Conference: Sustainable Urbanisation – bridging the development and growth
Keynote speaker bios

Keynote I: Gunnar Heipp

Gunnar Heipp is an internationally renowned expert in urban mobility, urban development, infrastructure and innovation. After having been involved in the famous development of the tram-train system and in Karlsruhe, he was for more than 15 years the Director for strategic planning, infrastructure, digitalization, sustainability and innovation management of the Munich Public Transport Company SWM/MVG. Besides this, Gunnar is engaged in numerous associations and foundations. In 2018, Gunnar has founded his own consulting company, focusing on strategic urban development and mobility. Customers are cities, public and private companies and start-ups in Germany, Austria, France and Scandinavia. He holds a master in civil engineering, studied urban planning in Karlsruhe (Germany) and Trondheim (Norway), took classes in management and economy at the St. Gallen Management School and is a fellow of the German Academy on Regional and Urban Planning (DASL).

Keynote II: Gerard van Bortel

Dr. Gerard van Bortel, is assistant professor of Housing Management at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands. He coordinates the Housing team within the Faculty of Architecture's Management in the Built Environment (MBE) department. Gerard specialises in organisational strategies and cross-sector partnerships of not-for-profit housing providers, strategies and approaches to create a sustainable affordable housing stock, and the role of not-for-profit landlords in supporting vulnerable places and people. He has published widely on these topics. Gerard is a supervisory board member of Amsterdam-based housing association Rochdale, board member of the Dutch Tenants Union, and works as a social housing performance auditor in the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders).

Keynote III: Pirkko Melville

Dr Pirkko Melville enjoyed the first part of her career as a symphony orchestra violinist and as a teacher/lecturer. On completing her doctoral dissertation in musicology and master's in business and economics Melville worked as an assistant professor at the University of Jyväskylä. In 2009 Melville was invited to join the city of Jyväskylä's innovation services unit as a research and development manager. Nowadays Pirkko Melville is strongly involved with strategy, urban development and innovations. Creative and open-minded Melville is an enthusiastic forerunner in the use of innovative and creative co-creation tools, and experimental development is one of her favourite subjects with which to improve social inclusion and resource wise behaviour in cities, not only among citizens but also in industrial and business environments. Pirkko Melville is recognized as a target-oriented leader with good social skills and known for her extensive networks as well as excellent skills in managing the same.

Keynote IV: Juha Kostiainen

Juha Kostiainen holds position of EVP Urban Development in YIT Corporation and is a member of Group's management board. Before starting again in YIT November 2012 Kostiainen worked four years in Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund. There he held several executive positions related to energy efficiency in built environment, public leadership, communications and public affairs. Previously (2001-2008), Kostiainen worked for YIT Corporation in several executive positions related business development, strategy and communications. Has also worked for the city of Tampere as a director, economic development (1997-2001) and a managing director of two different technology centres. He has a versatile experience related to societal activities and public affairs. Juha Kostiainen completed a doctoral thesis in Regional Studies at the Tampere University. He has published several articles on regional economic development policy, competitiveness of city-regions and area development (housing etc.) also in refereed academic journals. Kostiainen holds a position of adjunct professor in the University of Tampere (strategic development of city-regions).