ATLAS
ASSOCIATION FOR TOURISM
AND LEISURE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Destinations past, present and future

ATLAS Reflections 2017

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Introduction

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Dear ATLAS members

In this report I refer back to the successful 2016 Canterbury conference, introduce the upcoming conference in Portugal and discuss some new developments, challenges and prospects of ATLAS.

2016 Canterbury conference

Canterbury Christ Church University has taken great pleasure in hosting the ATLAS Annual Conference in September 2016. 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of ATLAS, therefore the conference brought together many old and current ATLAS members as well as welcomed new and non-members to the ATLAS family. The main conference theme was 'Tourism, Lifestyles and Locations'. I would like to thank the Canterbury team and especially Lorna Thomas for organizing this excellent conference.

2017 Viana do Castelo

The 2017 Conference will take place between 12th and 15th September 2017 at the campus of the School of Technology and Management. The Conference will be organised by the Tourism Laboratory, headed by Carlos Fernandes. The conference theme is 'Destinations past, present and future'. Destinations are increasingly produced, consumed and negotiated between tourists and actors kin the places they visit. These trends link to wider debates about the production of space and place, and the rise of new localities in a globalizing world. Destinations increasingly need to deal with the rise of new tourist spaces, changes in the tourism distribution chain and growing competition from other destinations.

This conference seeks to develop new perspectives not only on the challenges affecting the future of destinations worldwide, but also on strategies, practices and policies to sustain and /or develop the competitiveness of tourist destinations. The aim is to exchange and discuss ideas on critical areas of the development and management of tourist destinations in such a challenging context by tourism professionals and academics.

After 1997 and 2007, this is the third time ATLAS is visiting Viana do Castelo, and based on these previous experiences we anticipate a great conference and look forward to the hospitality of Carlos Fernandes and his team.

Challenges and prospects

In the last years a number of new developments took place. First, at the occasion of the 25th anniversary of ATLAS, we introduced in 2016 the first Volume of our new periodical, *ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review*. To improve our services to our members and conference participants, we have decided to start issuing *ATLAS Review*, which consists of thematically ordered collections of conference papers. We now have published 5 Reviews which all have become digitally available for members and are for sale to non-members via the ATLAS bookshop. Subsequent Volumes will follow shortly. With the launch of the *ATLAS Review* we

expect to have adequately addressed the many inquiries we received in the last years about possibilities to get conference papers published.

Second, the 2015 Lisbon conference was also the start of building an ATLAS chapter in Latin America. In Lisbon preparations were made for a first ATLAS conference in Brazil titled 'Tourism and Creativity: New Opportunities for Developing Latin America'. The 1st ATLAS Americas Conference was held in June, 2017, at the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco - UFPE, Recife/Brazil. The conference participants discussed how the links between creativity and tourism could be strengthened, generating steady growth to new and existing Latin American tourism destinations. In June 2018 Universidad Autónoma "Benito Juárez" de Oaxaca (Mexico) will host the second conference.

In June 2017 we also organised the 10th ATLAS Africa conference at Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya, focusing on 'Africa's Tourism and Travel Competitiveness: Opportunities and challenges'. The theme was selected on the premise that despite exponential growth of tourism in terms of earnings and visitor numbers, Africa still trails other continents in terms of tourist arrivals and receipts. More than 100 participants from Africa and abroad celebrated the fact that ATLAS Africa, founded in 2000, is still a vibrant community of scholars promoting leisure and tourism studies on the African continent. The 11th conference will be hosted by Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda) in June 2019.

Fourth, ATLAS will also resume their activities in Asia Pacific. We are very happy to organize an ATLAS Asia Pacific conference in Macau in March 2018. Our host will be the Institute for Tourism Studies. The conference will focus on the 'Nexus of Migration and Tourism: Creating Social Sustainability'. The Asia Pacific region has seen the fastest growing tourism development in the world. Despite rapid tourism economic development, and research into labour and employment such as economics and employment issues, research hasn't caught up to the rapidly changing issues, such as tourism linked migration and social and cultural aspects of sustainability. Thus, we invite you to discuss, reflect and develop upon issues pertaining to sustainability and the nexus of migration and tourism.

Finally we welcome a number of new Special Interest Groups (SIG) on 'Dark Tourism', on 'Heritage tourism and its related Education discourses and practices' and a third one on 'Space, Place, and Mobilities in Tourism'. SIGs have always been very instrumental towards achieving the goals of ATLAS and I am very happy that our call for new SIGS has been answered.

However, a number of things have not yet materialized. Unfortunately the Routledge - Taylor & Francis offer for ATLAS members (online access to 3 T&F journals per calendar year as a benefit of the membership) has not been very successful with only 3 subscriptions. Also webinars, the initiation of ATLAS Middle-East and a vibrant student section are still not brought to fruition. These and other new activities and prospects will be discussed during the Board and members meeting in Viana do Castelo and I welcome new ideas from and especially active participation of members to implement some of our plans.

A word of thanks

Finally, I first want to thank Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman for their work and support. Without them ATLAS would not last. Second, I would like to thank all conference, workshop and SIG organisers and Board members. Your enthusiasm and contributions are crucial for the future of ATLAS.

Unravelling the smartness of smart destinations

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Abstract

Smart tourism is a multi-disciplinary concept with multi-functional and multi-dimensional implications for both tourism professionals and researchers. Smart tourism has also become a buzzword in both academic and industry discussions, with a general confusion on what the term means and how it can be achieved. A general consensus on smart tourism and smart destinations does not exist, while technological shifts and advances continuously redefine smart tourism. This paper reviews a multi-disciplinary literature related to smart tourism in order to dismantle the concept of smart tourism and identify its constituent dimensions. Based on this review, the paper argues that a SDL approach is an appropriate approach for understanding and developing a useful roadmap for building smart destinations. In this vein, the paper proceeds by proposing and analysing a co-creation framework showing how destinations can be developed into smart destinations. The applicability of the arguments and the framework are explained by providing several examples of smart applications and smart tourism services developed by tourism destinations in order to enhance destination performance, competitiveness, sustainable tourism development but also well-being, quality of life and experiences for both tourists and local communities. The paper arguments are summarized in a table comparing and contrasting the concepts of smart tourism and e-tourism. The paper concludes by discussing the research and practical implications of the framework and providing directions for future research.

Introduction

Smart tourism has become a major buzzword in academic and industry discussions, as well as a strategic priority for sustainable tourism development in many regions. For example, The China National Tourism Administration has officially announced *"Beautiful China: 2014 Year of Smart Travel"* as tourism theme. The Internet of Things (IoT) technology is identified as the core technology driving the China's smart tourism strategy to make its tourism industry smart and convert Chinese cities to smart destinations. The E.U. and Korea are also investing a lot of money on supporting the development of smart destinations as a call to increase destination competitiveness, visitors' experiences and address problems created by exciding carrying capacity limits in overcrowded destinations. However, there is a lot of confusion about the concepts of smart tourism and destinations, as their evolution has been mainly driven by technology applications and advances as well as governmental initiatives, rather than a systematic theoretical research and underpinning about them. Suddenly, and without justification everything becomes and/or un-becomes 'smart' as soon as new technology advances emerge. These of course raises definitional questions and calls for better conceptualization and theoretical underpinning of the phenomenon. Thus, a critical look and systematic review about smart tourism and smart destinations is warranted.

To that end, this paper reviews a multi-disciplinary literature related to smart tourism in order to dismantle the concept of smart tourism and identify its constituent dimensions. Based on this review, the paper argues that a SDL approach is an appropriate approach for understanding and developing a useful roadmap for building smart destinations. In this vein, the paper proceeds by proposing and analysing a co-creation framework showing how destinations can be developed into smart destinations. The applicability of the arguments and the framework are explained by providing several examples of smart applications and

smart tourism services developed by tourism destinations in order to enhance destination performance, competitiveness, sustainable tourism development but also well-being, quality of life and experiences for both tourists and local communities. The paper arguments are summarized in a table comparing and contrasting the concepts of smart tourism and e-tourism. The paper concludes by discussing the research and practical implications of the framework and providing directions for future research.

Defining Smart in the Tourism context

Technological tools defining smart tourism

Numerus technological tools have been identified to drive smart tourism including: IoT, mobile communication, cloud computing, machine learning, robots, chatbox, Industrial Internet, near field communication, augmented and virtual reality, social networks, big data and analytics, sensors, RFID, and artificial intelligent technology (Liu & Fan, 2012; Zhang et al., 2012). However, as technology advances 'smart technologies become un-smart and new ones redefine the term. There has been not commonly agreed definition of what smart technologies are and what determines their smartness. Instead, authors have identified either: 1) the following outputs that smart technologies need to deliver in a tourism context namely experience (co)-creation, including information aggregation, ubiquitous mobile connectedness and real time synchronization (Neuhofer et al., 2015).; or 2) the capabilities and attributes of smart technologies that need to connect the physical infrastructure, information infrastructure, social infrastructure, and commercial infrastructure of tourism, and the supplies of smart tourism value to multiple stakeholders.

From a technological and information point of view, smartness has been used to define technologies and tools that are so connected and intelligent that they can become independent and autonomous entities being able to decide autonomous without any human intervention specifically about their self-sustaining and self-generation activities (Derzko, 2006; Debnath et al. 2014).

Figure 1
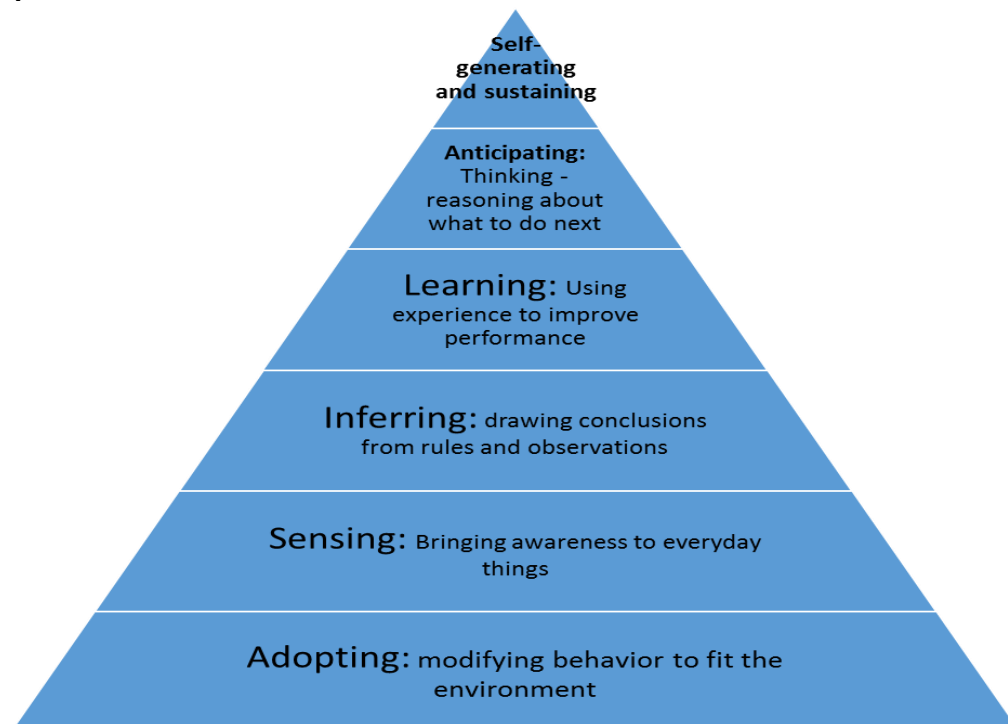
Source: Derzko (2006)

Figure 2

Predictive
preventive

Healing

communicating

controlling

processing

Sensing
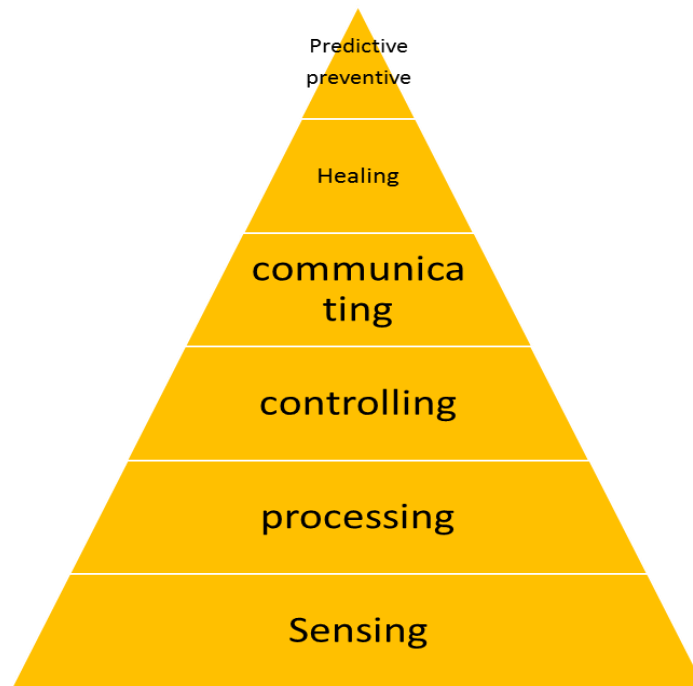
Source: Debnath et al (2014)

Technological applications defining smart tourism

Academic papers and industry best practices have identified numerous smart tourism applications defining smart tourism including: Advanced Traveler Information Systems (ATIS), Advanced Vehicle Control Systems (AVCS), Advanced Commercial Vehicle Operation (ACVO), and Electronic Toll Collection System (ETC), context-location based marketing applications, mobile apps, intelligent parking applications, bike sharing schemes, augmented reality enriching tourism experiences. There are numerous examples of smart tourism applications:

