



Bike Buddy & Bike Ambassador Report

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Original Research & Outreach

- Looked at Big10, well known, midwestern universities, and universities with a platinum BFU status (26 total).
- [Campus Bike Programmer Network](#)
- **Universities Contacted:** University of Michigan, Michigan State University, the public works department in the county where Pennsylvania State University is located, Rutgers University New-Brunswick, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of California Irvine, University of Iowa (bike library), University of California Los Angeles, University of Edinburgh, University of Maryland, University of Oregon, the City of Madison, Wisconsin, Indiana University, and a local biking group in Portland, Oregon (BikeLoud PDX).

Online Research

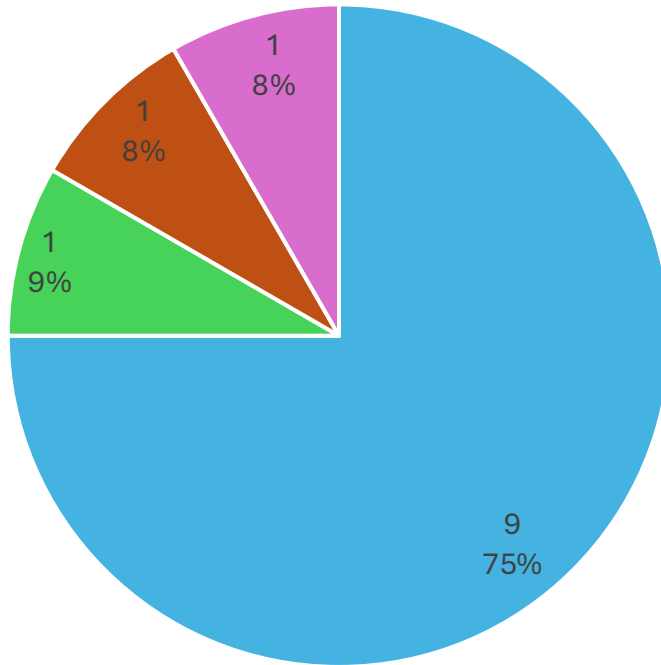
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	University Name	Big 1	BFU Status	Ambassador Program	Program Name	Program Link	Program Desc.	Other Notes	Possible Contact Info
2	Indiana University	Yes	Gold	Yes	Bike Ambassador	n/a	commute@iu.edu.	ndiana.edu/bicycles/bike-mentor-program.html	commute@iu.edu
3	University of Iowa	Yes	Silver	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		commuter-programs@uiowa.edu
4	University of Maryland	Yes	Gold	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		bike@umd.edu.
5	University of Michigan	Yes	Silver	Somewhat	Wolverines on Wheels	https://csed.engin.umich.edu/wolverines-on-wheels-envisioning-sustainable-transportation-on-campus/	Wolverines on Wheels is a sponsored student organization		wolverinesonwheels@umich.edu.
6	Michigan State University	Yes	Gold	Somewhat	MSU Bike Advisory Committee	https://msubikes.wordpress.com/msu-bac/	Campus Master Plan over many years	groups	East Lansing, MI 48824
7	University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	Yes	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		parking@umn.edu
8	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Yes	Silver	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		messerer2@unl.edu
9	Northwestern University	Yes	Silver	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		sustainNU@northwestern.edu
10	Ohio State University	Yes	Silver	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		bikehub@osu.edu
11	University of Oregon	Yes	Gold	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		rglaeser@uoregon.edu
12									
13	Pennsylvania State University	Yes	Gold	Yes	State College Borough Bicycle Ambassador Program	https://engage.zencity.io/statecollegepa/en/engagements/628c20d6-6e53-47b4-9d24-515cd1d2bd2e	The State College Bicycle Ambassador	Bicycle ambassador program is for the borough that the college is in, rather than by the college itself. I'm also unsure if this program is still active, the latest information I can find is from 2023.	publicworksdept@statecollegepa.u
14	Purdue University	Yes	Gold	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		parking@purdue.edu
15	Rutgers University-New Brunswick	Yes	n/a	Yes	New Jersey Ambassadors in Motion program	https://njbikeped.org/new-jersey-ambassadors-in-motion-2022-summary-report/	pedestrians.	select events.	Email: bikeped@ejb.rutgers.edu
16	University of California Los Angeles	Yes	Gold	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		hello@lovetoride.net
17	University of Southern California	Yes	n/a	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		tsubsidy@usc.edu
18	University of Washington	Yes	Gold	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		ucommute@uw.edu
19	University of Wisconsin-Madison	Yes	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	on-platinum-bike-renewal-08.04.23.pdf	Phone: 263-2969
20	Stanford University	No	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	The university offers educational classes and online webinars. https://transportation.stanford.edu/getting-stanford/bike	**** would have to fill out a form to
21	University of California Irvine	No	Platinum	Yes	BikeUCI Ambassadors	https://www.bike.uci.edu/bikeuci-ambassadors/	a volunteer program for cyclists to shan	I am unsure if this program is still active, the latest information I can find is from around 2020 right before lockdown.	biking@uci.edu
22	University of California Santa Barbara	No	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	The university offers a "Get Back on the Bike" annual series of eight classes for CSU employees who want to bike to work, tune up their bike, get safety gear, and learn strategies to travel in traffic and overcome other safety or comfort obstacles through personalized travel training. The university also appears to have a Campus Bicycle Advisory Committee, which volunteers at events and advises on upcoming bicycle-related infrastructure projects, but I can't find evidence of any meetings since 2023. https://bicycle.colostate.edu/sample-page/encouragement/	john.behlman@ucsb.edu
23	Colorado State University	No	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		transportation@colostate.edu
24	Boise State University	No	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	The Cycle Learning Center at Boise State University provides Bronco biking classes to promote safety, bike maintenance, and encourage biking as a means of transportation. BSU also offers a variety of free educational classes and weekly group rides to help cyclists feel more comfortable biking. https://www.boisestate.edu/clc/	clc@boisestate.edu
25	Portland State University	No	Platinum	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	It seems as though most responsibilities that would be conducted by ambassadors are done by the PSU Bike Hub, an on-campus bicycle repair shop. https://www.pdx.edu/bikehub/	???
26	University of Edinburgh (UK)	No	n/a	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	Bike buddies, staff cycling community and bicycle user groups help cyclists stay in touch and help newer cyclists get more comfortable biking around the area. https://transport.ed.ac.uk/cycling/getting-involved	Transport@ed.ac.uk
27	University of Toronto (Canada)	No	n/a	No	n/a	n/a	n/a		???

