



‘Making the Invisible Count’

A Design Science Research Approach to Predictive Modelling of Electric Vehicle Workplace Charging Loads

**iDODDLE — Studying the Impacts of Digitalised Daily
Life on Climate Change**

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My educational background blends entrepreneurship w/ operations research

Study Background & DPhil Research Group



Marcel Seger
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Environmental *Change*
Institute

iDODDLE
Research Project

Educational Track



2022 - today
DPhil (PhD) in Geography & the Environment at the
Environmental Change Institute (ECI), University of Oxford



2019 - 2022
Honours Degree in Technology Management at
Center for Digital Technology & Management (CDTM)



2014 - 2022
B.Sc. & M.Sc. In Management & Technology
(Industrial Engineering) at TU Munich

Key Information & Context

Research Objective
Studying the impacts of digitalised daily life on climate change
across the domains food, home, energy, and mobility

Funding
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ERC Consolidator Grant, #101003083 (2021 – 2025)






Agenda


Overview

1 | Introduction & motivation
Regulatory environment, real-world problem motivation

2 | Literature review
Prior research

3 | Methodology (DSR)
DSR process, sampling approach, data collection

4 | Design & development of artefact 
Design cycles 1 – 2

5 | Demonstration & evaluation 
Application of our artefact, qual. + quant. results

6 | Discussion
Review: Main findings and contributions

7 | Q&A
Appendix: References and back-up slides



Roll-out of extensive EV charging infrastructure on employee car park

Regulatory environment & real-world problem motivation

RQ1 What are the benefits of coordinated EV workplace charging for firms?

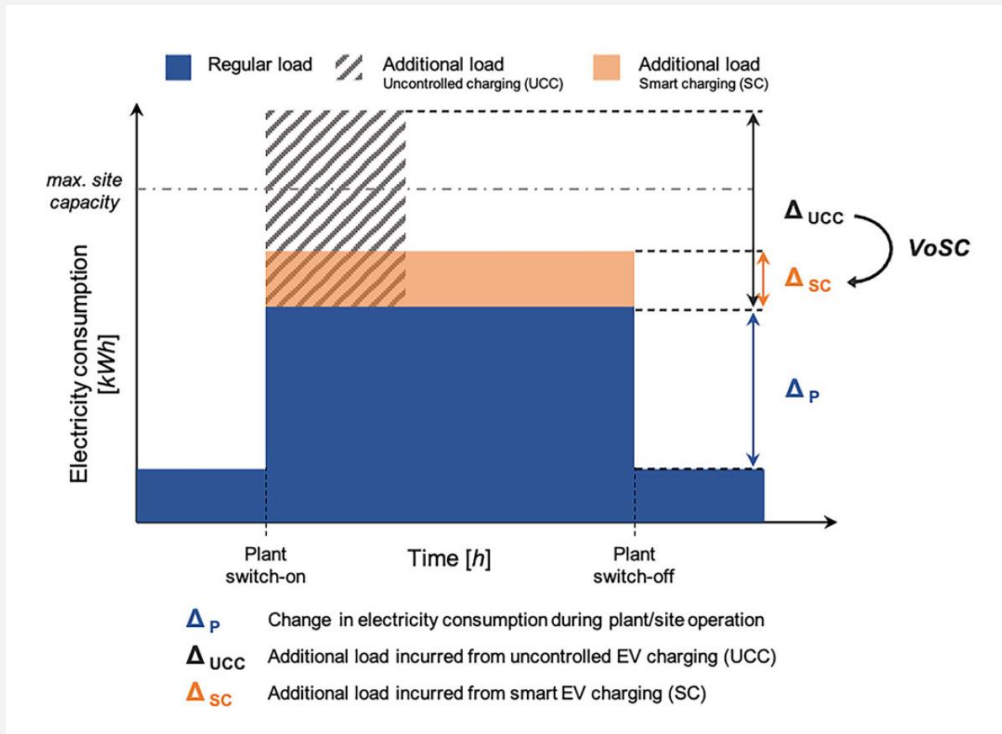


Fig. 1 | Schematic electricity consumption profile of industrial site.

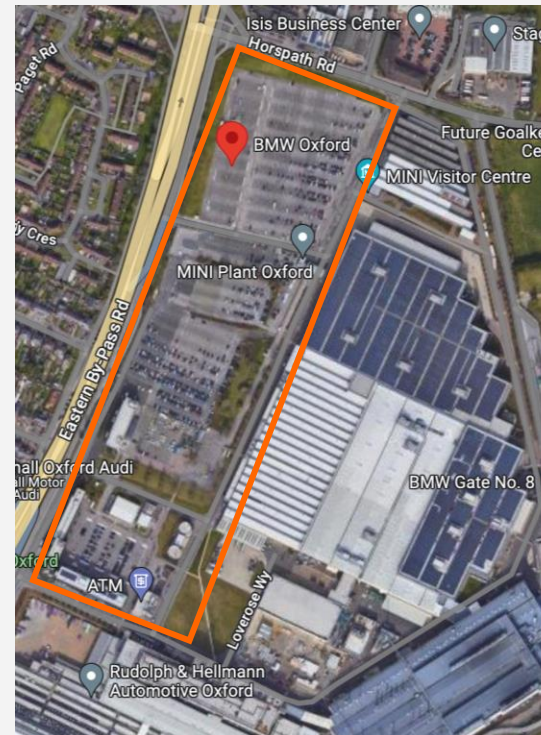


Fig. 2 | Aerial image of employee car park.