- Seoul City Tour Bus stops equipped with beacon technology that offer targeted information in four different languages
- Singapore implemented a "Digital Concierge Programme," one of the key programs of Singapore's "iN2015" plan, which allows visitors to access mobile tourism services anytime and anywhere.
- Korea has developed a mobile tourist information service system called" I TOUR SEOUL."
- A steam boat ski resort in Colorado has designed a guest tracking system using RFID technology in 2005.The mountain resort area of Pennsylvania has introduced the RFID wristband system.
- London once launched an intelligent guide system and provides numerous personalised and customised smart phone applications, e.g. http://www.visitlondon.com/traveller-information/getting-around-london/london-maps-and-guides/apps#wejWIbDu3wRCVbMD.97
- Belgium is implementing a "Tag Tag City" program
- Tasmania tracks visitors' itineraries and visits in the island and uses data to understand visitor's behaviour, preferences, itineraries and do better market segmentation and tourism product development: e.g. https://tasmania.tourismtracer.com/paths-through-state
- Dublin has developed the most sophisticated smart mobility scheme that collects and analyses Big Data streaming in from an array of sources – bus timetables, inductive-loop traffic detectors, and closed-circuit television cameras, GPS updates that each of

the city's 1,000 buses transmits every 20 seconds for supporting: real time traffic monitoring and management; but also Predictive analytics solving problems such as: *Where should we add bus lines? What are the optimum start times and start locations? How can we take proactive steps to improve a traffic jam we know is about to occur?*

    − San Diego has developed a smart and augmented parking mobile application and online service (**ParkItDTSD** short for Park It Downtown San Diego) that breaks down those silos, <u>bringing all of the data together, the very definition of a smart city service.</u> Each lot owner or service has kept the parking data to themselves, but this smart application connects all stakeholders together and consolidates and analyses data into one application to eliminate waste of resources, synchronizes best practices and enhance visitors' experiences. A network of sensors monitors whether a parking spot is available or not and helpful tips within the service tell people where and how long they can park for free. The San Diego service also adds augmented reality wayfinding since a parking spot may not be available right next to their destination. The service overlays directions over a live camera view to guide people from their parking spot

Smart tourism applications are mushrooming taking advantage of the latest smart technology advances. But where is the limit and criteria for defining and/or dis-qualifying a smart tourism applications as smart? Again, the literature does not provide any consensus or specific definition. However, one could classify smart tourism applications into the following three broad areas based on the outputs that they aim to achieve and the stage of the tourism experience that they influence:

1. Enhanced, meaningful and personalised visitors' experiences aiming to:
   - ➢ <u>Enrich experience </u>(e.g. virtual and augmented reality applications, smart touch walls) with more information at attractions through the use of technology
   - ➢ <u>Improve satisfaction </u>with more activities as tourists now want to "do," not just "see"
   - ➢ Strengthen overall industry with more <u>repeat visits and positive online reviews</u>
2. Seamless transport and travel services (e.g. translation apps, smart parking, sharing cycling platforms/schemes, integrated transport solutions) for visitors aiming to:
   - ➢ Improved nation-wide navigation system to encourage <u>visit to under-explored destinations</u>
   - ➢ Encourage <u>longer stays </u>as inter-region travels become easier
   - ➢ <u>Optimisation of resources</u>: smart parking, mobility sharing schemes
3. Convenient planning, booking, and payment applications (e.g. destination smart cards, digital payment options, SoCoMo marketing applications) aiming to:
   - ➢ <u>Increase spending </u>with more payment options
   - ➢ Allow attractions to develop more chargeable activities with facilitated payment
   - ➢ Improve personalization, safety and convenience of tourists– e.g. less need to carry cash

Smart cities defining smart tourism

Smart tourism is conceptualized as one of the goals of building smart cities. Thus, the approach of smart tourism is derived from the concept of smart cities and aims for improving public issues through ICT-based solutions and "multi-stakeholder, municipal partnerships" (Maniville et al. 2014, p. 9). As cities have become more competitive and complex, ICT helps to address common issues by coordinating different activities and services. One main goal of smart cities is to increase the living standard for its citizens by better informing and engaging them (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). Boes et al. claim that smart cities are developed with special focus on leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation, social capital, and human capital as the most fundamental constructs (Boes, Buhalis, & Inversini, 2015, p. 395).

There are numerous definitions of smart cities (Table 1) but all of them identify smart tourism as a core component and ultimate outcome of smart cities.

Table 1: Definitions of smart cities

Caragliu et al. (2011)	"when investments in human and social capital and traditional (transport) and modern (ICT) communication infrastructure fuel sustainable economic growth and a high quality of life, with a wise management of natural resources, through participatory governance
Harrison et al (2010)	a smart city connects its physical infrastructure with its ICT, social and business infrastructures to leverage the collective intelligence of the city
Piro et al (2014)	A healthy digital ecosystem that includes information-centric ICT platforms, sensor networks and wireless communication systems forms the fundamental base for such integration and data exchange
Cohen (2012)	Smart city wheel: smart governance, smart environment, smart mobility, smart economy, smart people, and smart living

Thus, efficiency and sustainability, transparent, open and inclusive governance are the critical drivers but also desired outputs of the smart city movement. What all these definitions also share is that smart cities should include the following **<u>critical components:</u>**
- intelligent interactions between the city and its inhabitants
- Innovative use of technologies to achieve resource optimization, effective and fair governance, sustainability and quality of life

Smart destinations defining smart tourism

Thus, the approach of smart cities has been transferred to the context of tourism destinations by several authors. Since tourism destinations are "initiated out of smart cities" (Zhu, Zhang, & Li, 2014), Boes et al. claim that "Smart Tourism Destinations should be built on top of the constructs of Smart Cities" (Boes et al., 2015, p. 399). Buhalis & Amaranggana (2013) state that a smart destination dynamically interconnects stakeholders through a technological platform, which supports the instant exchange of relevant information related to tourism activities instantly, to improve the resource management and to maximize the destination's competitiveness as well as the customer satisfaction. The concept underlines that information sharing plays a crucial role in smart tourism destinations. Gretzel et al. confirm that smart tourism can be seen as a "logical progression from traditional tourism to more recently e-tourism" (Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang, & Koo, 2015, p. 180). The manifold roles of ICT in tourism refer to operational, structural and strategic issues of managing a destination such as developing product innovations or attraction and retention of visitors (Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2012). With technological advancements the amount of available information resources has increased. In order to exploit such data and to turn it into business value-propositions, smart destinations collect, exchange and process data (Gretzel et al., 2015, p. 181).

There are numerous definitions of smart destinations (Table 2) all of them consistent with definitions of smart cities as they identify: the necessary technological tools and infrastructure; the desired outputs to be achieved in terms of resource efficiencies, effectiveness, transparent and participatory destination governance, quality of life and visitors' experiences.

For example, smart tourism is argued to include intelligent service, intelligent business, intelligent management, and intelligent governance (Yao, 2012), while developing smart

tourism requires eight systems: including institution, infrastructure, information resources, application support, application, service, regulations, and standardized norms, as well as the operation and maintenance of information security. Similarly, China established the Smart Tourist Service Center in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu Province, with approval from the National Tourism Administration. The center aims at enhancing the development of China's smart tourism, supporting the research, development, and promotion of smart tourism software and other related sections, and providing industrial support and technical services for the construction of smart tourism cities. The Overall Proposal for China's Smart Tourist Service Center indicates that the IoT technologies, such as sensing, wireless, and ad hoc networks, will completely change the production-consumption pattern of traditional information. And the involvement of the tourism IoT will construct a smart tourist information service network within which, people and society can perceive each other (Ding, 2012).

Table 2: Definitions of smart destinations

Authors	Definition
Vicini et al. (2012); Buhalis and Amaranggana (2014)	cities in which the massive use of technology allows to coordinate all activities, information and services in real time, interconnect all local organizations, and improve urban efficiency
Lopez de Avila, 2015	an innovative tourist destination, built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology guaranteeing the sustainable development of tourist areas, accessible to everyone, which facilitates the visitor's interaction with and integration into his or her surroundings, increases the quality of the experience at the destination, and improves residents' quality of life.
Presenza et al. 2014; Boes 2015	a tourism destination in which new technologies are so extensively embedded to influence tourism experiences, enhance destinations' competitiveness and favour tourism development projects
Zhang et al. (2012); Wang et al. (2013)	the intensive use of technology by means of an IT platform that integrates information on tourism with information on consumption and use of resources (cfr. smart tourism systems by Zhu et al. 2014), fosters the co-created tourism experiences, improving the effectiveness of DMO communications strategies, and enhances the competitiveness of destinations
Lamsfus and Alzua-Sorzabal (2013)	a destination in which "the investments in human and social capital, traditional transport, and modern ICT communication infrastructure meet the social, cultural, economic, leisure and personal needs of visitors
Lopez de Avila (2015)	an innovative tourist destination, built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology guaranteeing the sustainable development of tourist areas, accessible to everyone, which facilitates interaction with the visitor and integration into his or her surroundings, increases the quality of the experience at the destination, and improves residents' quality of life"i.e. the short term citizens of a smart city''.

Defining smart tourism: A value co-creation approach

Smart is about everything: the interconnection, synchronization and concerted use of networks, hardware, software, to take real-time and pro-active optimal decisions (Washburn et al. 2010; Harrison et al., 2010). In this components, one should also include the infoware and humanware consisting smart information systems, since data have become the oil of the new economy, big data analytics the critical component for taking intelligent decisions and enabling 'smart' systems to become autonomous decision-making units and social capital and the soft skills of human actors the engine driving the use and development of smart tourism. Taking all the above into account, Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang and Koo (2015, p. 8) defined smart tourism as *tourism supported by integrated efforts at a destination to find innovative ways to collect and aggregate/harness data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organizational sources and human bodies/minds in combination with the use of advanced technologies to transform that data into enhanced experiences and business value-propositions with a clear focus on efficiency, sustainability and enriched experiences during the trip*.

Thus, beside the classical approach to cooperative destination marketing, collaboration and pooling resources is also gaining new importance in the field of smart destination concepts. Thus, what all approaches to defining smart in the tourism context include and imply that is important can be summarised into the following input-process-output framework based on a SDL and co-creation approach, because all of these approaches to defining smart tourism have identified the need to use socio-technical systems to enable multiple tourism stakeholders to share and exchange resources (i.e. information, know-how, software-as-a-service etc.) for co-creating smart tourism services.

INPUTS
- Real time data
- Technology infrastructure and tools
- Stakeholders

VALUE CO-CREATION PROCESSES
- Interactions and interconnections
- Co-creation
- Knowledge exchanges – sharing

OUTPUTS
- Urban efficiency, development – planning
- Efficient and effective use of resources
- Destination competitiveness and sustainability
- Effectiveness communication - marketing
- Tourism experiences: meaningful, context and big data driven, technology augmented
- Quality of life

Figure 3: Smart Tourism: a value co-creation framework
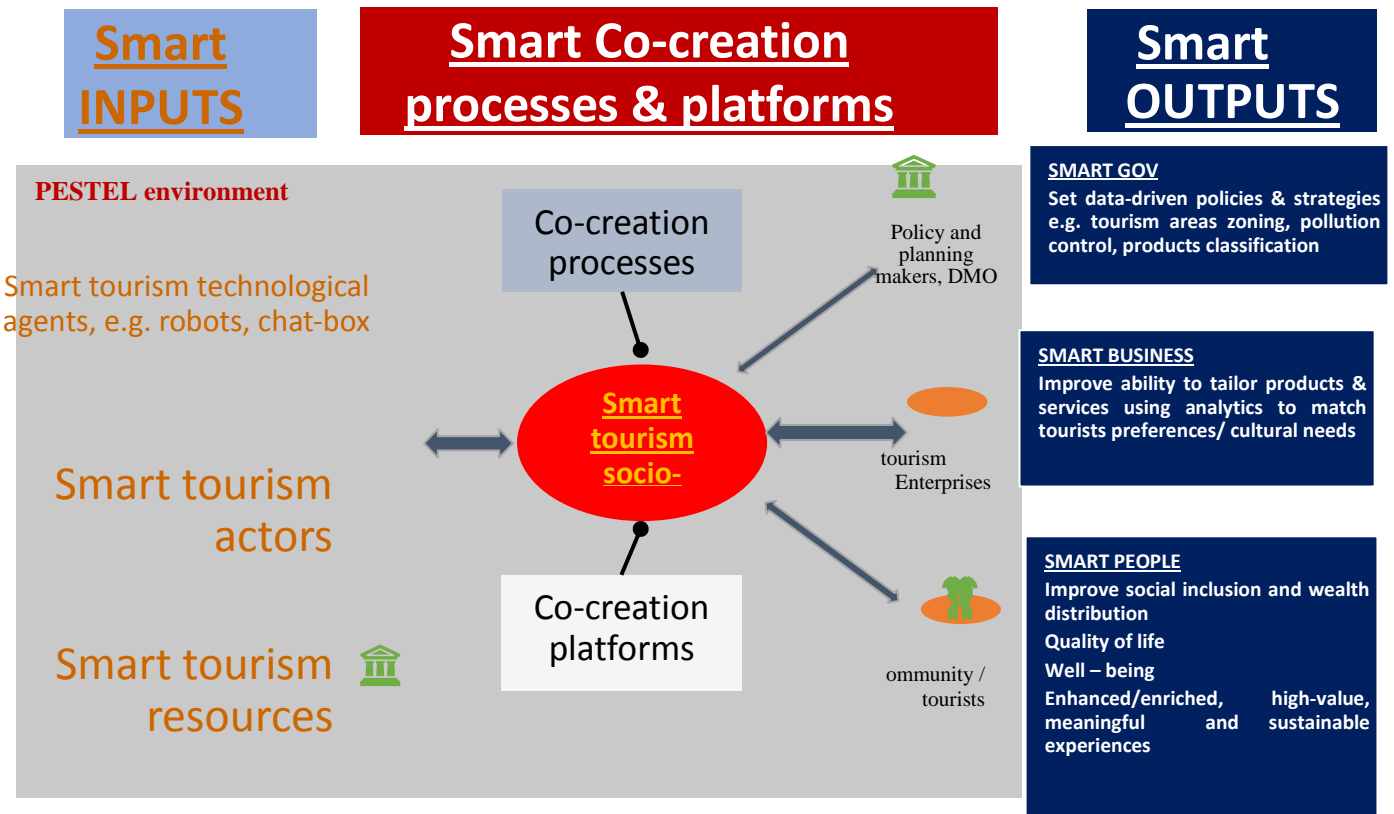
INPUTS of smart tourism destinations
Smartness is strengthen when developing tourism applications that combine tech with destination elements (Buhalis and Amaranggana, 2014)

Three component to convert tourism resources to smart tourism resources:
- Physical components
- Smart components (e.g. software, sensors, big data, cloud, IoT): they amplify the value and capabilities of the physical components. Smart components enable tourism resources to become independent intelligent entities
- Connectivity components (e.g. antenas, the cloud, internet, wi-fi etc.): Connectivity amplifies the capabilities and value of the smart components and enables some of them to exist outside the physical product itself. Smart tourism resources can develop various types of connectivity: One-to-one; One-to-many; Many-to-many; Vertical; Horizontal; Diagonal. Smart connectivity redefines industry value chains, industry entry barriers and competition. Based on their level of connectivity tourism resources can be: smart tourism resources; Smart connected tourism resource; Smart connected tourism system; Smart connected system of a system

Example: how bicycles in sharing schemes can become smart or how tourism attractions can become smart

Smart tourism actors as a resource in the smart tourism value co-creation system can include:
- Tourism stakeholders e.g. private, public and non-for-profit organisations
- Tourists themselves as active participants in the tourism industry. Smart tourists that use their personal technologies to tap into the resources of this smart tourism ecosystem and also actively contribute data through their movements, queries and

content uploads are also included as key species in the ecosystem, among other players such as government, residents and media.
- Smart tech agents such as anthropomorphic robots, chat box, machine learning, artificial intelligence etc.