Summary Stats

- [Questionnaire](#) emailed on June 27th & 30th and responses were requested by July 25th.
- 12 total responses
- 5 from cold emails to organizations + 7 from Campus Bike Programmer Network

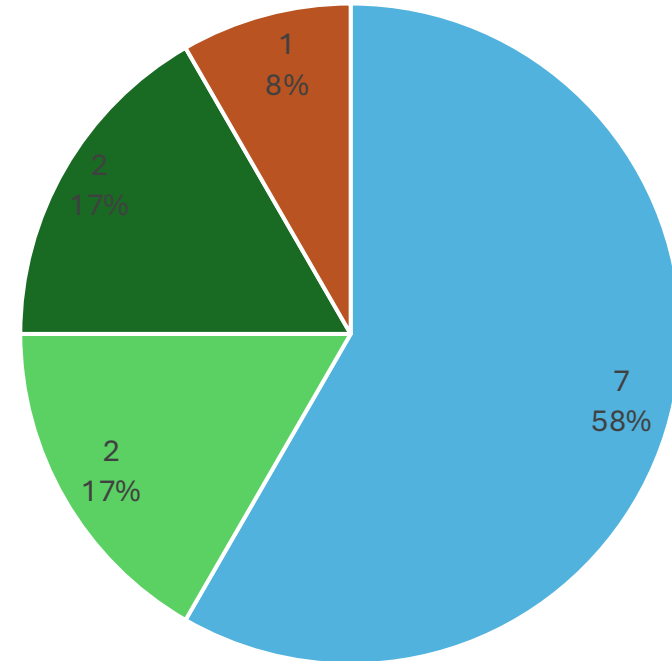
Bike Buddy + Bike Ambassador Program Stats