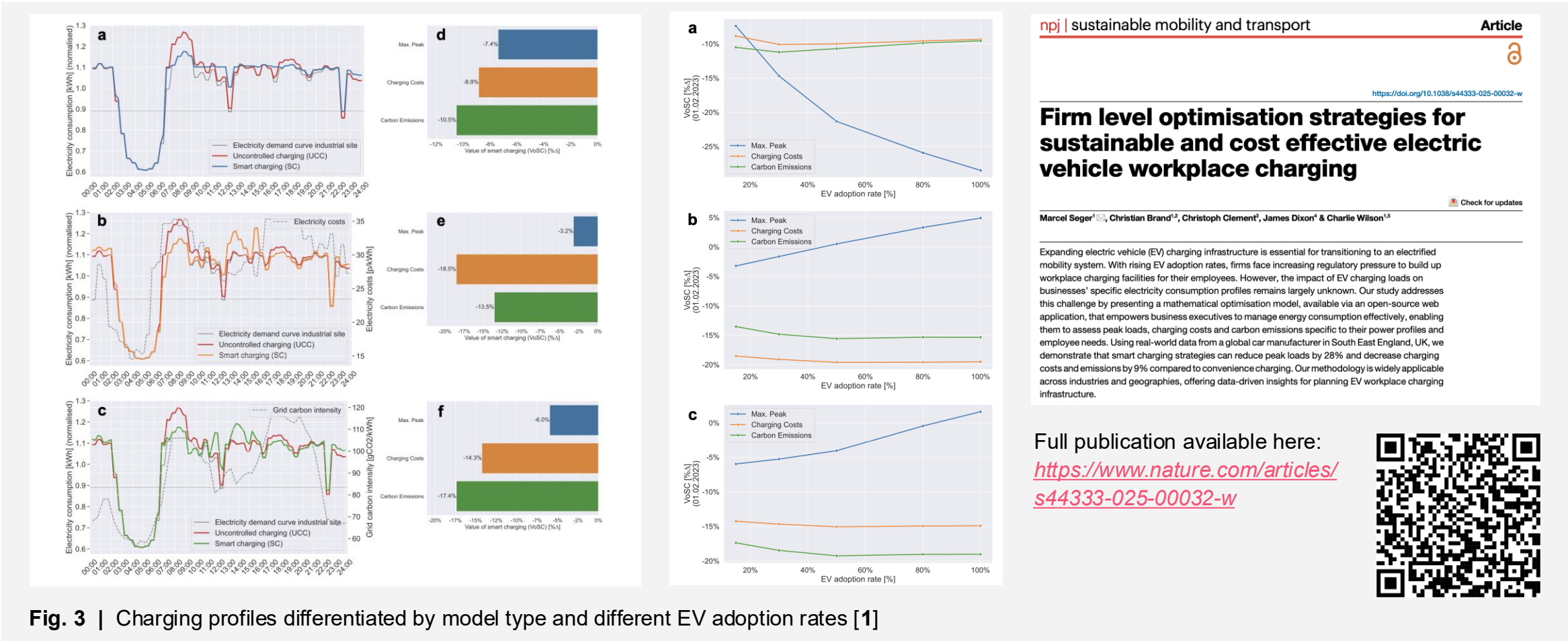
Motivation: regulatory context

- Enforcement of recent EU laws add regulatory pressure for firms
 - Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD): more stringent reporting of Scope 3 emissions, including employees' commute practices to the workplace
 - Energy performance of buildings (EPBD): legal requirement to provide min. 1x charging station on business car parks w/ >20 parking spots ('GEIG' in Germany – in effect since 01.01.2025)



SC strategies yield 28% lower peak loads while reducing charging costs by 9%

Prior work (PhD Paper 1): Overview of key results





Firm-specific decision support for predictive modelling of EV charging loads

Overview of prior research

IS for low-carbon energy and mobility systems

- ‘**Green IS**’: addressing challenges of sustainability and efficiency in energy and mobility systems [2, 3]
- Prominent examples of ‘Green IS’ research
 - Sustainable supply chain management [4]
 - Digital carbon accounting systems [5]
 - Energy-aware business process management [6]
 - Organisational digital decarbonisation approaches for environmental sustainability [7]
- ‘**Energy Informatics**’: emphasises the role of digital technology systems in optimising energy generation, distribution, and consumption
- Prominent topics:
 - Smart grid management [8], decentralised energy systems [9], demand-side energy management [10]

‘Research Gap’

- Most studies have taken on the viewpoint of either network operators or electricity market agents [22-25], or electricity market agents [26-29]
- In practice, the decision for building + operating EV workplace infrastructure lies within responsibility of private firms
- **Lack of adequate methods, data, and tools for workplace operators**

Sustainable transformation of mobility systems

- ‘Green IS’ + ‘Energy Informatics’ contribute significantly to the development of EV charging infrastructure
- Recent scholarly work:
 - Optimised load balancing and the integration of renewable energy into charging networks [11, 12]
 - enabling vehicle-to-grid and sustainable charging approaches [13]
 - user-oriented systems have been analysed to improve the EV charging experience, including intelligent navigation to available charging stations, real-time availability updates, and dynamic pricing [14-17]