However, it is not only about the type and quality (soft skills, knowledge, skills and competencies) of the actors being involved in value co-creation, but also the social capital connecting these social actors and the ties and bonds enabling them to link with each other, build trust and exchange and integrate resources for co-creating value.

One should be open and creative on who can be activated as a productive smart tourism actor. For example, the London's variety of apps builds on the foundation it developed in advance of its Summer Olympics when it invited **hackers** to dream up **solutions to issues** travelers were likely to have (http://hackathoncentral.com/winners_winter_2012/)

The inclusion of tourists as active actors of value co-creation is heavily debated in the literature. However, the inclusion of smart technology agents as active actors in co-creating tourism value is limitedly research despite the increasing adoption of robots, chatbox and other tech agents in online and offline tourism production systems. The use of tech agents has also risen several questions for which future research is required:
- What are the legal and ethical responsibilities of tech agents?
- How humans interact and perceive tech agents?
- What are the service expectations and evaluations of tech agents?
- Tech agents substituting Vs complimenting human labour?
- Impacts on employment levels, patterns, skills?

Examples: Austin, Texas became one of the first cities to develop a pilot program to regulate delivery robots. Under Austin's ordinance, delivery robots must operate on sidewalks and pedestrian ways, must weigh 136kg (300lbs) or less, and operate no greater than 16/kmh (10/mph). Drone deliveries, air traffic controls and privacy issues: (Cambridge, United Kingdom) Amazon, UPS; Uber Eats; KFC; Pizza Hut

SMART TOURISM CO-CREATION: PROCESSES AND PLATFORMS

Co-creation engagement platforms

Smart tourism has been widely defined as a socio-technical ecosystem enabling tourism stakeholders to exchange information and services for co-creating value (e.g. Gretzel et al., 2015; Beritelli et al. 2007, 2014, Baggio and Del Chiappa 2013, 2014). Gretzel, Werthner, Koo and Lamsfus (2015) further argue that smart business networks form an integral part of the smart tourism system. Together with the destination and the smart technology infrastructure, they form a smart tourism ecosystem. Gretzel et al. (2015) define the smart tourism ecosystem as a tourism system that takes advantage of smart technology in creating, managing and delivering intelligent touristic services/experiences and is characterized by intensive information sharing and value co-creation. Collecting, processing and exchanging tourism-relevant data is a core function within the smart tourism ecosystem (Zhang, 2012).

Ecosystems are required to have (Boley & Chang, 2007): interaction/engagement; balance; loosely coupled actors with shared goals; self-organization
Digital ecosystems are also defined as (Bajarin, 2011): open, flexible, demand-driven, interactive networked architecture and collaborative environments; a "complex of a community of digital devices and their environment functioning as a whole"; comprised of different hardware, software and services; interactions among technological agents (devices,

databases, programs, etc.) and respective information flows; Interconnections through technology that enables system interoperability and dynamic information exchange.
Based on these the functions and roles of the socio-technical smart tourism ecosystem are:

- Enable stakeholders/actors interactions
- Symbiotic inter-relations for individual and shared value co-creation (value co-creation Vs value co-destruction)
- Support resource exchanges and integration (e.g. information, data, computing power, data storage etc.)
- Data collection, processing and communication capabilities

Smart tourism ecosystems should have the following attributes (Werthner, 2003) Openness with respect to actors, resources and services; trust; scalability; dynamic in order to enable creativity, collaboration, and community building necessary constituents for supporting and fostering value co-creation

Similarly, the SDL defines s*ervice ecosystems* as "relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource-integrating actors connected by shared institutional arrangements and mutual value creation through service exchange" (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 161). Moreover, based on a SDL, the socio-technical systems provide actors a platform and the connections to link in order to exchange, share and integrate resources for value co-creation. However, the connections represent *service-for-service exchange*, rather than just connections of resources, people, or product flows; thus, in S-D logic, network actors are linked by common, dynamic processes (service provision). Secondly, the actors are defined not only in terms of this service provision (resources applied for benefit) but also in terms of *the resource-integration activities* that the service exchange affords. Finally, the *network has a purpose*, not in the sense of *collective intent* but rather in the sense of individual *survival/wellbeing*, as a partial *function of collective wellbeing.*

In addition, when zooming out from dyadic interactions and discreet transactions, the first thing noticed is that these dyadic interactions do not take place in isolation, but rather within networks of actors, of which the dyad is just a part. Thus, service ecosystems have been seen and they are analysed at various *levels of aggregation* (e.g., macro, *meso*, micro). Micro networks represent dyadic exchanges amongst actors; meso networks represent exchanges amongst multiple actors and links; and macro networks represent the wider socio-cultural, legal and economic environment within which the other networks co-exist. Thus, service ecosystems are open multi-level systems inter-relating with each other and affecting each other as well as co-existing into a wider socio-cultural, legal and economic environment. Thus, several studies in SDL (e.g. Vargo and Lusch (2016) are emphasising the role of *institutions* and *institutional arrangements* as co-ordinating mechanisms for facilitating resource integration and service-for-service exchange activities within service ecosystems. Institutions are the humanly devised rules, norms, and beliefs that enable and constrain action and make social life at least somewhat predictable and meaningful (Scott, 2008), what North (1990) calls "rules of the game." Institutional arrangements refer to higher-order assemblages of interrelated institutions (sometimes referred to as "institutional logics").

Value co-creation does not only take place according to the current institutions and institutional arrangements, but the former also re-defines and challenges existing institutions. Similarly, smart tourism co-creation processes need institutions to facilitate resources exchanges, but they also re-define and require the transformation of current institutions for facilitating smart value co-creation: e.g. what is the legal and ethical implications of using robots in services? What are the privacy legal requirements and implications of using drones for food delivery?

Key questions emerging and requiring further research include:
- How do tourism smart ecosystems assemble?
- How tourism smart ecosystems adapt and evolve?
- How smart tourism ecosystems create new tourism markets? How can one measure the market plasticity of smart tourism ecosystems?
- What determines the resiliency of smart tourism ecosystems in dynamic technological, socio-cultural, economic and legal environments?
- How do smart tourism ecosystems innovate and how do they foster market emergence?
- How can smart tourism service(s) be integrated and fostered by smart tourism ecosystems?
- What are the institutions and institutional arrangements that allow smart tourism ecosystems to hold together and function?
- How smart tourism ecosystems foster, enable and create new institutions and institutional arrangements?

Value co-creation processes

Value co-creation processes can be: 1) firm-centric co-creation acts initiated by firms along their value chain whereby the citizens and other stakeholders are invited to participate and contribute and 2) actor-centric co-creation acts initiated by the actors themselves and in which firms are enabled to participate.

Example of 1: Boston bump app application for identifying and maintaining road infrastructure: a driver opens up the app. The phone's accelerometer detects when a bump is hit, while the GPS determines location. The information is sent off into a larger data stream of information from Street Bump users. When enough people hit a big bump in the same spot, the app recognizes it as a pothole.

Example of 2: https://www.waze.com/: a community-based traffic and navigation app. Citizens share their own data about traffic on a community-owned platform and a community-developed map.

Outputs: value co-creation

Smart tourism can results in value for three major stakeholders: policy and planning decision makers and DMOs: tourism organisations; and local communities and visitors. Value co-creation processes may create value for one actor but destroy value for another actor (Figure 1). Thus, instead of value co-creation processes, the term value formation is a better term capturing both the negative and positive value outcomes of value co-formation processes. Value co-creation and co-destruction can happen simultaneously because value is phenomenologically and subjectively evaluated (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). From a service ecosystem approach, it is also understood that the benefit (value) realized by an actor (e.g., a "customer") does not occur in isolation but within a network of actors and interactions.

So, smart tourism co-creation needs to answers the following questions: value with whom? But also value for whom?

Figure 4: smart tourism outputs: value is phenomenologically defined and subjectively evaluated by every actor
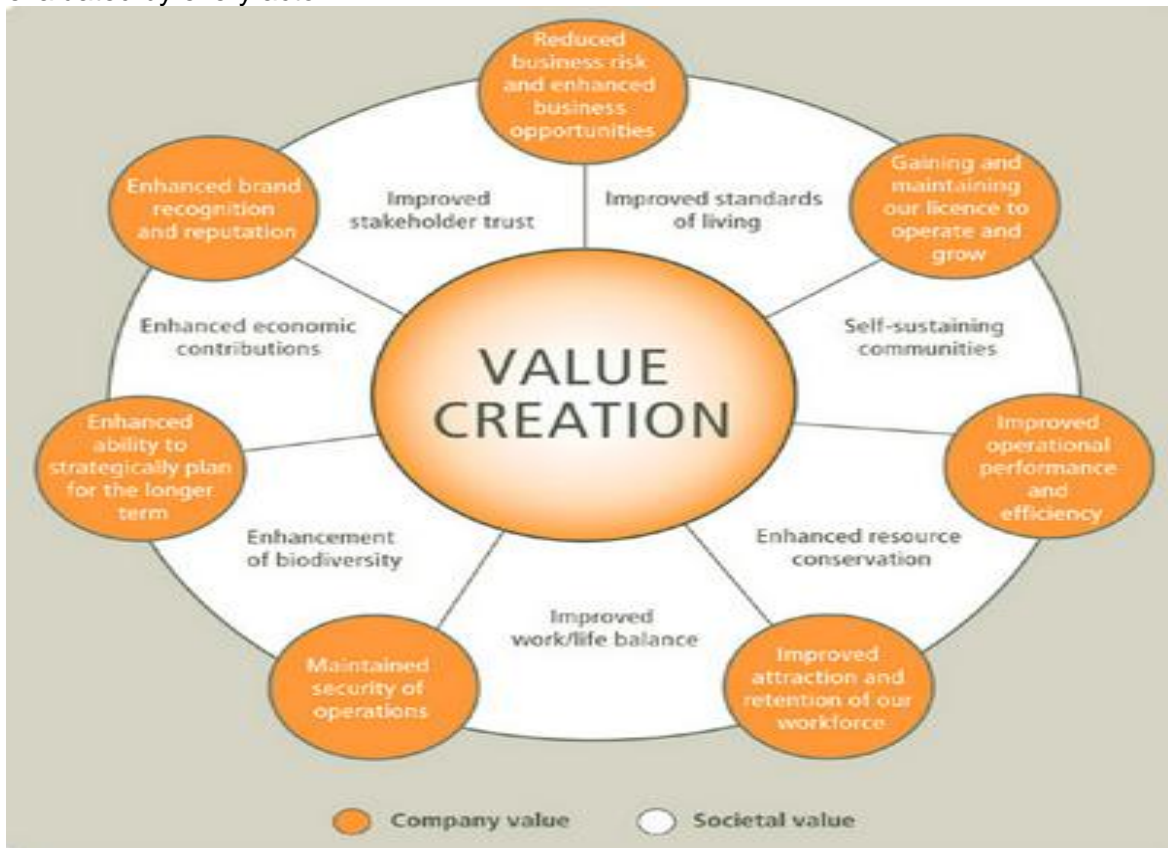
Activation and support of smart tourism ecosystems: facilitating factors

Smart tourism ecosystems is not a technology system. To develop smart tourism ecosystem and to ensure that it can be activated so that actors will have the capacity and wiliness to connect, exchange resources and co-create value, destinations need to build:
- Soft smart-ness: collaboration, innovation, leadership
- Hard smartness: technology infrastructure, technology tools, data -open data

As Boes et al. (2015) claim, smartness is often connected with innovative and transformative changes enabled via ICT. However, socio-technical aspects such as the human and social capital should not be neglected. Best practice examples show that smart places have not only introduced a state-of-the-art technology but have also enabled their citizens to create innovative ideas that are driven by the human capital (Boes et al., 2015, p. 399). Coleman (1988) defines human capital as the embodiment of skills and knowledge that are developed by an individual.

Numerous authors (Caragliu et al. 2011; Nam and Pardo, 2011; Lombardi et al. 2012; Caragliu et al. 2009; Boes et al. 2015; Sigala, 2015) claim that smart cities and destinations require: Innovation, creativity, human capital, knowledge workforce (intellectual capital – big data skills), collaborative spaces, entrepreneurship and social capital, relationships and interconnections

In this vein, to activate smart tourism ecosystems one should invest on:

- **Human capital:** education system, knowledgeable citizens, digital skills
- **Leadership:** bottom-up Vs top-down, a hub connecting ideas and stakeholders
- **Social capital:** collaborative networks, participative approach, innovation ecosystems, community engagement, partnerships
- **Entrepreneurship and innovation:** living labs, innovation competition, hackathons, grassroot innovation, participatory urbanism (co-creation of city smartness by its citizens)
- **ICT infrastructure:** applications/e-services/business models, infrastructure (wi-fi, cloud computing, urban platforms/sensors), open data / intelligent data

Conclusion

Smart tourism is not a simple multi-disciplinary concept enabling open innovation from various field. Smart tourism should be perceived as an anti-disciplinary concept that enables creative and disruptive innovation.

