling to take off requires three ingredients: hardware, orgware, and software. Parallel to the physical ‘building’, strategies such as policy making, stakeholder participation, decision making, and promotion are necessary. It was during the network planning strategies that integrated policies, design principles, systematic safety approach, and the polder model that were developed, implemented, and improved. Doing this parallel to the first demonstration tracks in The Hague and Tilburg, and consecutive waves of cycling (r)evolutions in the Netherlands made cycling a success. You will soon find out that this book presents both visible icons of cycling and cycling infrastructure in the Netherlands, as well as the less visible elements, such as data collection, strategies and tools for policy making, campaigns and behaviour change. Besides general information, all examples include actionable insights and lessons learned. We would invite you to carefully read these lessons as well, and try to grasp the essence of each project, and relate it to your circumstances.

“ In front of you lies a book containing a selection of some of the finest examples and practices Dutch cycling has to offer.”

We do not offer you a cookbook that guarantees success. We can only present you with the ingredients, and stress that you need all different types—hardware, orgware, software—covered. It is to engage in endeavours, to acquire and enhance knowledge and skills, to mix and align the ingredients to your situation.

We hope this book will motivate you to persevere in building and enhancing your cycling culture.