Does Your Organization Have a Bike Buddy Program? (Total Responses = 12)



■ No ■ Yes ■ Informal program ■ To be implemented Fall 2025

Does your Organization Have a Bike Ambassador Program? (Total Responses = 12)



■ No ■ Yes ■ Had a previous program ■ Informal program

Bike Buddy Program

"Develop a Bike buddy program on campus by FY30" ([2024 Campus Bicycle Plan](#), p.39).

Current Bike Buddy Programs

Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization

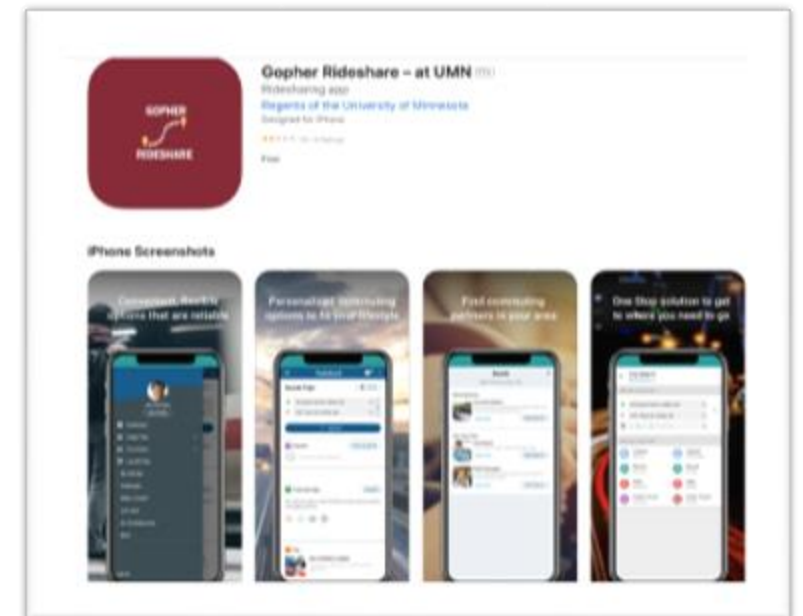
- funded by STBG (Surface Transportation Block Grant) + a local match provided by area communities
- Has been around for ~10 years but program formalized February 2025
- Uses RoundTrip application to coordinate rides

University of Minnesota

- Informal program
- Use Gopher Rideshare Program application to match bike buddies

Bike Buddy Program Coordination

- **RoundTrip** (powered by [RideAmigos](#)) helps to match cyclists to each other using “**bikepool**” matching capabilities. This feature is meant to connect anyone who is looking for someone else to bike commute with and *doesn't differentiate* between different levels of experience. - [Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\)](#)
- **Gopher Rideshare platform** ([mobile application](#)) “has the ability for cyclists to tag themselves as mentors and people looking for bike buddies can see and request them”. - [University of Minnesota](#)



Boston University Employee Experience

****Not BU related**

- **Successful programs:** Require **flexible**, **laid-back**, and **welcoming** mentors that can tailor rides to the individual
 - Successful anecdote: Mentor would offer to bike to work with people and bring bike tools and donuts. Mentor would meet people at their homes and would choose a leisurely route on a day where being slightly late was okay.
 - Having a map where bike commuters could mark their homes to help create a **biking culture** at work
- **Major Challenges:** little interest from mentees, mentors were disproportionately male with strong cycling preferences