Table 3. Comparing and contrasting e-tourism and smart tourism

	e-Tourism	Smart Tourism
Focus-objects	connected actors, tourism resources	connected, intelligent, autonomous actors – tourism resources
Sphere	digital	bridging digital & physical
Core technology	websites	Sensors, smart devices, cloud computing, industrial internet, IoT, RFID, Big Data, Machine learning,
Travel phase	pre- & post-travel	during trip, seamless experience
Lifeblood	information	big data, machine learning
Paradigm	interactivity	technology-mediated co-creation
Structure	value chain/intermediaries	ecosystem
Exchange	B2B, B2C, C2C	public-private-consumer collaboration, tech agents
Value	economic	economic, social, environmental

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Co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions

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A study on the co-creation practice of (reciprocal) value propositions between B2B focussed event companies and their clients

Introduction

1. Value in the event industry

In the rapidly evolving landscape of value offerings within the service industries, the concept of value propositions has been given more attention. Value propositions can be seen as an unique set of offerings that create competitive advantage. Contemporary marketing and event design has identified that the use and function of value propositions go beyond their function in marketing plans or strategic documents. They have become a tool to communicate and ultimately, to create value. However, little is known on the importance of value propositions in the context of event management nor on the use and function of value propositions as an innovative communication tool to create value between event owners (the initiator) and event companies (the organiser) in a B2B context. This research identifies value propositions and evaluates the practice of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions between B2B focussed event companies and their client in order to conclude on the significance of value propositions for the event industry.

Why value propositions?

In times of economic challenges, the first cuts are made in outsourced service. Incentives, exhibitions and (corporate) events depend heavily on these budget decisions, leaving event companies in a struggle to uphold their business. In these situations, corporate companies and large organisations choose not to hire an event company because of the cost or because they have their own in-house facilities. Clients often question the effectiveness of live-communication and argue that budgets are still under pressure since the recession in 2000. In times of economic decline, innovative services emerge and new partnerships are established. This increased importance of value offering has a high impact on the fairly young event industry. Event companies need to explicitly communicate the value and uniqueness of their business. This calls for new steps to be taken for event companies to offer and communicate their (unique) expertise and create added value to future proof their business. Business models such as blueprints, canvases and value propositions design may give practical guidance on future steps to be taken to do business or to capture the shift from being competitors towards becoming partners in order to identify the current change in values and customer needs.

Value propositions identified

The concept of value is not easily identified, as it can have a psychological, social and economic meaning and impact. From an event perspective, the focus is on economic value or shareholders value. However, seen in the light of co-creation, value is most predominantly considered to be a social attribute influenced by collective action and interaction (Laamanen & Skålén, 2015). Creating or redesigning value propositions is considered to contribute to innovation and (re)directing the company's strategy (Payne & Frow, 2014; Ballentyne *et al.*,

2011, Osterwalder *et al.*, 2014, Skålén *et al.,* 2015). The process itself delivers value for all actors and although it can enable as well as limit interaction between actors, it is argued to lead towards exchange and renewal of knowledge, new products and services, relationship development, generating solutions and or resolving situations (Ballentyne *et al.*, 2011; Osterwalder *et al.*, 2014).

Value and the value creation process traditionally identified the company as the creator of the value process (Kotler, 2013; Porter, 1985; Treacy & Wiersma, 1995). However, the focus has shifted towards who and what determines value and how value is (co-) created. The creation of value is considered to be the core purpose and central process of economic exchange (Vargo *et al.*, 2008). In a marketing consumer context, value can be defined as features and benefits (Rihova, 2015). However, integrating the managerial perspective, value creation can be seen as a three staged process (O'Cass & Sok, 2012); value as an outcome or offering (proposed by Gummerus, 2013 as value determination), value as a creation process (value creation) or the exchange of value: value co-creation. This implies that value can be tailored, augmented and improved. Value is becoming a 'good', an intangible 'product' that can be created and exchanged. It underlines the need for more knowledge on how value can be captured, tailored and exchanged.

Despite this significant correlation with organisational performance, the concept of value propositions continues to be a highly unidentified field (Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Frow & Payne, 2011; Kowalskowski *et al.*, 2012; Skålén *et al.*, 2015). Research on the construction, creation and application of value propositions is scarce. Surprisingly, the actual *use* and *creation of* value propositions is even more limited. Less than 10% of the 200 companies questioned in a research by Frow and Payne (2014) neither formally develop, communicate nor use value propositions. Although many large companies *have* value propositions (Oden, 1999) they are often implicit or not formally stated (2010, Urquhart, cited in Payne & Frow, 2012). Studies on value proposition can be categorised in four parts: Value Propositions and reciprocity, Design Steps that lead towards co-creating value propositions, Design Preconditions needed in order to co-create and Design Elements, the complete anatomy of value propositions.

Co-creation and reciprocity

The concept of consumer co-creation can be explained as 'informed, connected, empowered and active consumers that are increasingly learning and extracting value from the industry's value creation process' (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 6). Value co-creation in a B2B context points towards mutual value creation and shared outcomes and benefits or a 'collaborative relationship' (Anderson, 1995). This co-creation of value pushes companies towards a new business model where value is created through consumer, supplier and manufacturing partnerships (Doyle, 2008). Engaging in this creation of value implies the process is bi-directional. Hence, with at least two actors involved and values becoming linked, *reciprocity* in value co-creation is an undeniable fact. However, these mutual benefits do not necessarily imply that both parties enjoy the outcome of the process (Gummerus, 2013). Nor does it guarantee a positive outcome for all actors.

When the actual (co-) creation of (reciprocal) value propositions takes place, interaction takes place and thus a relationship is established. Relationships are highly influenced by activities and exchanges that happened in the past and may occur in the future (Truong *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, perceptions of and interdependent relationships are unique. Furthermore, relationships rely on third parties for activities and resources, for they are part of a broader network of interactions and interdependencies. This emphasises the importance of reciprocity in the co-creation process of value. As value propositions are identified as a tool to propose an organisations unique offering, these propositions imply an interaction; a bi-directional exchange. This can be the exchange of value, network or knowledge. The reciprocal aspect of value propositions therefore implies what can very well be a continuous

process of co-creation and exchange. This leads to the statement that co-creation and reciprocity (in value propositions and other offerings) is an essential element in strategic thinking and acting of companies in a wide range of industries.

Conducting a co-creation practice

Although literature states that value propositions are co-created and developed by network partners (Truong *et al*, 2012; Cova & Salle, 2008) such as suppliers and consumers, the network construction of the event industry works differently. Academic research is largely product driven and therefore consumer - supplier - producer focussed. In the event industry, a fourth actor plays an important role. The consumer is identified as the end user (experiencing the event), the supplier often stages the event and the organiser designs the event. The fourth actor is the client, that actually initiates and owns the event. These many actors in the event industry, call for an eminent need for strategic business models that stimulate network alliances.
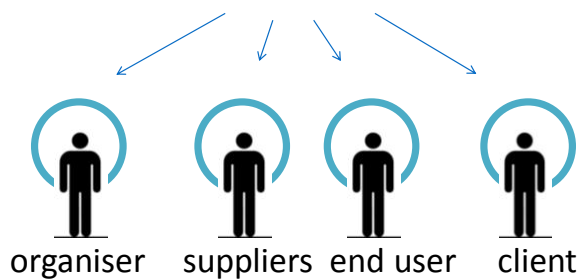
Actors in an event industry context

organiser   suppliers   end user   client

Fig. 1. Actors in the event industry

To test the function and meaning of value propositions for the event industry, a field research was conducted. Three owners of Dutch event companies were invited to co-create reciprocal value propositions with one of their clients. This B2B setting was chosen because of the importance of establishing a sustainable relationship between company owner and client. In-depth interviews were conducted to validate whether these event company owners met the Design Preconditions. The participants were each asked to select a client of their choice to perform the co-creation practice with. They were instructed to base their selection on the **relationship** with the client, the level and quality of their **communication**, their insight on the **knowledge, personal**- and **professional skills** of the client and their perception on their (shared) **objectives**. Because of the short time span of the co-creation practice (3 hours) an already established relationship between event company owner and client was essential.

E1	Event Company owner 1	C1	Client 1	Sales manager at a congress & exhibition centre
E2	Event Company owner 2	C2	Client 2	Head of communication at a waste company
E3	Event Company owner 3	C3	Client 3	Communication advisor at a health insurance company

Table 1. Sampled participants for the practices

During the co-creation practice of the conducted field research the participants were informed on the Design Preconditions and their function to enable and stimulate the learning component of the participants. They were lead through the session by means of the Design Steps by a facilitator. The Design Elements functioned as a support tool and checklist during the co-creation practices to trial and evaluate their validity and usefulness.

2. Design Preconditions: What is needed to start a co-creating process?

Co-creation leads to a strong interdependence between actors, which indicates the necessity of preconditions and settings that need to be in place to facilitate and optimise the process of (co) creating value. These preconditions that lead to a successful co-creation will be referred to as Design Precondition.

With knowledge sharing being a key aspect, Ballentyne & Varey (2006) identified three 'exchange enablers'; Relationships should give structure to the knowledge exchange (*relating*), communication that builds upon these relationships (*communicating*) and knowledge that is needed to improve the service (*knowing*). These enablers structure what Kowalkowski *et al.* (2012) define as an exchange *script.* The research labelled and identified the activities of the knowledge exchange, concluding that the 'resource integrated actors' follow a script in the co-creative practice of forming a value proposition. The characteristics on which the actors draw upon are labelled as *understandings* (the know-how, skills and experiences of each actor), *procedures* (the principles, rules and cultural norms of each actor) and *engagements* (the wants, needs, goals and purpose of each actor). It can be concluded that the practice of forming a value proposition cannot be seen as only a transition of knowledge but indeed is a co-creative practice between all actors drawing upon the script of procedures, engagement and understandings where skills (internal) and network and relations (external) need to be accessed and controlled.

DESIGN PRECONDITIONS	
labels ▼	**Sub-elements** ▼
▸ **Relations**	**Synergy** **Procedures**; principles, rules & cultural norms
▸ **Communication**	Networking, knowledge sharing
▸ **Knowledge**	**Understandings**; knowhow, skills and experience
▸ **Objectives**	**Engagements**; wants, needs, goals
▸ **Personal skills**	**Empathy** **Passion**
▸ **Setting**	Ambiance, focus

Table 2. Design Preconditions for the co-creation practice of value propositions

3. Design Steps: How to co-create

With the concept of value propositions and the importance of value creation identified, value propositions need to actually be co-created. The creation process follows a step-by-step approach, identified as Design Steps. Evaluating the studies of Ballentyne *et al.* (2011), Cova & Salle (2008), Kowalkowski *et al.* (2012) and Osterwalder *et al.* (2014), the Design Steps for the co-creation of (reciprocal) value propositions are identified as *Learn, Design, Assess, Test, Adapt* and *Adopt.*
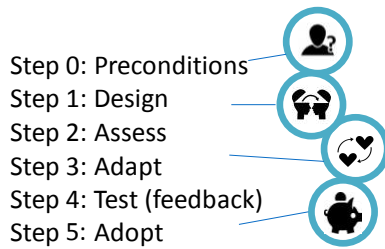
Design Steps

Step 0: Preconditions
Step 1: Design
Step 2: Assess
Step 3: Adapt
Step 4: Test (feedback)
Step 5: Adopt

Fig. 2. Design Steps for co-creating(reciprocal) value propositions

4. Design Elements: The anatomy of value propositions

With the *process* and *preconditions* of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions discussed, the anatomy of value propositions needs attention. The work of Payne & Frow (2012), Osterwalder *et al.* 2014), Skålén *et al.* (2015), Lindič & da Silva (2011), Rintamaki *et al.* (2007) and O'Cass & Ngo (2011) was evaluated in order to compose a detailed overview of elements needed to form well-composed value propositions.

DESIGN ELEMENTS	
labels ▾	**Sub-elements** ▾
▸ **Solution**	Problem finding & solving, Value needs, Cost drivers, Differentiation, Easy to use, Unique
▸ **Cooperation**	Co-creation value, Flexibility, Partner value, Reciprocity
▸ **Performance**	Operating, Information, Retail value, Business system activities, Functional value, Economic value, Reliability, Quality
▸ **Emotion**	Emotional value, Affective value, Symbolic value, Relationship building value

Table 3. Design Elements of (reciprocal) value propositions

Unique value propositions?

The labels led to a discussion of *uniqueness.* What distinguishes one event company from the other and what is their unique offering? Value propositions should in the end result in an unique product for the consumer. Therefore, unique was considered to be an essential element of well-composed value propositions. *Quality* was discussed, referring to the distinction between high-quality event companies and amateurs (which will be discussed in the next chapter). Designing value propositions in a way that *reciprocity* was included proved to be difficult. In designing as well as assessing, participants discussed the reciprocity on its application, function and meaning. It was concluded that designing well-composed value

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propositions that are truly reciprocal is difficult. But most importantly, participants commented on the uniqueness of value propositions, and the (im) possibility to use reciprocal value propositions for more than one client. Reciprocity within Cooperation was also identified as highly important. Therefore, *Reciprocity* was included in the Design Element Cooperation. It was concluded that four leading Design Elements determine the shape of (reciprocal) value propositions. Within these four elements, the sub elements can or may shape the propositions in different ways, depending on the industry and the actors involved.

5. Conclusion

Creating (reciprocal) value propositions

Not many publications focus on value propositions and their function. Studies identified that participants found the actual co-creating of (reciprocal) value propositions time-consuming and difficult. However, benefits derived were highly rewarding. Insight was gained in constraints and interdependencies between the company and other companies and stakeholders (such as suppliers). The insight derived from the co-creation process enabled them to address and improve aspects of the company-stakeholder relation and the need for dialogue. Also the actual implementation of the value propositions gained acceptance internally (employees) as well as externally (stakeholders). This leading to an improvement of communication again internally as well as externally. Benefits were derived such as cost savings and breaking through mind-set barriers of traditional thinking (Cova & Salle, 2008). Other interesting outcomes highlighted the importance of including the consumer and identified the need to target specific requirements of each specific target group. Value propositions set a 'refocus on product development, marketing and sales on individual major consumers and their needs' (Payne & Frow, 2014 p. 220), leading towards access to a larger market. The effect of large key players in the market, controlling the access, transmission and the receiving knowledge within networks is considered to be important. Key players in the market should 'initiate a coordinating and cooperating approach, incorporating dialogue and taking a knowledge brokerage role' (Truong *et al.*, 2012 p. 205), leading towards knowledge renewal and stability within the network (Frow & Payne (2011).