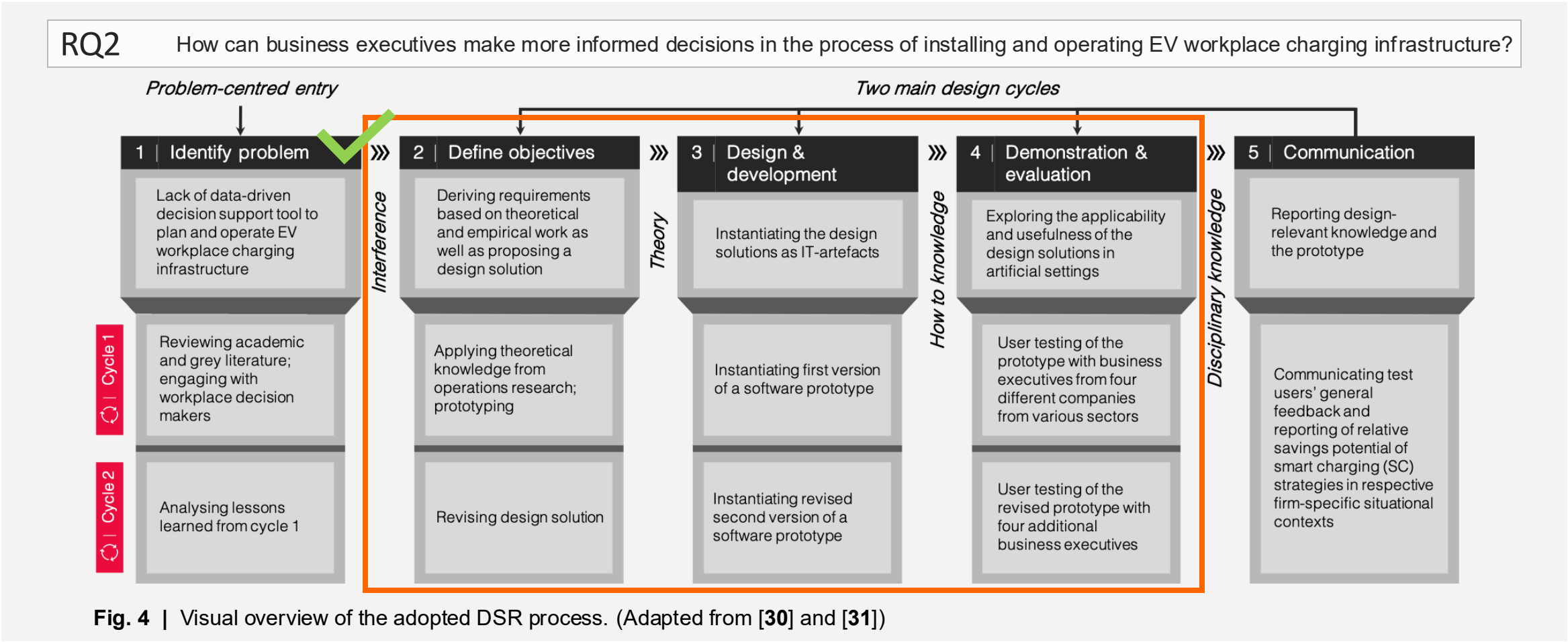
Smart EV charging

- ‘Smart charging’ – a concept referring to managing electricity loads from EV charging cycles according to pre-defined objectives [18]
 - Review of common objective functions [19]
 - Joint optimisation of the decision on the number of EV chargers to be deployed and the operational decision of charging spot assignments [20, 21]



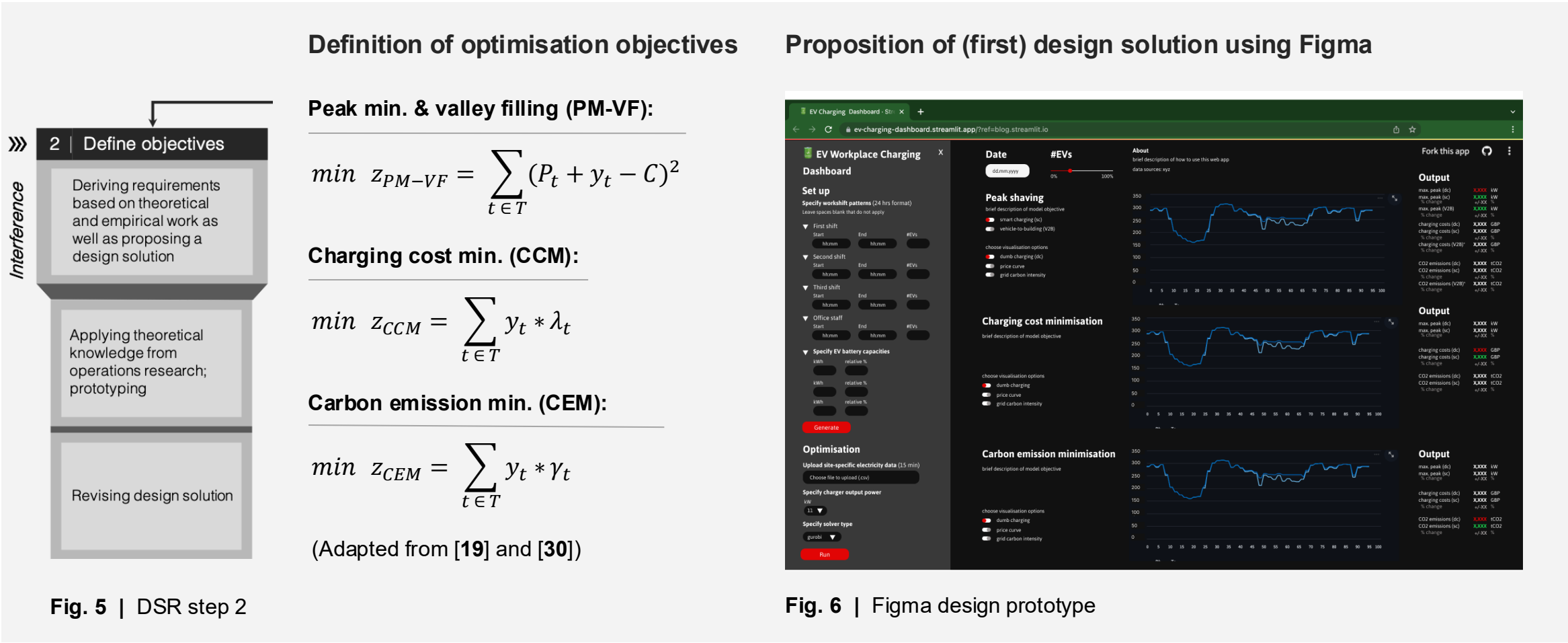
Developing a digital artefact as decision support tool for practitioners