Bike Buddy Program Recommendations

- Adopt an app (such as RideAmigos) OR create an algorithm to match buddies via factors like **location**, **cyclist experience** (optional), **destination** (potentially if just for a singular ride), etc.
 - Illinois phone app?
- Reach out to various **campus RSOs** and departments to reach a wide audience of students who could be interested in a bike buddy program
 - Freshman, graduate students, international students, dorms, off-campus, etc.
 - In-person meet ups
 - Quad day, Welcome Week, [Sustainapalooza](#), etc.
- Minimal/ no requirements to be a bike buddy
 - *Maybe* require a shield membership or a 100% on the bike safety quiz

Bike Buddy Program: Steps Towards Implementation

1.

Coordinate a system to pair up bike buddies based on various individual and ride characteristics (algorithm, app, sign-up sheet, in-person meet up, etc.)

2.

Widely **advertise** the bike buddy program at in-person events, Welcome Week events, and online to attract a diverse group of bike buddies

3.

Reinforce the program by **improving bike infrastructure** and bike safety measures on campus

4.

Implement end of year/semester **surveys** to better understand cyclists

Bicycle Ambassador Program

"Develop a Bicycle Ambassador program on campus by FY30" ([2024 Campus Bicycle Plan](#), p.39).

Current Bike Ambassador Programs

University of Oregon: UO Bike Share Student Ambassadors

- “Bike Share is operated by a local nonprofit, and they manage the Bike Share Ambassadors Program. UO Transportation Services provides some funding for this program.”
- Current students fill out a form to become an ambassador
- Ambassadors attend quarterly meetings to learn about service-learning opportunities like bike valet events, planting trees by bike, helping with bike education events, and volunteering at bike encouragement events on campus.
- Bike Share Ambassadors help run events like the [Filmed by Bike Festival](#) (very popular)

State College Borough: State College Borough Bicycle Ambassador Program

- Many ambassador roles available – tabling for events, helping with community bike rides and delivering educational presentations
- Department of Public Works’ Sustainability Community Engagement Fund
- Bike-in Movie, Fall-Foliage Community Bike Ride, and [Mayor's Bike Ride](#), etc.

Current Bike Ambassador Programs

University of Minnesota : *Informal Program

- Biking program interns are used as bike ambassadors though there is a desire to create a formal bike ambassador program

NJ Bike Ped Interview Summary

- Ambassadors were full time in the summer and paid (mostly planning graduate students)
 - ~20% ambassador duties and ~80% research for bike and ped center
- Focused on education + safety – Statewide program affiliated with Rutgers University but NOT a university program
- Funded by NJ DOT (BPRC grant)
- Hard to figure out statistics and if you can prove its effective – so funding was hard to justify and later diverted to other projects (ambassador program ended around 2020/2022)



Bike Ambassador Program Training

Tiered Training: All **State College Borough** ambassadors receive orientation with expectations and initiatives. Ambassadors have tiers

- **Silver**: League of American Bicyclist [Smart Cycling course](#)
- **Gold**: Complete League Cycling Instructor training (to lead community rides)

Bike Ambassador Program Recommendations

- Require ambassadors to undergo a training program (create one, use a League of American Cyclist, or use another course)
- Ambassadors should be recognizable
 - Gear (spoke cards, shirts, stickers).
 - Ambassadors should appear at a variety of events in in the community
- Ambassador work should be flexible
 - Retaining ambassadors can be a challenge, ambassadors should have a balanced workload

Bike Ambassador Program: Steps Towards Implementation

1

Create a **simple bike ambassador application** that asks about a person's interest in the program, comfort with biking on and off campus and availability.

2

Select applicants that are passionate and willing to represent safe biking habits.

3

Administer **safety training** to all ambassadors.

4

Order and distribute **ambassador gear**.

5

Have **ambassadors** **consistently appear** at events and practice safe habits.

6

Check in regularly with ambassadors to **gauge feedback**.

Thank you