The event industry and value propositions

The practice of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions in the event industry, reciprocity identified four main themes. The practice of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions is valuable for the participants and for their relationship. Identifing personal values and accrediting values to a relationship creates awareness and deepens the relationship. The market within the event industry is small with important players who all know each other. They are able to identify each other's strengths. It was argued that therefore event companies don't need value propositions, because 'jobs' are often allocated by word of mouth. And when it comes to pitching, the event companies can tell by the type of client which event company they are looking for and eventually gets the job. With the event market always being under pressure, event company owners recognise the need to specify and communicate values. **Reciprocity** is a highly significant factor in cooperating with clients. It determines and influences the quality of the cooperation that effects the process and the end product. **Quality** is therefore an important theme. Specifically for the relatively young event industry the distinction between top-quality event companies and amateurs or newcomers is hard to make, making it difficult for clients to select a suitable event company. Within the event industry, it is (yet) undefined what makes an event company a top-quality company and who or what determines the (level of) quality. Hence, related to reciprocity with events, quality, engagements and synergy are important. **Engagements** are the needs, wants and goals (Kowalskowski *et al.*, 2012) of the client and the ability as an event company to identify and empathise with these needs and to act accordingly. Furthermore being able to relate to the client's values and the connection between the event company and the client in

recognising and sharing each other's values is considered important. It is a significant part of the cooperation process that needs to be in place in order to successfully design and organise the event (and share and transfer knowledge). In order to reach this level of cooperation, a relationship needs to be established. Event company owners and clients need to 'have a click' and 'share the same colours'. This level of cooperation or **synergy** plays an important part in a successful cooperation between a top-quality event company and their client.

To use or not to use?

The absence of (reciprocal) value propositions in the contemporary event industry and a lack of proof on the use of them is striking. It can furthermore be questioned whether it is in fact possible to create unique, un-replicable (reciprocal) value propositions. Event company owners consider it impossible that a single set of (reciprocal) value propositions captures the value that is offered by an event company, with each event and thus client desiring a different approach and having different values. How can (reciprocal) value propositions capture the entire set of offerings that is cut and customised to each event? Using such (reciprocal) value propositions might result in a narrow approach towards the market. On the other hand, specific positioning of an event company could also result in attracting clients with specific needs, resulting in a less varied portfolio but more jobs. Mostly the event owners recognise the value of reciprocity and the benefits of including this in your value propositions as a promise towards (potential) clients. Also the function of having value propositions is seen as positive, specifically in the contemporary event industry where acquisition is difficult and disappointing bids result in losing money, valuable time and good ideas. Considering the need for quality, reciprocity is seen as an important element of value propositions for it indicates the need for a relationship with excellent communication, cooperation and were synergy takes place.

Blueprint as a roadmap

In order to answer the question what is needed to co-create (reciprocal) value propositions, a blueprint model is presented. Although models have been published on various aspects of value propositions, no model captures the complete overview of the practice of co-creating and designing (reciprocal) value propositions. The *Co-Creating Reciprocal Value Propositions Blueprint* (fig 3) is designed as a roadmap in order to co-create and design well-composed (reciprocal) value propositions for the event industry. The three areas Design Preconditions, Design Steps and Design Elements are essential in order to co-create (reciprocal) value propositions for the event industry. The use of the blueprint contributes to the strategic decision making of event companies. Meaning that (reciprocal) value propositions have a significant importance for the event industry that leads towards an innovative approach to future proof the business of event companies.

The centre of the *Blueprint* represents a significant concept; Four key actors are considered influential in the event industry, and the interrelated arrows represent the flow of interaction and exchange between them. The actual value of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions lies not specifically in the end result, but in the co-creation process itself. The interrelated skills combined in a mutual process results in 'togetherness', 'sharing an energy' and 'having the same colours', identified as synergy in the relationship. This emphasises the transformation that the service industry is undergoing towards a value driven approach within the network. It stresses the urgency of strategic changes to be made towards an exchange driven approach. This demand for a 'click with the client' is considered to be the most influential factor in engaging and continuing cooperation in the event industry. It requires a high level of strategic and personal insight from the participants and implicates that openness and transparency are key factors. This synergy effects the quality of the service throughout the network, and can therefore function as an effective strategy to distinguish amateurs from

top-quality event companies. The *Blueprint* stresses the urgency of this new approach in strategic decision making on a interrelated, personal and emotional level within the network.

Looking at the *Blueprint*, knowledge exchange takes place during the communicating and relating aspects of the co-creation process. This knowledge is the stream of information, values and feelings, flowing between the participants. This can be considered value-in-use, a value driven way of doing business or symbolic interactionism (Truong *et al.,* 2012). This knowledge renewal emphasises that synergy and quality are considered key elements in 'doing business' in the event industry and that the development of (reciprocal) value propositions will evolve as trust and relationships grow throughout the entire network. The *Blueprint* gives practical guidance for event companies on future steps to take in doing business. When suppliers and competitors become partners, this blueprint can assist in identifying values and needs in order to establish synergetic relationships.

Critical view on the research

With event company selecting their own co-creation partner, it is unsure what will happen if co-creation practices take place between participants who have not established a relationship yet. No further research has been conducted on 'new' participants and whether they possess the Design Preconditions. How these Design Preconditions influence the process of knowledge exchange is an undetermined factor. Event companies question the use and function of value propositions within the event industry. This should be further examined to confirm or disprove this statement. A deeper insight into the concept of reciprocity and the use and function of reciprocity within marketing tools in general and value propositions specifically is suggested. Furthermore it would be of value to research whether participants need more knowledge and insight on reciprocal designing, in order to design well-composed reciprocal value propositions.

It is recommended to create (reciprocal) value propositions for each event that will be designed by an event company for a client. Further research should identify the specific benefits of this practice for the event company, the client and/or the consumer. The use of the *Co-creating (reciprocal) Value Propositions Blueprint* is also recommended and further research should identify the benefits (or constraints) of this Blueprint. Such research will build upon the knowledge of understanding and identifying the significance of co-creating (reciprocal) value propositions within the event industry or in any other service industry. This chapter takes a positive attitude towards the concept of value propositions. This does however call for a critical approach towards (reciprocal) value propositions in future research and stresses the need for trialling their application, function and purpose.

Future proofing the event industry

The need for change or innovation is often not recognised. A mindset change is required (Ballentyne *et al.*, 2011) to open up dialogues within networks and start exchanging knowledge. To recognise this necessary change, a 'jolt' is needed (Greenwood *et al.,* 2002). This can derive from social upheaval, technological disruption or competitive discontinuity. In the event industry, the jolt is the need for qualitative standards within the industry. Innovative tools such as the *Co-creating (reciprocal) Value Propositions Blueprint* give event companies guidelines on how to distinguish and profile themselves as a high-quality event company. However, event companies need to recognise this change and embrace new and innovative tools and methods and become transparenct in this new era of value exchange.

Although the event industry is part of the creative industry (Getz, 2012), business oriented studies seem to be much more applicable to the event industry. The event industry needs to recognise that their service-oriented products require a huge amount of strategic focus. Being or becoming innovative is therefore a must in order to professionally develop into a

mature industry. There is a need to become innovative and creative with an exploratory, open mind. The event industry therefore should embrace both its business oriented and its creative side. The very nature of knowledge exchange lies in the willingness to be transparent, needed to learn and grow. With event companies stressing the importance of 'being of the same blood type', it is eminent that the event industry is ready to take the next step towards becoming a value-based knowledge exchanging industry.

Figure 3. Co-Creating Reciprocal Value Propositions Blueprint
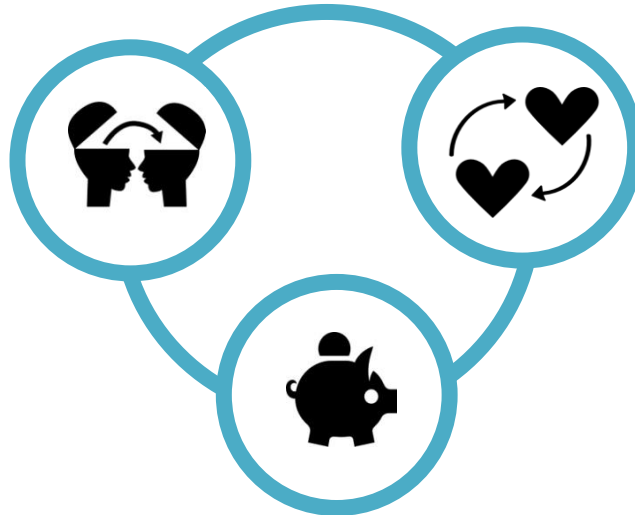
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ATLAS Events

ATLAS Annual Conference 2017
Destinations past, present and future
Viana do Castelo, Portugal
12-16 September, 2017

The Conference will take place between 12th and 15th September 2017 at the campus of the School of Technology and Management. The Conference will be organised by the Tourism Laboratory, headed by Carlos Fernandes.

The way in which places are being transformed by tourism was the subject of a recent ATLAS publication (Russo and Richards, 2016), which described how destinations are increasingly produced, consumed and negotiated between tourists and actors kin the places they visit. These trends link to wider debates about the production of space and place, and the rise of new localities in a globalizing world. Destinations increasingly need to deal with the rise of new tourist spaces, changes in the tourism distribution chain and growing competition from other destinations.

These changes suggest an increasingly uncertain future for destinations worldwide. Where will tourists go next? Which new intermediaries will emerge? How will tourists arrange their travel in future? What kind of experiences will be in vogue, and how will these impact on the destinations themselves?

This conference seeks to develop new perspectives not only on the challenges affecting the future of destinations worldwide, but also on strategies, practices and policies to sustain and /or develop the competitiveness of tourist destinations. The aim is to exchange and discuss ideas on critical areas of the development and management of tourist destinations in such a challenging context by tourism professionals and academics.

Keynote speakers

Maria Gravari-Barbas is the Director of the Institute for Research and High Studies on Tourism (Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes Supérieures du Tourisme, IREST) of Paris 1 – Sorbonne University. She has a degree in Architecture and Urban Design (University of Athens, 1985), and a PhD in Geography and Planning (Paris 4 – Sorbonne University, 1991). She was Fellow at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA (1990). She is the director of the EIREST, a multidisciplinary research laboratory focusing on tourism, mainly related to cultural heritage and development. She is also the director of the UNESCO Chair "Tourism, Culture, Development" of Paris 1- Sorbonne University and the coordinator of the UNITWIN network of the same name, comprising more than 25 top level universities all around the World. She is invited professor in different Universities in Europe, the States and Latin America. She is the author of several books and papers related to Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

Carlos Costa is based at the University of Aveiro, Portugal, where he is Full Professor, Leader of the PhD Programme and the Tourism Research Unit, and Director of the Department of Economics, Management, Industrial Engineering and Tourism. He is also Editor of the Portuguese Tourism & Development Journal. He leads a spin-off tourism consultancy company in the Aveiro University, which provides bespoke services for tourism organisations and companies. He holds a PhD and an MSc in Tourism Management (University of Surrey, UK), and a BSc in Urban and Regional Planning (University of Aveiro, Portugal).

Marianna Sigala is professor of tourism with tenure at the University of South Australia and is visiting professor at the University of Queensland under the Jim Whyte Fellow scheme. She has published in numerous international journals, books and edited books on innovation and challenges on social media and e-marketing strategies for hospitality and tourism. She is book review editor, reviewer and member of editorial board of several international scientific journals and editor of the Journal in Hospitality & Tourism Cases, the Journal of Service Theory & Practice (previously published as Managing Service Quality) and recently appointed as co-editor of the CAUTHE journal titled Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Management. She is currently member of the Executive Board of the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT) and Chair of the I-CHRIE Johnson & Wales Hospitality & Tourism Case Study Competition & Publication Series.

Donald Getz retired in July 2009 from his full-time academic position at the University of Calgary, Canada, where he remains Professor Emeritus and Adjunct Professor in the Haskayne School of Business. He is a Distinguished Fellow in the International Academy for the Study of Tourism, and has been a leading scholar in the fields of tourism and event studies. He is currently a Guest Professor at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, and at Stavanger University in Norway. He holds a James Whyte Visiting Fellow position at the School of Tourism, University of Queensland. As an internationally renowned scholar, Professor Getz's areas of expertise include destination and resort management and marketing, family business and entrepreneurship. He is also the author of the book 'Event Studies', a bible for tourism students across the globe.

ATLAS SIG Space, Place, Mobilities in Tourism meeting
Mobilities and body at play
Tarragona, Spain
17-18 October, 2017

The recently created SIG 'Space, Place, Mobilities in Tourism' convenes a first international workshop to take place the 17 and 18 of October 2017, at the Vila-seca Campus of University Rovira i Virgili, Vila-seca, Tarragona (Spain).

This workshop will gather a group of researchers presenting key advances into the understanding and analysis of relational processes and bodily performances shaping and negotiating (tourist) places.

We invite contributions which address the conference themes from a range of subject fields including, but not limited to; leisure studies, tourism, geography, cultural studies, sociology, gender studies, ethnic and racial studies, and social anthropology.

Within this context, the SIG workshop organisers welcome presentations on the following topics:
- Challenges in Mobilities Research: Methods and Applications
- Ethical dimensions of mobility in tourism and spatial justice perspectives
- Dissonant performances in tourist places: resignifying space
- 'Hosts and guests' in the age of mobilities: practices of cosmopolitanism

The workshop is open to academic researchers and practitioners at any career stage with an interest in tourism. It is organised by ATLAS (Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research) and the University Rovira i Virgili, research group 'Territorial Analysis and Tourism Studies' (GRATET) of the Department of Geography.