Design science research process: General overview



Definition of objectives are informed from operations research

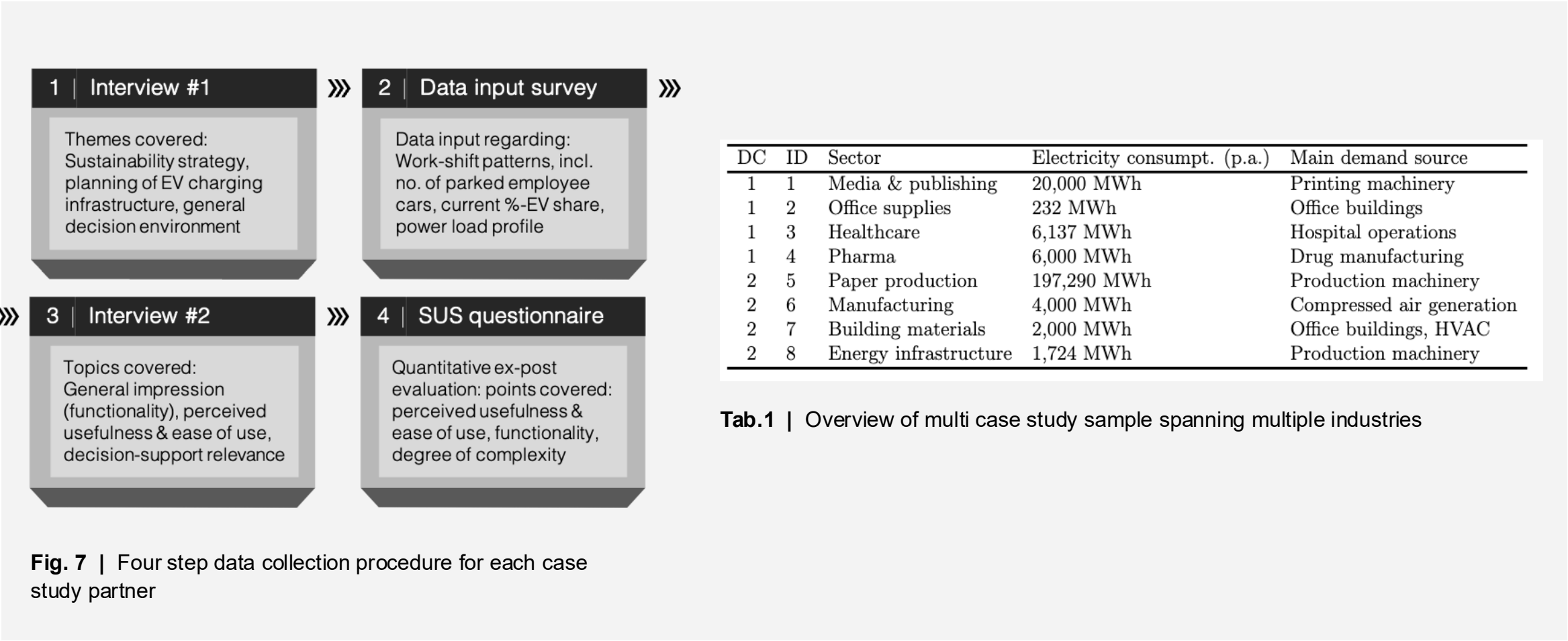
Design science research process: Step 2





We used mixed-methods research with a total of eight case study partners

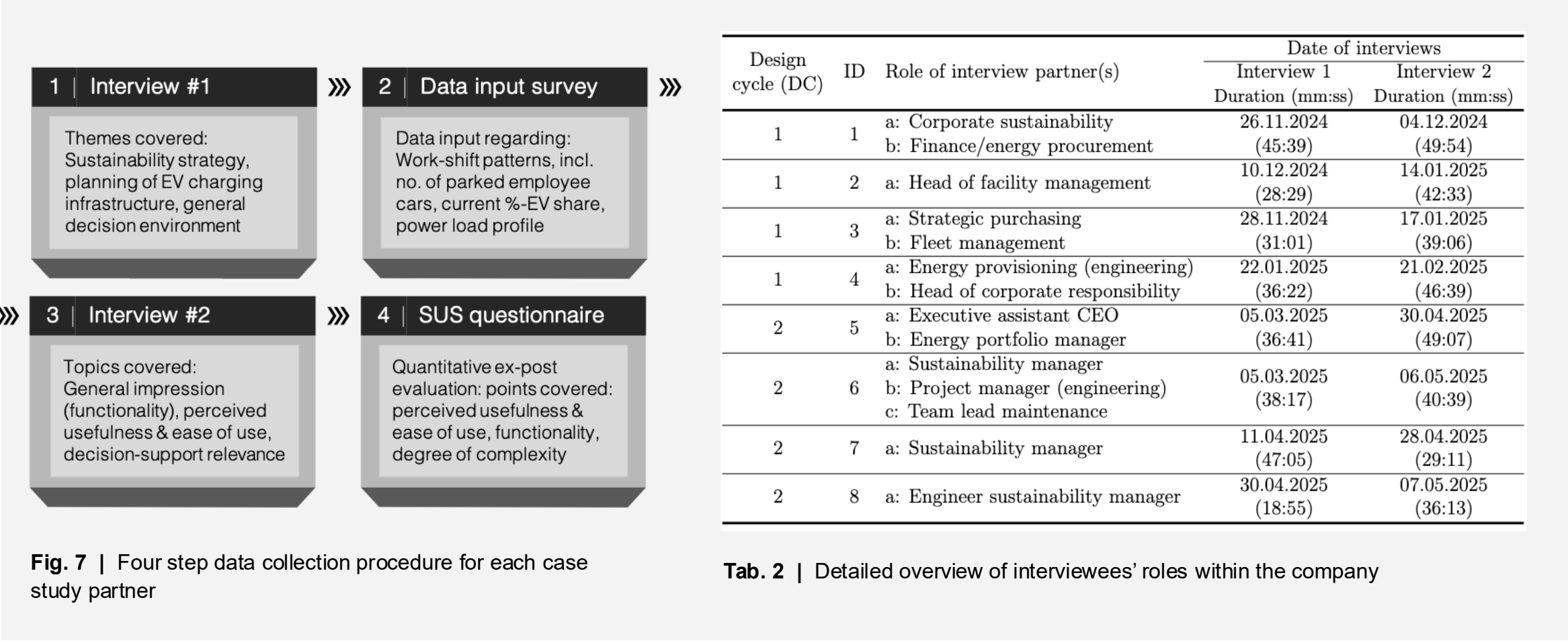
Sampling & data collection



We conducted two semi-structured interviews with each case study partner



Sampling & data collection



The artefact is built in a modular manner using streamlit for visualisation

DSR step 3 (Design cycle 1)

