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# INTRODUCTION

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## **Q-Park Thesis Award**

### **Understanding the trends that impact parking**

We are proud to present this collection of the winning theses from the first five years of the Q-Park Thesis Award.

Parking is and will continue to be an essential link in the mobility chain. At the same time the sector will be strongly impacted by many trends and developments in the coming decades. Socio-economic trends (aging population, further urbanisation, e-shopping), technological developments (electric, self-driving and smart cars) and the diffusion of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) applications are creating new opportunities in the parking sector, but are also introducing new players and changing power relationships.

Understanding these trends and their potential impact on parking is key for the future of the sector. And academic research performed by students for their master thesis can greatly contribute to this knowledge.

The winning thesis abstracts contained in this publication can be classified in four major themes:

- | Parking demand
- | Parking choice behaviour
- | Parking as mobility management tool
- | Parking and electric vehicles

### **Celebrating five years of cooperation**

In cooperation with the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Q-Park established the Q-Park Thesis Award in 2014 for the best master's thesis on parking and mobility written at a University in the Netherlands or Belgium.

We have commissioned this book to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Q-Park Thesis Award and to give an overview of the winning theses. In each of the four sections we reproduce the abstracts<sup>1</sup> of each thesis that was awarded a prize in the period 2014 – 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> All authors of the theses presented in this book have given Q-Park their explicit permission to publish their abstracts in this publication.

### Bridging the knowledge gap

When we established this award in 2014 our purpose was both internal and external: on the one hand we wanted to mark the retirement of our founder, Ward Vleugels. On the other we sought to bridge the considerable gap between academic research on parking and its practitioners in the parking sector<sup>2</sup>.

As a parking operator Q-Park has welcomed the dramatic rise in academic literature on parking in the last 15 years. But we have also noted the knowledge mismatch between what practitioners need in the field and what academics have produced. Put simply, the two are driven by different goals.

But as the theses presented here show, the two worlds can come closer to generate new knowledge which combines both academic rigour and new ideas for practitioners to tackle current and future challenges.

### Fourteen winning master theses in five years

In the first five years, more than 40 master theses were submitted to the Q-Park Thesis Award from leading universities in the Netherlands and Belgium; 14 received a prize, and 13 theses are presented in this publication. The theses have been assessed by a jury of academics and practitioners based on their academic and socio-economic relevance.

Each thesis should provide new knowledge for the parking sector and must be distinguishable from previous research. The theses include both qualitative and quantitative research and all of them meet rigorous academic standards<sup>3</sup>.

### Thank you

We would like to thank and congratulate all students who submitted their theses for the Q-Park Thesis Award in the last five years. All students have actively contributed to create new knowledge for the parking sector. In the coming years we hope that many more students will conduct research on parking and mobility related themes.

We are also truly grateful to all the supervisors who have helped the students to conduct their research and to graduate. We hope you will keep feeding the Q-Park Thesis Award with many students' research.

We trust that this publication will continue to build bridges by inspiring students and academics to conduct new research on parking and by encouraging practitioners to strengthen their cooperation with universities.

### Maastricht, September 2019

Frank De Moor – Q-Park

Theo Tuis – Q-Park

Giuliano Mingardo – Erasmus University Rotterdam



<sup>2</sup> Parking operators, urban planners, policy makers, and advisors.

<sup>3</sup> For each abstract we clearly state the author, the affiliated university where the student graduated and the year of publication. Most of these theses are publicly available and can easily be found on the internet through the thesis repository of each university.