The event will establish synergies with the IGU-Leisure and Global Change commission congress 'Tourism Shaping Places: Mobilities and tourism destination evolution' (http://moveturproject.org/igucatalonia2017/), to take place from 18 to 21 October in the same facilities and involving 3 keynote speakers (Kevin Hannam, Szilvia Gyimóthy and Mathis Stock). A reduced fee is offered to the ATLAS SIG participants who wish to attend both events.

ATLAS SIG Dark Tourism meeting
Dark Tourism and Higher Education
Amsterdam, Netherlands
9 November 2017

This meeting will be organised in cooperation with the Institute for Dark Tourism Research (IDTR). The event aims specifically at lecturers and students from Institutes where Tourism Management allows for BA and MA research on dark tourism related topics.

Subjects include:
- Dark tourism
- Slum Tourism
- Heritage tourism
- Memorial tourism
- Crime-related tourism
- Fiction/Literature/Movie tourism
- Ethical tourism
- Tourist Motivation
- Tourist Psychology

ATLAS SIG Gastronomy and Tourism meeting
New approaches for providing customer experiences in gastronomy tourism
Bergamo, Italy
21-23 February, 2018

The Tourism and Gastronomy Group has been running since 2000. Expert meetings have taken place in Portugal, France, Italy and Spain and has produced a number of publications, including the Tourism and Gastronomy volume (Routledge, 2002). Most members of this Special Interest Group (SIG) are involved in research in this subject in their local /regional area. During the meetings the aim has been to present good practices of this subject area, discuss our current research and to identify opportunities for joint research as well as other co-operative initiatives.

The next meeting will be held in Bergamo (Italy), at the local university, from the 21st to the 23rd of February of 2018 and it will be an opportunity to rejuvenate activities within the SIG. Destination marketers increasingly recognise the importance of local/regional gastronomy for influencing the experience seeking tourists´ decisions about holiday destinations. It is suggested that the current attractiveness of gastronomy tourism results from the development of innovative and creative experiences. Traditional experiences (e.g. visits and tastings) are being implemented with more innovative and creative elements thus increasing the quality of visitor experiences.

These changes suggest the need for research on how a destination´s gastronomy contributes to the quality of the visitors´ experiences. How can food providers develop augmented experiences? What are the implications on the process of product development at the destination? How does creativity and innovation impact on food providers and tourist destinations? This meeting seeks to reflect on such questions, discuss ideas and develop new perspectives, strategies and practices to implement customer experience in gastronomy tourism.

ATLAS Asia Pacific conference 2018
Nexus of Migration and Tourism: Creating Social Sustainability
Institute for Tourism Studies
Macau, China
27-29 March 2018

The Asia Pacific region has seen the fastest growing tourism development in the world. Despite rapid tourism economic development, and research into labour and employment such as economics and employment issues, research hasn't caught up to the rapidly changing issues, such as tourism linked migration and social and cultural aspects of sustainability. Thus, we invite you to discuss, reflect and develop upon issues pertaining to sustainability and the nexus of migration and tourism. We are particularly interested in the complexities of trends, issues, challenges and opportunities around migration linked tourism, which remains a relatively minor part in academic research. While large numbers of migrant workers move to 'new' tourist destinations such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Macau and Dubai for employment, issues pertaining to social sustainability (e.g., well-being, quality of life, integration, the distribution of power and resources, employment, education, the provision of basic infrastructure and services, freedom, justice, access to influential decision-making fora and general 'capacity-building') have yet to be fully developed within tourism research.

We are extremely excited to hold this conference in Macau, which is marked as a global tourist city. A one hour ferry away from Hong Kong, it has seen rapid tourism economic development through gaming tourism. With 50% of its labour force, migrants, Macau's fascinating mixed Chinese, Portuguese and international culture makes it the perfect location to present papers related to tourism mobilities, migration, social sustainability and future directions. We invite contributions from a variety of disciplines including anthropology, cultural/human geography, sociology, psychology, cultural studies, economics, border studies, leisure studies, tourism studies and hospitality/event management. We invite you to submit papers on topics that include (but are not limited to):

- (Re)definitions of social sustainability
- Equitable access and the sustainability of the community
- Creating socially sustainable communities
- Migrant quality of life/ community well-being in tourist destinations
- Migrant tourism workers' integration & inclusion
- Migration and tourist community formation
- Conflicts between/intersection of tourists, local residents and migrant workers
- Tourism (im)mobilities, ethics, morals and (in)justice
- Tourism mobilities and border crossings
- Human security, transnationalization and citizenship
- Borders, spatial socialization and subjectification
- Social networks, borders and the allure of tourist destinations
- Gender and mobility in tourism
- Intersectionality, gender and race
- Roles of religion in tourism migration and mobilities
- Religious and spiritual mobilities and tourism
- Academic mobilities
- Social sustainability in ASEAN tourism development
- Social sustainability and future directions
- Island tourism
- Destinations resilience

ATLAS Cultural Tourism Research Group expert meeting
Participatory culture and new challenges for tourism:
Responses to the challenges of mass cultural tourism
Barcelona, Spain
12-13 April, 2018

In 2018 the European Commission celebrates the European Year of Cultural Heritage with the aim of promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion and strengthening a sense of identity. The initiative draws attention to the new challenges that the cultural heritage is facing in recent years, such as the impact of the digital shift, the environmental and physical pressure on heritage sites, the reduced public budgets, and the falling participation in traditional cultural activities.

Beyond merely commercial approaches, the touristic sector can stimulate virtuous uses of the cultural heritage that allow either to keep it alive and guarantee its preservation. If increasing tourism activity can threat the preservation of cultural heritage, the participation of local communities in the management and promotion of the cultural heritage can mitigate the risks related to the banalization of cultural landscapes in mass tourist destinations.

In the last few years, the touristic model of Barcelona has been widely discussed. For instance, one of the most visited World Heritage Sites in Barcelona such as Parc Güell has been surrounded by several controversies among residents due to the decision of restring the access in 2013. Barcelona is thus asked to give responses that mitigate the conflict around cultural tourism that also will be scalable in other cities and heritage sites.

Coping with scenarios as such, the touristic sector is thus expected to foster encounters between local communities and visitors as a strategy to keep tangible and intangible heritage alive and enact intergenerational dialogue and practices. New technologies have to be the main driver in encouraging co-creation process between audiences, both tourists and locals, and cultural heritage.

Within this context, the expert meeting organisers welcome presentations on the following topics:
- Responses from touristic sector to congestive heritage sites
- Participatory approaches and social innovation in cultural tourism
- Private-public collaboration in the management of touristic heritage sites
- Heritage promotion strategies and policies
- Basic challenges in sustaining of Culture Tourism Destinations
- Cultural heritage, tourism and climate change
- The role of new technologies in engaging cultural tourists in tourist destinations
- Gamification techniques in engaging cultural tourism
- New participatory narratives for cultural heritage
- The role of online peers' interaction for cultural heritage enhancement
- Co-creation in cultural tourism experience
- Food, wine in cultural destination

The workshop is open to academic researchers and practitioners at any career stage with an interest in tourism. The meeting will be organized by the ATLAS Cultural Tourism Research Group, which has been monitoring cultural trends around the world for the past 25 years. The meeting with be hosted by the Ostelea School of Tourism and Hospitality, Campus Barcelona, affiliated to the Lleida University and partner of EAE Business School and member of the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization)

ATLAS Annual Conference 2018
Destination Dynamics
Copenhagen, Denmark
26-28 September, 2018

Welcome to a dialogue about the places and people of tourism. During this conference, we explore tourism destinations as relational, intersectoral, collaborative, networked, hybrid, transnational and multiscalar endeavours. We expand on the connections between tourism and communities, value (co-)creation, rural and urban development, entrepreneurship and innovation as well as quality of life – to name just a few things. Essentially, we are interested in knowing more about how destinations change and how this relates to other parts of the social.

Welcome also to Copenhagen, a bustling Nordic capital experiencing increasing tourism numbers through a strong brand combining liveability, sustainability, food, design and diversity. Also, it is a destination which has declared war against "tourism as we know it" – at least in the newly launched and much-famed DMO strategy, Localhood. During the conference, we will get a first-hand look at how very different actors work together to develop tourism for the benefit of the destination, locals and tourist and also discuss the challenges and paradoxes ingrained in this 'local' tourism movement.

Lastly welcome to the home of TRU, the Tourism Research Unit at Aalborg University. As the heading for our research strategy, Destinations dynamics is a common denominator for the work and projects conducted under TRU. As hosts to the conference, TRU is committed to integrate the conference theme as a red thread throughout the keynotes, break-out sessions and general activities during the conference. We look forward to hosting you in our city and our university for some exciting days of sharing and co-creating new ways of understanding and engaging with Destination dynamics.

Possible subthemes
- Post-industrial destination presents and futures
- Platforms, networks, communities: Disruptive and regenerative tourism entrepreneurship
- Destination transformations and intersectoral governance
- Tourism and mobility transpositions:Hosts, guest, expats, migrants, pilgrims and intersecting trails Informal ecologies in tourism
- Smart tourism methodologies: big data, digital crowdsourcing/PPGIS, multi-modal opportunities
- Place making and sense of place in a globalized world, branding and geopolitics, transcultural aesthetics
- Collaborative action research: interventions, living labs, e-governance, learning hubs, ethics of engagement, design methods, public ethnographies
- Valuing tourism: practices of measuring, documenting, legitimizing, institutionalising and compromising
- South-South dynamics – new theoretical and methodological perspectives
- Taste of place – the role of food and gastronomy in branding, place making and destination development
- De-centering tourism: emerging 'localhoods', temporary citizenship, mooring and other mobilities
- Urban tourism in the Anthropocene
- Arctic tourism - exploring liveable futures

Other planned events

ATLAS Latin America conference 2018
Universidad Autónoma "Benito Juárez"
Oaxaca, Mexico
June 2018

ATLAS Africa conference 2019
Makerere University
Kampala, Uganda
June 2019

Soon more information, please visit the ATLAS homepage at:
www.atlas-euro.org

ATLAS Special Interest Groups - Reports

The current SIGs are:
- Cultural Tourism
- Gastronomy and Tourism
- Cities and National Capital Tourism
- Volunteer Tourism
- Events
- Business Tourism
- Dark Tourism Research Group
- Heritage Tourism and Education Research Group
- Space, Place, Mobilities in Tourism Research Group

Cultural Tourism Research Group

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The ATLAS Cultural Tourism Group continues to collect data on the motivations, behaviour and experiences of cultural tourists, as it has been doing since 1991. Regular surveys of cultural tourists have been carried out in destinations around the world, revealing much about the trends in this important market.

In the past year the group launched the book Reinventing the Local in Tourism, edited by Paolo Russo and Greg Richards, which focusses on the way in which places are being transformed for and by tourism as the 'local' becomes the new arbiter of authenticity. The discussion about cultural tourism is also beginning to include the role of culture in the overcrowding experienced in the centre of many major tourist cities and around a number of key tourist sites worldwide. In 2018 an Expert Meeting will be staged by the ATLAS Cultural Tourism Group in Barcelona looking specifically at the challenges of mass cultural tourism. This meeting will be hosted by Ostelea School of Tourism and Hospitality, Campus Barcelona, affiliated to the Lleida University and partner of EAE Business School. The event is designed to tie in to the European Year of Cultural Heritage and link to the ongoing discussion about the use, conservation and preservation of heritage in the 21st century.

Many members of the group made contributions to the UNWTO Report on Tourism and Culture Synergies (2017). This report included surveys of cultural tourism activity in UNWTO Member States, as well as a survey of leading experts in cultural tourism and cultural heritage worldwide. The results of this research indicated that cultural tourism will continue to play a key role in tourism development and marketing worldwide in future. For the future, Member States tended to prioritize product development and marketing. As a result, 'understanding tourist behaviour' is an important policy area, followed by diversification. Other priority areas are developing better measurement and statistics for cultural tourism, balancing promotion and protection of heritage, involving local communities and developing partnerships. Tourism experts tended to emphasise the growing importance of intangible culture and heritage in the tourism experience, and the need to develop better collaboration between the different stakeholders in cultural tourism.

Specific recommendations developed in the report include the need to:

- Create a vision for cultural tourism to link and energize stakeholders;
- Generate better information;
- Develop more specific cultural tourism policy;
- Create more targeted cultural tourism marketing activity;
- Ensure cultural protection;
- Make effective use of new technologies; and
- Foster stakeholder collaboration.

The findings of this research will be presented at the Second UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture in Muscat in December 2017, at which discussions will be held on issues such as Tourism development and protection of cultural heritage, Culture and tourism in urban development and creativity and Exploring the Nature/Culture interface in tourism.

Gastronomy and Tourism Research Group

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The Tourism and Gastronomy Group has been running since 2000. Expert meetings have taken place in Portugal, France, Italy and Spain and has produced a number of publications, including the Tourism and Gastronomy volume (Routledge, 2002). Most members of this Special Interest Group (SIG) are involved in research in this subject in their local /regional area. During the meetings the aim has been to present good practices of this subject area, discuss our current research and to identify opportunities for joint research as well as other co-operative initiatives.

The next meeting will be held in Bergamo (Italy), at the University of Bergamo, Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures, from the 21st to the 23rd of February of 2018 and it will be an opportunity to rejuvenate activities within the SIG.

Meeting theme. Destination marketers increasingly recognise the importance of local/regional gastronomy for influencing the experience seeking tourists´ decisions about holiday destinations. It is suggested that the current attractiveness of gastronomy tourism results from the development of innovative and creative experiences. Traditional experiences (e.g. visits and tastings) are being implemented with more innovative and creative elements thus increasing the quality of visitor experiences.

These changes suggest the need for research on how a destination´s gastronomy contributes to the quality of the visitors´ experiences. How can food providers develop augmented experiences? What are the implications on the process of product development at the destination? How does creativity and innovation impact on food providers and tourist destinations? This meeting seeks to reflect on such questions, discuss ideas and develop new perspectives, strategies and practices to implement customer experience in gastronomy tourism.

Important dates. Abstract submission: 15th November 2017; notification of acceptance: 30th November 2017 and full paper submission by the 30th March of 2018.
Provisional programme is available on the ATLAS website.