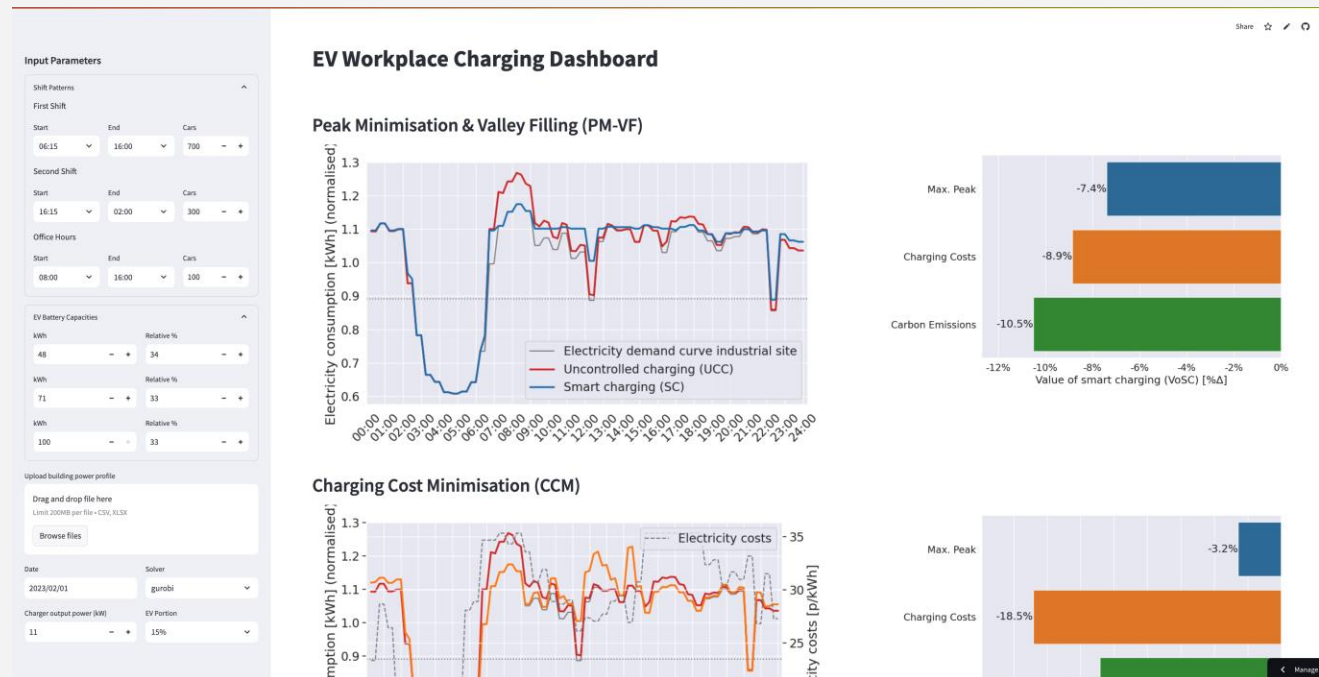
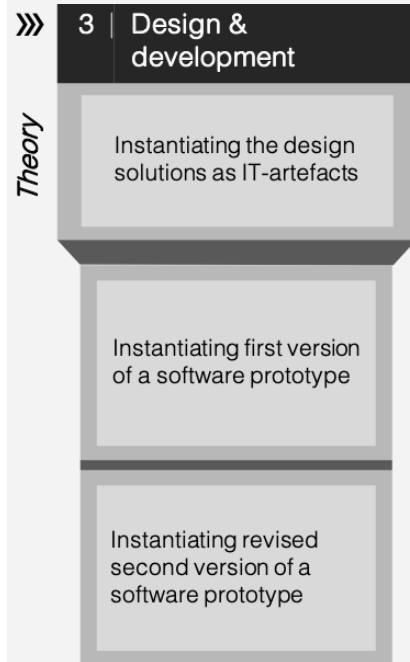


Fig. 8 | First functional prototype (Design cycle 1)

Coding languages & tools



Data pipeline



Model formulation



Optimisation



Visualisation



We tested the artefact based on real-world firm-specific data

DSR step 4: Demonstration

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4 | Demonstration & evaluation

Exploring the applicability and usefulness of the design solutions in artificial settings

User testing of the prototype with business executives from four different companies from various sectors

User testing of the revised prototype with four additional business executives

How to knowledge

DC	ID	Sector	Electricity consumption (p.a.)	Main demand source	Work shifts	# Cars	EV rate (status quo)	Type of analysis
1	1	Media & publishing	20,000 MWh	Printing machinery	AM (06:00–14:00) PM (14:00–22:00) Night (22:00–06:00)	90 80 60	5%	Firm-specific data
1	2	Office supplies	232 MWh	Office buildings	Office staff (08:00–16:00)	50	25%	Firm-specific data
1	3	Healthcare	6,137 MWh	Hospital operations	Fleet (16:00–07:30)	50	10%	Firm-specific data
1	4	Pharma	6,000 MWh	Drug manufacturing	AM (06:00–14:00) PM (14:00–22:00) Night (22:00–06:00) Office staff (08:00–16:00)	100 150 80 300	10%	Firm-specific data
2	5	Paper production	197,290 MWh	Production machinery	AM (06:00–14:00) PM (14:00–22:00) Night (22:00–06:00) Office staff (08:00–16:00)	250 175 80 60	5%	Firm-specific data
2	6	Manufacturing	4,000 MWh	Compressed air generation	AM (06:00–14:00) PM (14:00–22:00) Office staff (08:00–16:00)	100 70 100	30%	Firm-specific data
2	7	Building materials	2,000 MWh	Office buildings, HVAC	Office staff (07:30–17:00)	500	12%	Default load profile
2	8	Energy infrastructure	1,724 MWh	Production machinery	AM (06:00–14:00) PM (14:00–22:00) Office staff (07:00–16:00)	170 30 140	3%	Firm-specific data

Tab. 3 | Firm-specific inputs from case study partners



We received eight highly relevant design & feature improvements

DSR step 4: Evaluation (Design cycle 1)

»»

4 | Demonstration & evaluation

Exploring the applicability and usefulness of the design solutions in artificial settings

User testing of the prototype with business executives from four different companies from various sectors

User testing of the revised prototype with four additional business executives

DC	ID	Quote from interviews (round 2)	Timing (mm:ss)	Qualitative code(s)	Prio.
1	1b	<i>“Something I might even wish for more is this: You’ve now (...) taken the load profile of a single day at our site and analysed it. As a complement or extension, one could perhaps create some kind of average.”</i>	16:07	Aggregated analytics	High
1	1b	<i>“In Germany, we also have (...) a dynamic tariff. (...) You can basically take the numbers themselves and, in the end, go back to all time periods, even into the past. (...) [Then], of course, you can also retrieve the German prices from the website.”</i>	18:10	Germany-specific market price data integration (entso-e)	High
1	1b	<i>“And regarding CO₂– specifically grid carbon intensity – I’m not sure if there are actually data available for download to display them properly here. But there is something called the Electricity Map. Do you happen to know it? (...) And there, of course, you can also specifically check for Germany what the electricity mix is on a given day.”</i>	21:01	Germany-specific grid carbon intensity data integration (electricity maps)	High
1	2a	<i>“And what I would actually find really interesting: is that also dependent on the seasons, depending on what kind of strategy I might want to pursue at the time? And to actually simulate something like that?”</i>	23:02	Seasonal effects / aggregated analytics	High

Tab. 4 | Qualitative codes from second round of interviews (excerpt)

SUS score of 87% after DC 1 indicates high acceptability

DSR step 4: Quantitative evaluation (Design cycle 1)

»» 4 | Demonstration & evaluation

Exploring the applicability and usefulness of the design solutions in artificial settings

User testing of the prototype with business executives from four different companies from various sectors

User testing of the revised prototype with four additional business executives

No.	System Usability Scale (SUS)	Response Distribution 'strongly disagree' (score: 1) to 'strongly agree' (score: 5)
1	I think that I would like to use this system frequently.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I found the system unnecessarily complex.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I thought the system was easy to use.	1 2 3 4 5
4	I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this system.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I found the various functions in this system were well integrated.	1 2 3 4 5
6	I thought there was too much inconsistency in this system.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I would imagine that most people would learn to use this system very quickly.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I found the system very cumbersome to use.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I felt very confident using the system.	1 2 3 4 5
10	I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this system.	1 2 3 4 5

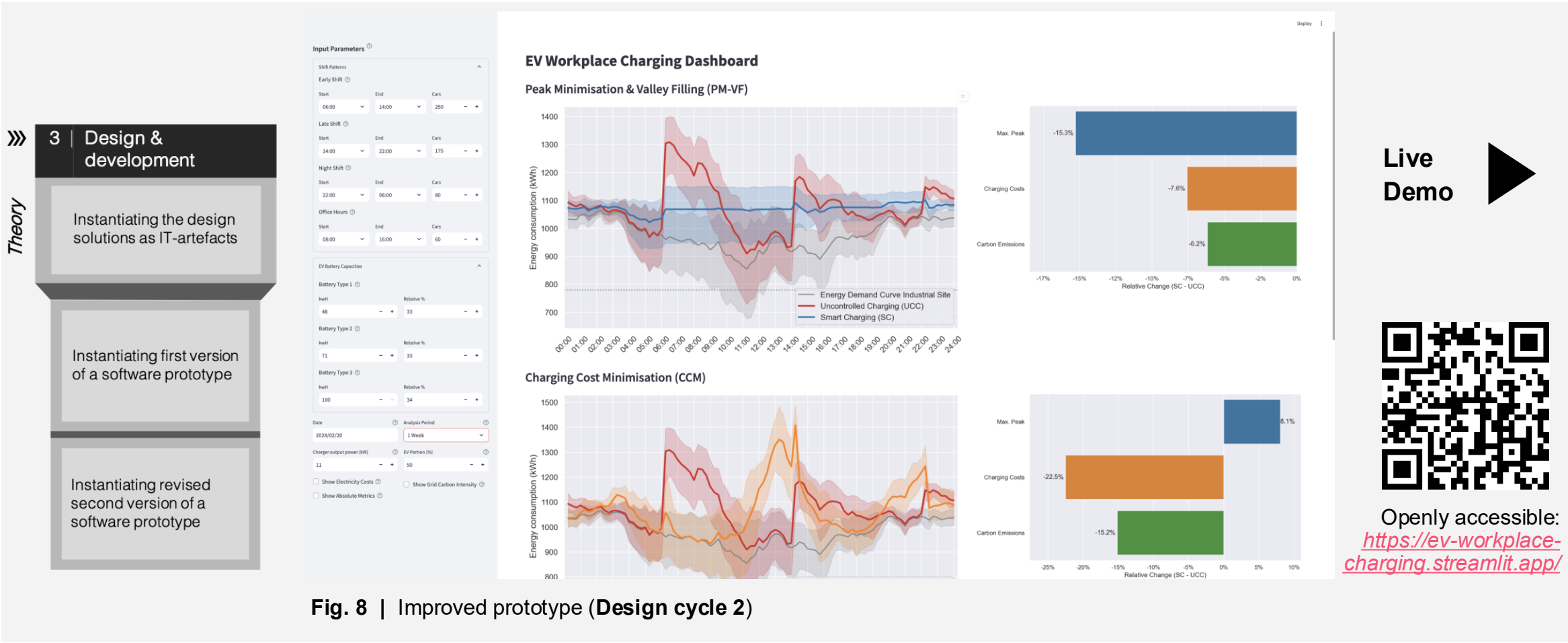
Total Score
87%

'Excellent'
> acceptable

Tab. 6 | Quantitative evaluation using the System Usability Scale (n = 4) (DC 1)

Enhanced artefact incorporating feedback from design cycle 1

DSR step 3 (Design cycle 2)





Final SUS score indicates high acceptability among prospective users

DSR step 4: Quantitative evaluation (Design cycle 2)

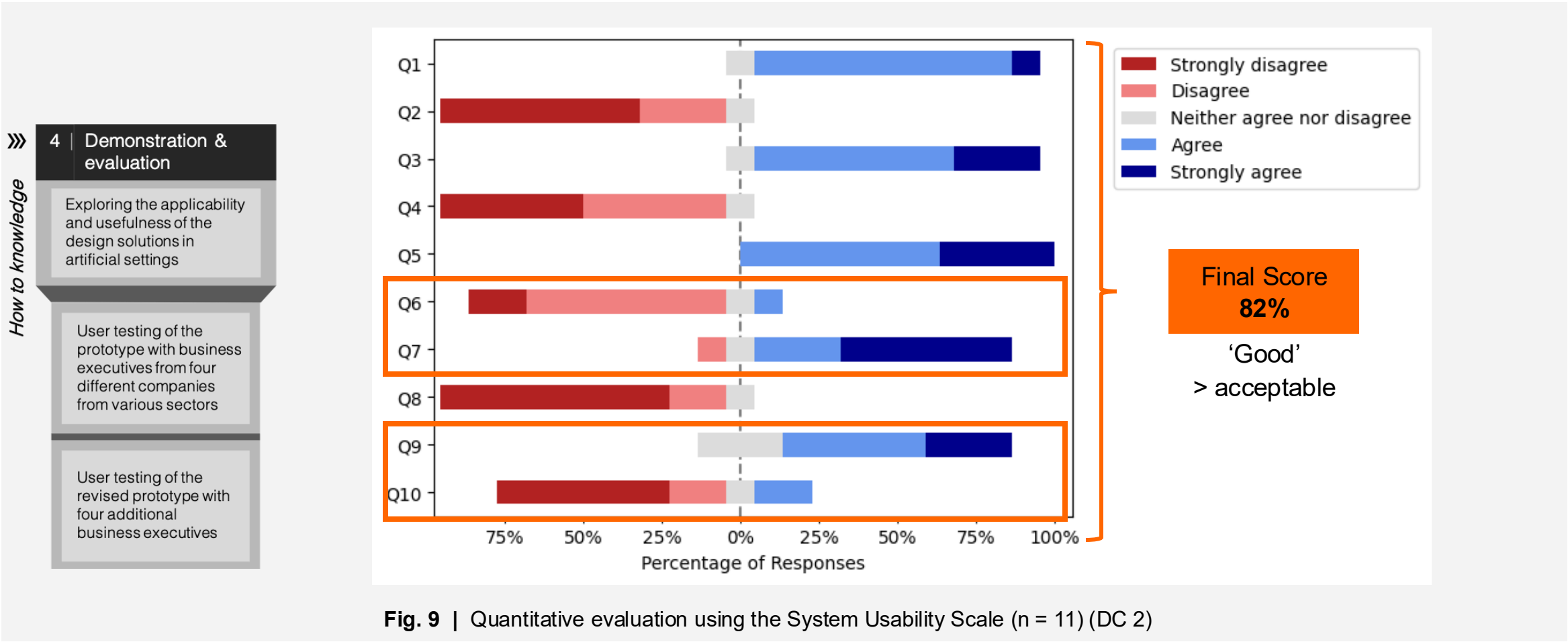


Fig. 9 | Quantitative evaluation using the System Usability Scale (n = 11) (DC 2)



Our research contributes to DSR through ‘exaptation’

Main take-aways

Summary

- We build a **digital artefact** using Streamlit to assist workplace decision makers to more accurately predict the impact of EV workplace charging
- We designed, built, and evaluated the prototype through **two rigorous design & evaluation cycles**, collecting qual. + quant. data from eight case study partners (medium- to large-sized firms in Germany)
- With a total SUS score of 82%, we deemed the prototype as acceptable.
- Going forward, we will open-source the web application to the public.

Contribution to theory

- Decision type: ‘**Decision support system**’
 - Guiding workplace decision makers with building and operating EV workplace charging infrastructure
- Core contribution through ‘**exaptation**’, i.e. repurposing existing optimisation algorithms for dedicated applications in workplace charging decision contexts

Selected quotes: perceived usefulness

*"I actually find this **really useful**. Because I think a lot of companies still have no real idea of the challenges that come with electrification in general, and with reducing CO₂ emissions. And just getting an overview of what's basically out there and how things can be optimised is, I think, a huge help for any company."*

Case study ID: **4a** [Pharma]

*"But it's just nice to be able to argue using valid data, and I **think data will become increasingly relevant** in the future anyway. And of course, all this information is something I'd otherwise have to gather myself with a lot of effort. Having it all from a single source—just entering my own values, which I already have—**that's a great solution.**"*

Case study ID: **2a** [Office supply manufacturer]



Q&A

*...and a special **'thank you'** to
my collaborators **Christoph** and **Marc-Fabian**
and my supervisors **Charlie** and **Christian***

Thank you for your attention!
Any Questions?



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Please **reach out** to discuss
potential further collaboration



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Semi-structured interview guide

Overview

Interview 1 (excerpt)

Introduction

- Decision Context and Scope
- Criteria Identification
- Stakeholder Involvement
- Information Gathering and Evaluation
- Decision-Making Challenges

Closing Questions

Interview 2 (excerpt)

Introduction

- First impressions of web application
- Ease of use
- Information visualisation
- Real-world applicability
- Decision support
- Improvement and feedback

Closing Questions



We benchmark each model type against uncontrolled charging (UCC) [%Δ]

Approach: Outlining four-step structure

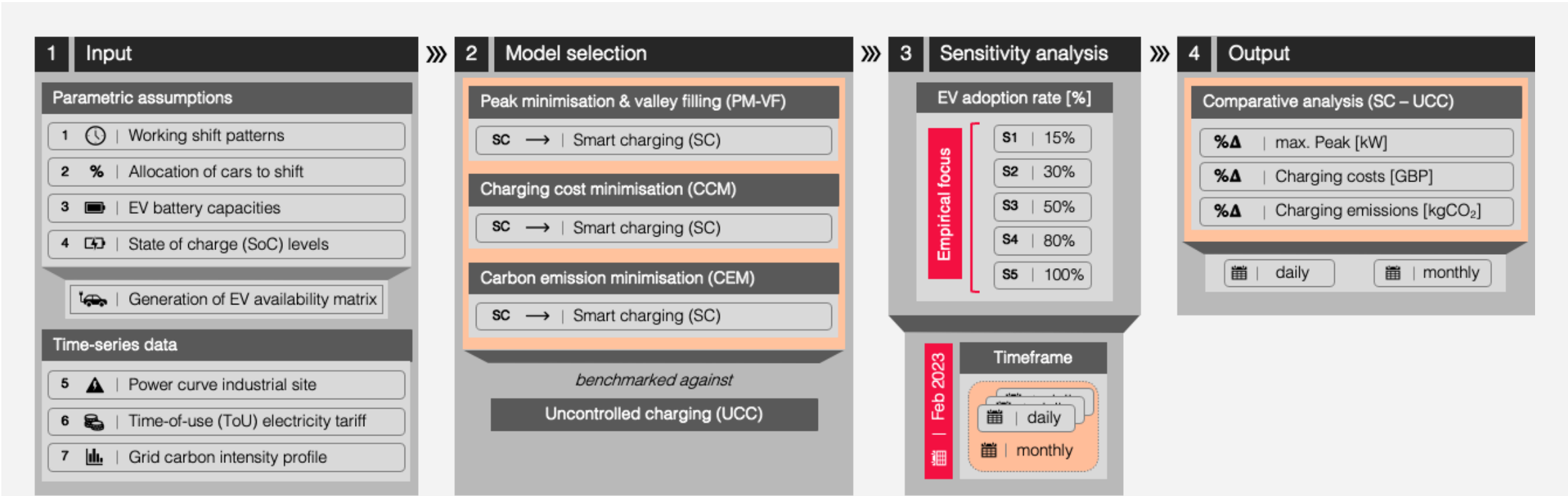


Fig. A1 | Schematic overview of our modelling framework. **Step 1:** Specification of input parameters. **Step 2:** Selection of model, assessing (i) peak minimisation & valley filling (PM-VF), (ii) charging cost minimisation (CCM), or carbon emission minimisation (CEM). **Step 3:** Sensitivity analysis with varying EV adoption rates [%] and temporal scale. **Step 4:** Computation of model results for each objective function in relative terms (%Δ).



Each model pursues a different optimisation goal, yet w/ identical constraints

Methods: Drawing from operations research (OR)

Peak min. & valley filling (PM-VF):

$$\min z_{PM-VF} = \sum_{t \in T} (P_t + y_t - C)^2$$

Charging cost min. (CCM):

$$\min z_{CCM} = \sum_{t \in T} y_t * \lambda_t$$

Carbon emission min. (CEM):

$$\min z_{CEM} = \sum_{t \in T} y_t * \gamma_t$$

$$[1] \quad s.t. \quad y_t = \sum_{m \in M} x_{mt} f_{mt} \quad \forall t \in T$$

Total charging load

$$[2] \quad -p_{max} \leq x_{mt} \leq p_{max} \quad \forall t \in T; m \in M$$

Charging power restrictions

$$[3] \quad 0 \leq E_m^{ini} + \sum_{k \in T | k \leq t} x_{mk} f_{mk} \leq E_m^{cap} \quad \forall t \in T; m \in M$$

Battery capacity restrictions

$$[4] \quad E_m^{fin} = E_m^{ini} + \sum_{k \in T | k \leq t} x_{mk} f_{mk} \geq E_{T+1} \quad \forall t \in T; m \in M$$

Minimum state-of-charge (SoC) requirement

$$[5] \quad 0 = x_{mt} (1 - f_{mt}) \quad \forall t \in T; m \in M$$

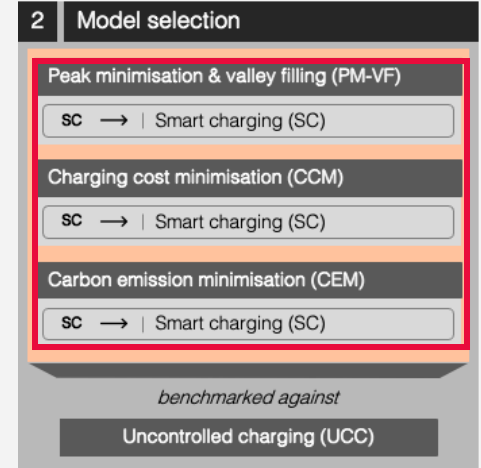
Logical operator ensuring car availability

$$C = \frac{\max(P_t) + \min(P_t)}{2}$$

Constant C

$$f_{mt} = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if EV } m \in M \text{ is parked at workplace at time } t \in T, \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Definition of car availability matrix



C	Average of peak and minimum power consumption of building
E_{T+1}	Energy needed for next trip
E_m^{cap}	Battery capacity of EV m
E_m^{fin}	Final battery energy of EV m
E_m^{ini}	Initial battery energy of EV m
F	EV presence matrix
M	Set of EVs
N	Set of time intervals
P_{di}	Power consumption of building in interval i
$Q^{(i)}$	Set of intervals prior to interval i
T_m	Charging/discharging period of EV m
m	Electric vehicle (EV)
p_{max}	Maximum charging or discharging power
t_m^{arr}	Arrival time of EV m
t_m^{dep}	Departure time of EV m
x_{mi}	Charging/discharging power of EV m in interval i
y_i	Total load for charging/discharging the available EVs in interval i
i	Time interval

For further references, see [19, 30].



Each model pursues a different optimisation goal, yet w/ identical constraints

Methods: Drawing from operations research (OR)

Peak min. & valley filling (PM-VF):

$$\min z_{PM-VF} = \sum_{t \in T} (P_t + y_t - C)^2$$

Charging cost min. (CCM):

$$\min z_{CCM} = \sum_{t \in T} y_t * \lambda_t$$

Carbon emission min. (CEM):

$$\min z_{CEM} = \sum_{t \in T} y_t * \gamma_t$$

$$C = \frac{\max(P_t) + \min(P_t)}{2}$$

Mathematical Objective Function
Minimising the least square difference:

$$\min z_{PM-VF} = \sum_{t \in T} (P_t + y_t - C)^2$$

2 Model selection

Peak minimisation & valley filling (PM-VF)

SC → | Smart charging (SC)

Charging cost minimisation (CCM)

SC → | Smart charging (SC)

Carbon emission minimisation (CEM)

SC → | Smart charging (SC)

benchmarked against

Uncontrolled charging (UCC)

Fig. A2 | Schematic power curve. Figure taken from [5].



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