City and National Capitals Tourism SIG

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It is now over 10 years since this SIG was established. During that time, we have focused on developing research and literature on tourism and national capitals. National capitals have long been important destinations, and tourism has been integral to their development, yet when we began, national capital tourism had received little attention in either the urban studies or tourism literature.

The work of the SIG has gone a long way to remedying that and we have sparked sustained interest in research on tourism and national capitals. Around one hundred scholars have been members of the SIG, and there has been an active and successful publishing programme. Brent Ritchie and I edited a book and a journal special issue; I went on to edit a further book and a journal double issue, and co-organised a joint meeting with the Cultural Tourism SIG - Greg Richards and Paolo Russo edited an ATLAS book based on the papers presented. In all, more than 60 papers have been published, authored by more than 50 scholars, examining more than 30 cities. This represents a very solid achievement for the SIG.

We had a well-attended meeting at the ATLAS conference 2016 in Canterbury, UK. There was a positive response to potential new research directions that I proposed, and some lively discussion. However, members of the group proved unable to commit to taking responsibility to move the work of the SIG forward. I think that means we have to consider whether now is the time to deem its work is complete.

Events Research Group

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Founded in 2010, the ATLAS Events Group has held expert meetings in Breda (2011), Peniche (2013) and Sheffield (2014), Lecce (2015) and Barcelona (2016). Special tracks were also organised at the ATLAS Annual Conferences in Malta (2014) and Lisbon (2015). The group has also produced two books with Routledge from previous meetings - *Exploring the social impacts of events* (2013) and *Event Design: Social perspectives and practices* (2014).

In 2016 specific attention was paid to the development and testing of the Event Experience Scale originally created by a number of group members (De Geus et al, 2015). There has been much written about event experiences, but very little empirical measurement of what type of experiences event participants actually have, or how experiences vary between events. The basic research questions to be addressed by the this project therefore include:
- What is the relationship between event experiences and event type (sports, culture, business, etc.)?
- How are event experiences affected by event content?
- How do event experiences relate to event location (country, region, urban, rural, etc)?
- How do different visitor types experience events?

The project currently has a dozen members from 8 different countries, who have collected data on a wide range of different events, including Carnival in Brazil, the World Mobile Congress in Barcelona and the John Coltrane Jazz Festival in the USA. These studies are beginning to reveal the very different experiences that visitors have of events, and how experiences very according to visitor background, event context and location.

One of the major areas of research has been in Mexico, thanks to the initial efforts of Daniel Barrera Fernández and Agustín Ruiz Lanuza. Daniel initiated surveys at the Festival Internacional Cervantino in Guanajuato, the initial findings of which were also published (Barrera-Fernández and Hernández-Escampa, 2017). Agustín Ruiz Lanuza later coordinated the production of a book including a report on this research, as well as other event case studies and an overview of the Event Experiences research to date (Richards and Ruiz Lanuza, 2017, eds).

Other papers relating to research activities of the group have been published in a special issue of the International Journal of Event and Festival Management (De Brito and Richards, 2017), which looks at the relationship between events and placemaking. Other research related to the work of the group on the network approach to events has included the role of festivals as knowledge hubs (Podestà and Richards, 2017) and the creation of network value through events (Richards and Colombo, 2017).

In the near future the publications from the last expert meeting of the group are due to be published in a special issue of Event Management (Richards and Colombo, forthcoming). The next expert meeting of the group will also be staged during the ATLAS Annual Conference in Viana do Castelo, Portugal in September. Publications are also expected to be forthcoming from this special track of the conference, which will see the presentation of over 20 papers from delegates from 8 different countries on the theme of "Event Experiences: Special, Engaging, Different?" This meeting will also include a discussion on the future research and publication activities of the group.

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Richards, G. and Colombo, A. (forthcoming) Rethinking the Eventful City. Special issue of Event Management, volume 21.

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Business Tourism SIG

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This year, no conference was organised for the members of the Business Tourism Research Group. The coordinator of the group, Rob Davidson, has left full-time teaching to focus on MICE Knowledge, his research and training consultancy for the business tourism industry, although he continues to teach as a Visiting Professor in universities in France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. This year, Rob will continue to be an active member of this group, but will step down from the responsibility of coordinating it. Therefore, the priority for this group is now to elect a replacement coordinator who can carry forward the activities of the group, notably the continuation of its annual conferences, which have taken place since 2006. It is proposed that a new coordinator should be chosen at the ATLAS Annual Conference 2017 in Viana do Castelo, Portugal. Prior to that event, members of the group will be invited to express their interest in taking on this responsibility.

Heritage Tourism and Education Special Interest Group

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ICOMOS Bangladesh

Activities in the Last Year

The group was just established in the summer of 2017. As such, activities to date has centred on skype calls and informal face-to-face and email discussions on the directions and the future activities of the group.

Plans for the next year(s)

Long-term Work-Plan and Output

Overall, we aim to produce a range of intellectual outputs from the research and scholarly work we do on the topics and focus areas listed above and these outputs can take the form of the production of academic peer reviewed papers, special issues, edited books, academic conferences, student workshops, policy and consultation work and community outreach.
We are particularly keen to use the group to help establish longitudinal, multi-locational and collaborative research on heritage tourism and education. Activities and meetings will serve as platforms for such research and scholarly exchange. We are also committed to involving students in such dialogues about heritage tourism and the educational aspects of such a field.

More specifically, we are looking at the following:
- An inaugural meeting in Macao
- Special Interest Group meetings once a year (in Asia)
- Student workshops every other year
- Participation in ATLAS Annual Conference – as a thematic panel
- Edited books or special issues in journals from the sessions

We are formulating a research on Heritage Tourism Education and will pilot this in the heritage town of Luang Prabang, Laos PDR. It is our intention that experiences gathered from this pilot will help shape a research template that could be adapted and used in multiple sites and over a sustained period of time so we are able to generate substantive multi-sited and longitudinal data which could be shared with members of the group and the community. Members of the group, led by Dr Wantanee Suntikul, are also embarking on a focused study of Hong Kong's maritime heritage. These research projects will help shape the scholarly dialogues and activities we projected in the work-plan at the end of this report.

Connections with other groups

While possessing its unique focus areas, this proposed Special Interest Group (SIG) is envisioned to provide collaborative connections with existing SIGs, such as Cultural Tourism SIG and Events Tourism SIG. With a core group of researchers based in Asia, this proposed SIG has the potential to support ATLAS' Asia-Pacific Section and help broaden ATLAS' reach.

Tentative Immediate Work-Plan

Date	Activities
Oct 2017	Collaborative and multi-sited research on Heritage Tourism Education: First phase at Luang Prabang, Laos PDR (Investigators: Chin-Ee Ong and Sharif Imon)
Dec 2017	Collaborative and multi-sited research on Heritage Tourism Education: Second phase at Georgetown, Penang (Investigators: Chin-Ee Ong and Sharif Imon) Maritime Heritage Research – Research Meeting 1 (Wantanee Suntikul, Sharif Imon, Chin-Ee Ong)
April 2018	Possible Joint Conference and student workshop with ATLAS Asia in Macao
June 2018	SIG Meeting or student workshop in Singapore
Dec 2018	Collaborative and multi-sited research on Heritage Tourism Education: Third phase at Macao (Investigators: Cora Wong, Sharif Imon, Chin-Ee Ong) Maritime Heritage Research – Research Meeting 2 (Wantanee Suntikul, Sharif Imon, Chin-Ee Ong)

Dark Tourism Research Group

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During the last 2016 Atlas Annual Conference in Canterbury "Tourism, Lifestyles and Locations" (14-16 September) the special track on Dark Tourism, Memory and Pilgrimage attracted quite some attention and presentations and this led to the suggestion by the ATLAS board to consider the possible creation of a Dark Tourism SIG. During the conference 11 papers were presented by a variety of academics on topics that had an obvious link with the concept of dark tourism when referring to "death, suffering and the macabre" as defined by Philip Stone (2006) in his definition of this phenomenon. An overview of the presentations can be found below and it demonstrates both a wide geographical range of the phenomenon (Cambodia, Turkey, Czech, Belgium, USA, the West Indies, Malta and Germany a.o.), and a broad scope of research topics and methods that range from torture museums to natural disasters and socio-cultural impacts, war heritage and memorials, national identity, the management of criminal landscapes, the link with religious and cultural tourism, geographical representation, content analysis and netnography.

After participating in this special track one might suggest that the interest in dark tourism is very much alive (pun not intended) and that it attracts the attention from academics from a wide variety of disciplines indicating that there are obvious opportunities for research in cooperation with other academic disciplines such as sociology, social geography, cultural studies and cultural anthropology. The start of an inter-academic network such as the Special Interest Group within ATLAS might provide a new platform for both new and establish academics and could contribute to further international cooperation in these fields and the exchange of knowledge.

The possible introduction of a Dark Tourism SIG is also based on personal interest in this phenomenon. At Inholland University I have researched a variety of dark tourism related topics and some of these have been published in both academic journals and /or as book chapters. Furthermore the topic has also inspired many of our students for their bachelor thesis and in some case these have also yielded publications. In 2013 our university hosted the first international conference on Dark Tourism in the Netherlands and this led to an invitation by the director of the Institute for Dark Tourism Research to become a fellow of this organisation. Ever since, cooperation with the IDTR has been regular and led to an exchange of information, articles and participation at international conferences. Further cooperation with this institute for the SIG therefore seems a logical next step and the IDTR, by mouth of its director Philip Stone welcomed this suggestion. Some additional information on the Institute is provided herewith.

The iDTR, based at the University of Central Lancashire (UK) and led by Dr Philip Stone, is an academic centre for dark tourism scholarship, research and teaching. Since 2005, dark tourism research at UCLan (University of Central Lancashire) has become firmly established as an area of scholarly activity that has important social, cultural, economic and political implications (iDTR, n.d.). The Institute for Dark Tourism Research aims to advance knowledge about the act of visitation to tourist sites of death, disaster or the seemingly macabre. It brings together researchers who seek to deliver internationally recognised research that contributes to the ethical and social scientific understanding of dark tourism and heritage, as well as to the appropriate development, management, interpretation and promotion of dark tourism sites, attractions and exhibitions (iDTR, n.d.).

The main objectives of the iDTR are:

- Build research capacity in the area of dark tourism in order to publish high quality outputs.
- Enhance, influence and inform industry practitioners to help ensure the ethical implementation and management of dark tourism / heritage sites, attractions and exhibitions.
- Establish a global reputation as a centre of excellence for developing innovative interdisciplinary approaches to dark tourism research.
- Increase the level of local, national and international research collaborations with industry, academia and the media.
- Update and improve knowledge that informs the curriculum and the teaching of dark tourism as well as research methods

It seems obvious that these objectives could be in line with the objectives of the future SIG and the cooperation between the two organizations would be strengthening both of them.

Although there was no introductory meeting on this possible SIG-creation in Canterbury and some time has elapsed since, informal meetings and conversations seem to support the idea and therefore I would like to invite possible participants to come forward and support this proposal, as a new Atlas SIG can only be established when a minimum of four full members is in support. As for the clear set of aims and objectives and the required annual work plan some work still has to be undertaken, but this proposal would like to offer a first suggestion.

1. This SIG group will focus on the field of Dark Tourism and related themes that could include such developments as slum tourism, red tourism, funerary tourism, battlefield tourism and remembrance tourism and many others that have become recognizable features in our post-modern travelling society as well as the focus of academic pursuit and discussion.
2. This SIG group will provide a platform for both new and established academics to discuss research findings on a regular base by opening a social network application dedicated to the subject (e.g. Linkedin-group).
3. This SIG group will strive for the possible publication of papers of its members and supporters through the Atlas network.
4. This SIG group will organize an international conference on dark tourism and related themes at least every 2 years. The first one will be posted for November/December 2017 and will be hosted by Inholland in Amsterdam. Further details will be communicated through the existing Atlas networks and Trinet. It would be a nice occasion for the official launch of the SIG and confirming its collaboration with IDTR.
5. This SIG group will be supportive of PhD candidates and other students (BA and MA) to position their research and receive feedback.
6. This SIG group will establish a interactive connection with other academic organizations that have demonstrated their interest in the topic and will set up collaboration with the existing IDTR.
7. For the moment the location of this SIG group would be located at Inholland University in Amsterdam where management, colleagues and students have expressed their interest in and support of this new development.

A good idea is not enough when you want to start a new venture. Networking, contacts and support shoud be added and it needs the commitment from several parties. As I can only speak form my own university at the moment, I can pledge the support of InHolland for this SIG and hope that other institutes and academics will follow suit. I therefore invite you to express your interest in this proposal, maybe even add your support for its start and let's make it a promise to meet in Amsterdam in February 2018 to get face to face and celebrate a new initiative.

Space, Place, Mobilities in Tourism Research Group

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Fiammetta Brandajs (Technical secretariat)
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The SIG *Space, place, mobilities in tourism research* held a 'foundational event' at the 2016 Annual Meeting in Canterbury, when the coordinator invited the ATLAS members who responded to his invitation to gather and discuss about their ideas for a new trans-disciplinary group that had to 'replace' the old Tourism Geographies SIG.

At that meeting we suggested that a good way to start the activity of the group would be to have a first SIG meeting, and URV-Tarragona offered as a venue.

The activity of putting together the group have continued in the following months, with a mailing list of confirmed names (people who said that YES they want to be involved in the group) that is included below. Other 'networked activities' have been carried out in this initial stage:

- A Doodle to choose a name for the group, which eventually turned out to be the one we have by majority vote
- A brainstorming, helped by the circulation of some documents and notes, to wrap up a 'work plan' and/or manifesto of the group
- A consultation about the research topics to be included in the first SIG events.

The **1ˢᵗ SIG meeting will be eventually held in Vila-seca (URV Campus) on 17-18 October 2017**, in coincidence with the IGU-Tourism conference 'Mobilities shaping places' organised by URV and held on 18-21 October. Participants have been offered the possibility to attend both at a discounted price. The two events slightly overlap in terms of potential audiences however the SIG meeting is clearly more trans-disciplinary in character.

The program of the SIG meeting involves

- Three 2-hour sessions:
  - Challenges in Mobilities Research: Methods and Applications
  - Dissonant performances in tourist places: resignifying space
  - 'Hosts and guests' in the age of mobilities: practices of cosmopolitanism
- An introductory session
- Two keynote lectures offered by D. Ioannides and X. Caletrio
- An 'organisational' SIG meeting establishing the way forward.

A Scientific Committee has been convened for the occasion and includes: Antonio Paolo Russo, Salvador Anton (URV), Julie Wilson (Open University Catalonia), Dimitri Ioannides (Mid Sweden University), Javier Caletrío (Mobile Lives Forum), Kevin Hannam (Edinburgh Napier), Saida Palou (University of Girona) and Claudio Milano (Ostelea School of Tourism) has revised.

The SC has received and eventually accepted after revisions **22 abstract proposals**, approximately 6 by 'local' (Catalan) authors and the rest by Spanish and international contributors, in majority people who were in the loop as part of the SIG, and a few contributors who take part both in the SIG and in the IGU event. The registration to the event for accepted will be opened in September (through the ATLAS website).

This meeting will be the first real opportunity we had to talk openly and frankly about the way forward and the next steps for this SIG. Topics that will be touched are the funding, the membership (to be extended and promoted further in the whole ATLAS network), the publication projects, the circulation of researchers, the next events, possible collaborative research projects, etc. Obviously we'll use the Annual Meeting in Viana as a further opportunity to get together with those SIG that will attend.

We thought about having one of the keynotes broadcasted as an **ATLAS webinar** as announced in previous occasions. This still has to be technically organised but I will make a proposal within the next weeks.

Volunteer Tourism Research Group

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ATLAS Regional Groups - Reports

ATLAS Africa

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As already explained in the coordinators report, in June 2017 we organised the 10th ATLAS Africa conference at Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya, focusing on 'Africa's Tourism and Travel Competitiveness: Opportunities and challenges'. The theme was selected on the premise that despite exponential growth of tourism in terms of earnings and visitor numbers, Africa still trails other continents in terms of tourist arrivals and receipts. More than 100 participants from Africa and abroad celebrated the fact that ATLAS Africa, founded in 2000, is still a vibrant community of scholars promoting leisure and tourism studies on the African continent. The 11th conference will be hosted by Makerere University and Makerere University Business School, both based in Kampala (Uganda) in June 2019.

The Steering Committee of ATLAS Africa welcomed Joseph Mbaiwa (University of Botswana), Aggie Weighill (Vancouver Island University) and Geoffrey Bakunda (Makerere University Business School) as new members. During their meeting it was decided to actively look for funding for joint research projects and to promote scientific publications based on conference presentations. Marina Novelli (University of Brighton) offered delegates of the ATLAS Africa conference to submit their papers to two journals of which she is Editor in Chief and Co-editor.

ATLAS Europe

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ATLAS and NECSTouR collaboration

The possibilities of collaboration between ATLAS and NECSTouR were discussed with Patrick Torrent (Presidency of NECSTouR Catalonia Region) at the NECSToUR Annual General Meeting 2017 in Seville, Spain (30th and 31st of March, 2017). NECSTouR is interested in discussing the collaboration and signing the MoU.

Further steps will be considered during the ATLAS conference in Portugal.

NECSTouR is a Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism, bringing together 30 regions competent in tourism associated with tourism-related academic organizations and representatives of sustainable and responsible tourism business networks. NECSTouR is an Advisory Body to the EC in tourism

Since 2007 NECSTouR has been at the forefront of European tourism policy, lobbying to strengthen the presence of regions in Europe (www.necstour.eu).

Benefits:
- Sharing experiences on tourism decision making
- Raising Members' expertise to influence the Tourism Policy
- Visibility
- Being part of a dynamic network to make smart connections

Working Groups:
- EU Funds
- ETIS
- Digital Platform
- SMART Destinations
- Cultural Tourism and Sustainability
- Innovation, Skills and Education

NECSTouR is a platform where the tourism industry meets the academics, and together they can influence the EU tourism policy

ATLAS and UNWTO collaboration (UNWTO Knowledge Network membership or MoU)

The possibilities of, the collaboration between ATLAS and UNWTO Knowledge Network have been discussed with Yolanda Perdomo, Director of the Affiliate Members Program during the UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism San Sebastian, Spain (May 8-9, 2017). There are two possibilities – to become a KN member or to sign a MoU. UNWTO is now open to both possibilities. UNWTO publishes global reports on different topics; some ATLAS members contribute to these reports.

Further steps will be discussed during the ATLAS conference in Portugal.

The UNWTO Knowledge Network is an inclusive Community of Knowledge within the UNWTO Affiliate Members Program where knowledge generators, policy makers, and

practitioners proactively participate in sharing, interacting and accessing of relevant resources to be able to stimulate the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge in tourism. The Knowledge Network works across the following activities in collaboration with its members and partners:

- Joint research activities
- Talent Development in Tourism
- KN Global Forum and Symposia
- UNWTO KN Review Series
- KN Working Groups
- Regional Networks / Thematic Networks
- K-Focus Alert
- UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism

Conference proceedings to be sent for evaluation and indexing to SCOPUS and/or Web of Science. It was discussed during the meeting in Canterbury

Scopus indexed proceedings are recognized by the accreditation institutions better as just simple proceedings.

Conference proceedings are eligible for Scopus review if they are serial and meet all of the Scopus minimum journal selection criteria. Eligible conference proceedings are reviewed in the same way as journals.

Minimum criteria – preselection criteria
- Peer-review
- English abstracts
- Regular publication
- References in Roman script
- Publication ethics statement

Quantitative and qualitative measures
Journal policy
- Convincing editorial concept/policy
- Level of peer-review
- Diversity in geographic distribution of editors
- Diversity in geographic distribution of authors

Quality of content
- Academic contribution to the field
- Clarity of abstracts
- Quality and conformity with stated aims & scope
- Readability of articles

Journal standing
- Citedness of journal articles in Scopus
- Editor standing

Regularity
- No delay in publication schedule

Online availability
- Content available online
- English-language journal home page
- Quality of home page

A book edited by Alžbeta Kiráľová on Creative Tourism was prepared and published by IGI Global, USA with contribution of some ATLAS members.

Activity proposal
ATLAS Summer School on European Food Heritage
- Place: Prague/…
- Date: August 2018

ATLAS workshop with round table with industry and EU policy makers
- Place: Prague/…
- Date:

International Students´ Colloquium on European Cultural Heritage Tourism
- Place: Prague/…/virtual
- Date:

Open Call for application for internship for PhD students
Place: participating universities (Prague for sure)
Date: 1 term (summer or winter)

References

UNWTO (2017). Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism, Madrid, UNWTO.

KIRÁĽOVÁ, A. (Ed.) (2017). Driving Tourism through Creative Destinations and Activities. Hershey, IGI Global: A volume in the Advances in Hospitality, Tourism, and the Services Industry (AHTSI) Book Series. ISBN13 9781522520160.

ATLAS Latin America

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Minutes pre-conference meeting
Recife, Brazil, 5 June, 2017

Name of ATLAS regional section

To name the ATLAS regional section as "ATLAS AMERICAS" is discussed. Arguments for and against are discussed and finally it is agreed to name the section "ATLAS LATIN AMERICA". The main reasons are:
- Lack of interest on the part of USA
- Importance of highlighting the academic vision of tourism from a Latin or "South centric" approach.

Language

From the above mentioned agreement, the interest in facilitating communication in Portuguese and Spanish among the members of the ATLAS LATIN AMERICAN Section is derived. However, in practical terms it is observed that English is the language that is easier to use in multicultural contexts. The English language, in addition to allowing seamless intra-section communication, facilitates communication with other sections of ATLAS and with the Board. As a result, a multilingual communication is agreed.

Aims, objectives and related tasks

AIM 1. MOBILITY AGREEMENTS. To sign up formal agreements for lecturers and/or students mobility among ATLAS LATINAMERICA Universities.

OBJECTIVE 1.1. To create a Catalogue of Tourism Education Programmes of each member University (Ana)

TASK 1.1.1. To send programmes and detailed syllabus to Ana (all members)

AIM 2. RESEARCH. To promote international research projects through participation of members with different origins. This aim is considered as important but not of short-term priority. Once contacts are established, common interests will arise. By the way, some partners comment on their interest to hold a meeting of the Tourism & Gastronomy Special Interest Group in Brazil

OBJECTIVE 2.1. To coordinate and facilitate this meeting (Carlos Fernandes).

AIM 3. PUBLISHING. To increase the number of publications by Latinamerican authors in indexed journals and / or through books or book chapters

OBJETIVE 3.1. To publish the outcomes of I ATLAS LATINAMERICA Conference: Tourism and Creativity: New Opportunities for Developing Latin America (Anderson Gomes). Marisa Brito offers her help .

AIM 4. MEMBERSHIP. To increase number of Latinamerican ATLAS members
TASK will be done with the collaboration of ATLAS LATINAMERICA Regional Coordinators:
- Brazil: Carla Borba and André R. Costa Perinotto
- Mexico, Mid-America and Caribe: Daniel Barrera-Fernández and Marco Hernández-Escampa
- South America: Ana will get in touch with Uruguay , Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica colleagues.

AIM 5. NETWORKING. To stablish partnership agreements with other networks (ABRATUR, OTIUM, etc,)

Future developments of ATLAS Latin America

A webinar will be offered to Latin American ATLAS partners who cannot physically attend next   ATLAS Annual Conference "Destinations past, present and future" that will take place in Viana do Castelo, Portugal, 12-15 September 2017 (Carlos Fernandes).

Universidad Autónoma "Benito Juárez" de Oaxaca (Mexico) will host II Conference ATLAS LATIN AMERICA Meeting in June 2018 (Daniel Barrera-Fernández and Marco Hernández-Escampa).

ATLAS Asia Pacific

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Jaeyeon Choe and our partners at IFT are very busy organising the 2018 ATLAS Asia Pacific conference in Macau.

ATLAS Asia Pacific conference 2018
Nexus of Migration and Tourism: Creating Social Sustainability
Institute for Tourism Studies
Macau, China
27-29 March 2018

More information can be found in this Reflections.

ATLAS Middle East

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ATLAS new publications

ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review

The ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review gives ATLAS members and participants of the ATLAS conferences and meetings a platform to publish the papers they have presented. The editing will be carried out by an editorial board / field editors.

This first volume of 2017 on Health, Wellness and Spa Tourism in the Balkans focusing on local communities as a cardinal point of sustainable development in tourism in the sense of well-being and quality of life. It includes papers from the 2014 Budapest conference and is edited by Harald A. Friedl, Manuela Tooma and Kai Illing.

The second volume of 2017 includes papers from the 2015 ATLAS Africa conference, which took place in Dar es Salaam. We would like to thank. Rita Nthiga, Laban Rotich and Øystein Jensen for editing the three papers.
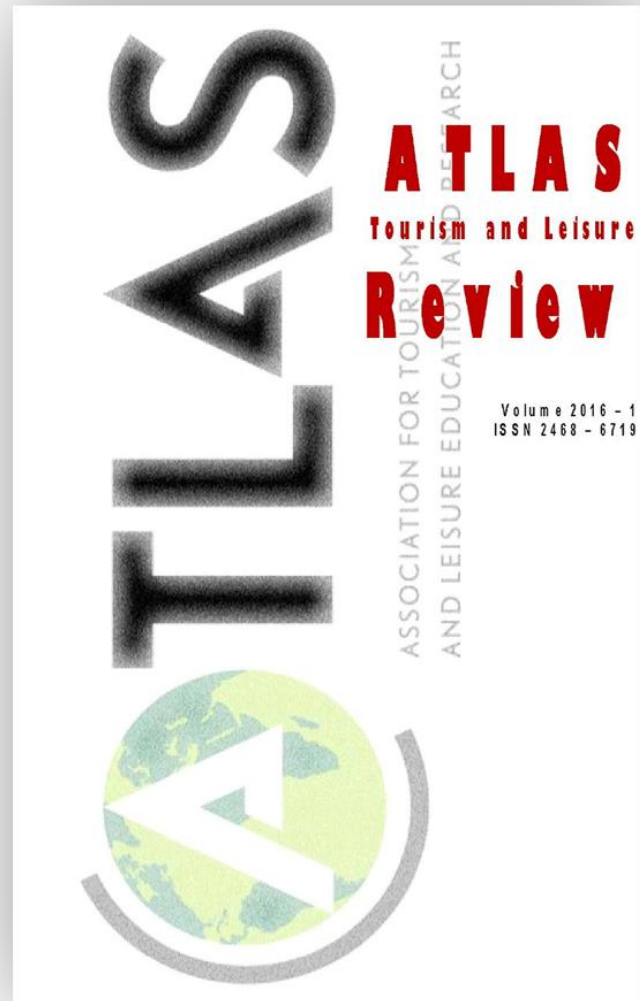
ATLAS Review Volume 2016 – 1: Well-Being and Employment in Tourism

ATLAS Review Volume 2016 – 2: Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing

ATLAS Review Volume 2016 – 3: Health, Wellness and Spa Tourism in the Balkans

ATLAS Review Volume 2017 – 1: Well-Being and Quality of Life in Tourism

ATLAS Review Volume 2017 – 2: ATLAS Africa, conference proceedings 2015

The ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review is free for ATLAS members, but also available in the ATLAS online shop.

ATLAS is selling some of its publications in PDF format. This will save the buyers shipping costs.

In our online webshop it is also possible to buy a special version of the PDF publications with a Library Licence. With this Library Licence you or your library will get permission to host the PDF on your catalogue for your students and staff. Of course ATLAS members will still benefit from the 20% discount on the publications.

**Tourism, Lifestyles and Locations
ATLAS Reflections 2016 (In PDF)**
Edited by René van der Duim, Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman
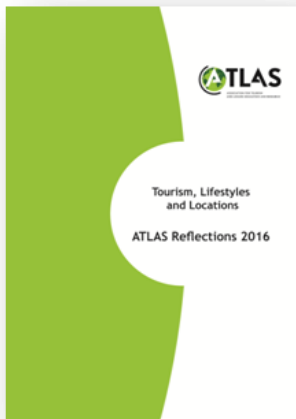
**Destinations past, present and future
ATLAS Reflections 2017 (In PDF)**
Edited by René van der Duim, Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman